



Jackson told listeners that the American Indian vote was worth as much and counted as much as any other citizen's vote.

"We must hold our heads high and dry our tears from our eyes and keep our eyes on the prize, and the prize is a sensitized government. . . ."

Jackson said it was time for a new government, one different from Reaganomics, with fair treatment for blue collar workers as well as executives. He told the Indians that if they would hold on and vote, a change could occur.

"More and more in these close elections the Indian vote makes a difference," Jackson said.

Jackson said Vice President George Bush does not deserve support.

"Bush and (Sen. Dan) Quayle have a blind spot in their eye, and that blind spot is the ugliness of the nation. We pledge allegiance to the flag, we love our country, but that was never the issue. The issue was getting our flags made in Korea where we get the joy and they get the jobs."

The people of the country have the passion, Jackson said, but the president needs the priorities.

Jackson said priorities meant spending more money and time to help the homeless, one-third of whom were veterans who fought for the United States.

"Not the Quayle kind, who fought a war between Gary and Indianapolis, but the Vietnam kind.

"Your suffering has made you a strong people. Invest in people, reinvest in America and stand tall. This is your nation."

Jackson said Bush never would understand the plight of people who have to work for their money and fight for their rights.

"Bush was born on third base and thought he hit a triple."

Before and after Jackson's speech, Frank LaMere, a Winnebago Indian and executive director of the Nebraska Indian Intertribal Development Corporation, urged the Indians to vote because their vote did count in the presidential election.

"The constituency of tribal leaders are the ones who have to go out and get it done," LaMere said. "Indian votes are unanswered, because the race is so close . . . we can make up for the surrounding communities."

The Indian delegates of NCAI and the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska presented Jackson with an award of excellence for appreciation. The award acknowledged that during the 1988 election, "he knew our story better than anyone," said LaMere.

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Snake said NCAI had invited both Bush and Dukakis to the convention, but neither accepted the invitation.

"We were much ignored by the two major candidates. The candidates didn't want to lose votes by talking to us. It was a major affront to the largest Indian organization not to have them accept."

Snake said that if Bush were elected president, the Indian people would be stuck with the same philosophy of the Reagan administration.

"The Republicans lack sensitivity," Snake said. "While the Reagan administration has run the deficit to extremes, Indian aid has gone down.

"The Indians can't afford any more Republican leaders, it just costs us too much."

Left: High school students and other democratic supporters praise Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition and chant "Keep hope alive" after his speech.

Above: Rev. Jesse Jackson reminds convention goers of their importance in the political process at a Oct. 28 National Congress of American Indians in Sioux Falls, S.D. Jackson is holding an award given to him by the Winnebago tribe of Nebraska and the NCAI.

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