

Harold Washington's Acceptance Speech – April 12th, 1983

Chicago, IL

As transcribed by Hannah Lantos, from <http://www.chicagopublicradio.org/Content.aspx?audioID=15929>.

The following excerpt is from the speech that Mayor Harold Washington made when he won the election in 1983.

Tonight we are here. Tonight we are here to celebrate a resounding victory. We, we have fought a good fight. We have finished our course. And we have kept the faith.

We fought that good fight. We fought it, with unseasoned weapons and with a phalanx of people who mostly have never been involved in a political campaign before. This has truly been a pilgrimage. Our government will be moving forward as well, including more people. And more kinds of people, than any government in the history of Chicago. Today... today... today, Chicago has seen the bright daybreak for this city and for perhaps this entire country. The whole nation is watching as Chicago is so powerful in this! Oh yeah, yeah, they're watching. They're watching.

Out of the crucible... Out of the crucible of this city's most trying election, carried on the tide of the most massive voter turn out in Chicago's history. Blacks. Whites. Hispanics. Jews. Gentiles. Protestant and Catholics of all stripes. Have joined hands to form a new democratic coalition. And... and to begin in this place a new democratic movement.

The talents and dreams of our citizens and neighborhoods will nourish our government the way it should be cherished and feed into the moving river of mankind. And we have kept the faith in ourselves as decent, caring people who gather together as a part of something greater than themselves. We never stopped believing that we were a part of something good and something that had never happened before.

We intend to revitalize and rebuild this city. To open its doors and be certain that its babies are healthy! And its old people are fed and well-housed. We intend, we intend that our city will grow again and bring prosperity to ALL of its citizens. We have been victorious. But I am mindful that there are many other friends and neighbors who were not a part of our campaign. But that's all right! That's all right! That's all right! You never get them all! That's why we have a democracy. Because there are many opinions in a city as diverse and multi-ethnic as the city of Chicago.

To those who supported me, I offer my deepest thanks. I will initiate your reforms. But I charge you... I charge each and every one of you to rededicate your efforts to heal the divisions that have plagued us. Each of us must reach out, in open arms. Together we will overcome our problems, and restore Chicago to its proper position as one of the most dynamic cities in all the world!

THINK CLEARLY

What is the main idea of the speech?

Prove it—underline five examples that tell you that is the main idea.

TWO-STEP INFERENTIAL QUESTIONS INSIST THAT STUDENTS THINK MORE

INFERENCE	QUESTION	ANSWER	EVIDENCE
<i>Infer from context</i>	<i>What does <u>pilgrimage</u> mean?</i>		
<i>Infer motive</i>	Why did some people vote for Harold Washington?		
<i>Infer cause-effect relations</i>	What caused problems that the new mayor would face?		
<i>Infer predictions</i>	What do you think one of the people who heard the speech did next?		
<i>Infer feelings</i>	How do you think Harold Washington felt about the people who had voted for him?		
<i>Infer traits</i>	What is a trait of Harold Washington?		
<i>Infer the main idea</i>	What is the main idea of the speech?		