

Politics 2016 – ‘You’re fired up’

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Philadelphia, PA - The Mid-Atlantic Region dominated the podium at the Wednesday, July 27 session of the 2016 Democratic National Convention. The former governor of Maryland, who may become the party's new chairman; a senator from Virginia, who is the party's candidate for vice president; and a long-time political figure from Delaware, who is the nation's outgoing vice president all addressed the delegates. President Barack Obama also spoke but may have been upstaged by the vice president.

As CNN Politics' Kevin Liptak pointed out, Vice President Joseph Biden delivered what was likely his last political speech of his five decade career. Biden painted Republican Presidential Candidate Donald Trump as a man who lacks compassion and someone who "doesn't have a clue about the middle class." He told the delegates that the party's standard-bearer—former senator, secretary of State and First Lady Hillary Clinton "gets it."

Biden mocked Trump for the tycoon's famous reality television line "you're fired," and presented it as evidence that he is a bad option as the nation's next leader. Virginia Senator Tim Kaine, Clinton's running mate, lampooned Trump's constant interjection of "believe me." Kaine then cited anecdotes where he (Kaine) claims Trump chiseled people out of thousands of collars. "Do you really believe him?" Kaine asked. "Donald Trump's whole career says you better not."

The LA Times pointed out that while Kaine's speech appeared well-received, several delegates waived signs expressing opposition to the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). Kaine decided this week to withdraw his support for TPP. The Democratic Platform Committee decided not to formally oppose the trade deal.

Former Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley's six-and-a-half minute speech also included praise for the party's candidate and a rebuke of the GOP candidate. Of Clinton, O'Malley stated "she will stand up to ISIS, she will stand up to the Russians. Of Trump, O'Malley said he "turns anger into a political weapon. To hell with Trump's American nightmare. We believe in the American dream."

Ben Mathis-Lilley of Slate referenced tweets by several conservative pundits. Mathis-Lilley's essay "Conservatives find selves shocked to realize they liked Obama's speech," noted conservative blogger Erick Erickson labeled the president's speech "uplifting and not particularly partisan."

Former GOP speechwriter Josh Podhoretz tweeted, "take about five paragraphs out of that Obama speech and it could have been a Reagan speech. Trust me, I know."

Mathis-Lilley noted the praise was qualified. "They still felt Obama had governed in a divisive way and that voters still have good reasons to be unhappy with the direction the country is heading.

Thursday night's wrap-up will give Hillary Clinton a chance to measure up to all the praise that has been heaped on her this week in Philly and a chance to respond to the trashing she took in Cleveland last week.

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