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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. *dy*

CALDER PLAZA

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1974

B.F. Keiths.  
Regent Theatre.  
Chicago.



TWO ALTERNATE OPENINGS FOR CALDER PLAZA IN THE EVENT OF RAIN:

I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR BEING HERE TODAY.

AND BELIEVE ME -- NOBODY, BUT NOBODY, WILL EVER ACCUSE YOU OF  
BEING FAIR WEATHER FRIENDS.

# # #

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR ALL THOSE BUTTONS AND SIGNS AND  
BANNERS SAYING "WIN". AS I LOOK AROUND ME, I THINK THE ONLY ONE  
IN GRAND RAPIDS WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE IN WIN IS THE WEATHER MAN.

- | -

IT'S JUST A WONDERFUL AFTERNOON WITH ALL THE BANDS, THE  
PARADES AND SEEING SO MANY OF MY GOOD LIFE-LONG FRIENDS AGAIN.

BUT I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU -- THOSE TWO BIG BALLOONS SENT UP IN MY  
HONOR HAVE ME A LITTLE WORRIED. I UNDERSTAND THEY'RE FILLED WITH

HOT AIR. I JUST HOPE YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING.

THANK YOU, MAYOR PARKS, FOR THAT VERY KIND INTRODUCTION ---  
AND THANK YOU, ALTHEA BENNETT, FOR THESE COOKIES FOR BETTY. SINCE  
YOU KNOW WHAT A STEADY CUSTOMER I WAS OF YOUR COOKING AT  
PETERSEN'S DRUG STORE, I HAVE TO WARN YOU: IT'S A LONG FLIGHT BACK  
TO WASHINGTON. BETTY JUST MAY NOT GET ALL OF THEM.

SOME PEOPLE, I KNOW, HAVE CRITICIZED ME FOR NOT  
STAYING IN WASHINGTON THIS FALL. THEY ASK: WHAT IS HE DOING  
IN GRAND RAPIDS? WELL, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN 26 YEARS I  
*Behrooz / Traveler / Service Clubs / Farm Bureau Community Groups / Labor Union*  
HAVEN'T BEEN OUT CAMPAIGNING FOR MYSELF. SO I'M OUT  
*Byron Carter*  
*Standards*  
*Lovell*  
*Kent City*  
*And Lake*  
*Calvin*  
*Rockford*  
*Janis*  
*Belding*  
*Portland*  
*Lake Park*  
CAMPAIGNING FOR OTHERS -- AND I ENJOY IT.

THE TRUTH IS, I MISSED THE RED FLANNEL DAY PARADE IN CEDAR SPRINGS  
THIS YEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME; I MISSED THE SPARTA RODEO FOR THE  
FIRST TIME; AND WHEN YOU INVITED ME TO THIS HOMECOMING -- I  
JUST HAD TO COME HOME.

AS I RETURN TO THE FAMILIAR SIGHTS OF GRAND RAPIDS,  
*of the surrounding communities*  
I'M STRUCK BY ONE THING: GRAND RAPIDS IS A PRETTY GOOD  
CROSS-SECTION OF THESE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

WE HAVE SOME WONDERFUL FARMS AND FARM FAMILIES AROUND  
HERE. BUT YOU KNOW AND I KNOW THAT GRAND RAPIDS IS BASICALLY  
INDUSTRY. IT IS A GOOD WORKING MAN'S TOWN.

GRAND RAPIDS IS BIG ENOUGH TO HAVE ALL THE PROBLEMS OF A  
BIG CITY. BUT IT IS STILL SMALL ENOUGH SO THAT WE ALL KNOW EACH  
OTHER. SO WHEN I AM IN THE WHITE HOUSE DEALING WITH THE PROBLEMS OF  
THIS NATION, I TRY TO RELATE THEM TO PEOPLE I HAVE KNOWN ALL MY LIFE.  
IN THE CASE OF INFLATION, FOR EXAMPLE, I AM CONCERNED ABOUT HOW IT  
AFFECTS PEOPLE I KNOW IN THIS AUDIENCE HERE TODAY.

SINCE I BECAME PRESIDENT, THERE HAS BEEN A LOT OF COMMENT  
*Some accurate / some erroneous*  
ABOUT GRAND RAPIDS, SOME OF IT A BIT AMUSING. A LOT OF COMMENTATORS  
AND WRITERS DESCRIBE GRAND RAPIDS AS CONSERVATIVE. WHAT DO THEY  
MEAN? ① *Paying bills - YES*  
DO THEY MEAN THAT PEOPLE HERE HAVE A HEALTHY SKEPTICISM OF  
QUICK AND EASY SOLUTIONS? IF SO, GRAND RAPIDS IS CONSERVATIVE.  
② DO THEY MEAN THAT PEOPLE HERE ARE AFRAID OF NEW IDEAS? IF SO,  
GRAND RAPIDS IS IN NO WAY CONSERVATIVE.

I KNOW AT FIRST IT WAS THE SUBJECT OF SOME CONTROVERSY BUT  
THE CALDER STABLE (STAY-BEAL) IS NOW AS MUCH A PART OF GRAND RAPIDS  
LIFE AS DRIVING OUT TO SEE THE RICH REDS AND YELLOWS OF THE AUTUMN  
TREES -- OR SINKING YOUR TEETH INTO ONE OF THOSE GOOD, JUICY, FRESHLY  
PICKED APPLES FROM KENT AND IONIA COUNTIES. LIKE THOSE TANGY  
JONATHANS AND WINESAPS, CALDER'S WORK HAS ADDED A RICH NEW FLAVOR  
TO OUR LIFE HERE.

LOOK AT OUR CALDER SCULPTURE HERE -- AND TELL ME THAT PEOPLE  
IN GRAND RAPIDS ARE AFRAID OF NEW IDEAS. I SEE WHERE CHICAGO  
UNVEILED A NEW CALDER LAST FRIDAY -- BUT GRAND RAPIDS WAS WAY AHEAD OF  
CHICAGO IN RECOGNIZING THIS ARTIST'S GREAT TALENTS. IN FACT, I  
USED TO SAY I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND ABSTRACTION, BUT THAT WAS BEFORE  
I BECAME A CALDER CONVERT.



FOR MANY YEARS, MY OFFICE WAS IN THE FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING  
OVER THERE. MY OFFICE WINDOW LOOKED OUT ON THE LIVING CENTER OF THE  
GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY. CALDER PLAZA IN THE VANDENBERG CENTER  
SEEMS TO BE WHERE GRAND RAPIDS PEOPLE GO -- TO HOLD A MEETING, TO HOLD  
A DEMONSTRATION, OR JUST TO HOLD HANDS ON A SUMMER NIGHT. AND I  
DON'T EVER WANT TO SHUT MY EYES TO THE VIEW FROM GRAND RAPIDS -- TO THE  
HOPES, THE THOUGHTS AND THE FEELINGS OF MY FELLOW MICHIGANDERS.

LOOK AT THE RECORD OF THE LATE SENATOR ARTHUR VANDENBERG --  
AND TELL ME THAT PEOPLE IN GRAND RAPIDS ARE AFRAID OF NEW IDEAS.  
IT WAS SENATOR VANDENBERG WHO TURNED FROM ISOLATIONISM TO THE  
CONCEPT OF MUTUAL SECURITY AGREEMENTS, ALMOST THIRTY YEARS AGO. ----

IT WAS SENATOR VANDENBERG WHO FOUGHT FOR THE EUROPEAN RECOVERY PROGRAM -- THE SO-CALLED MARSHALL PLAN -- AND DRAFTED THE LEGISLATION WHICH PUT IT INTO EFFECT. IT WAS SENATOR VANDENBERG WHO HELPED PRESIDENT TRUMAN LAY THE FOUNDATIONS OF POST-WORLD WAR II BIPARTISAN FOREIGN POLICY WHICH HAS ENDURED FOR THE PAST QUARTER-CENTURY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, GRAND RAPIDS' RESIDENTS DO HAVE A HEALTHY SKEPTICISM OF QUICK AND EASY SOLUTIONS. THAT IS WHY I AM SO PLEASED TO SEE SO MANY WIN BUTTONS AND SIGNS IN THIS AUDIENCE HERE TODAY. THE WIN PROGRAM REPRESENTS A SERIOUS AND SOLID APPROACH TO SOLVING THIS NATION'S MOST PRESSING PROBLEM -- INFLATION -- AND I AM DELIGHTED TO SEE YOUR ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT OF IT. THANK YOU.

I ALSO WANT TO SAY THANKS FOR ALL THE FLATTERING SIGNS

I'VE SEEN. ONE SAYS "FORD HAS A BETTER IDEA." BUT THE ONE I

LIKE EVEN BETTER IS "AT FORD WE LISTEN."

AS YOUR CONGRESSMAN, I TRIED TO LISTEN TO YOUR VIEWS.

AS YOUR PRESIDENT, I INTEND TO KEEP ON LISTENING -- AND HAVE SOUGHT

DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS IN ADVANCE OF MAKING DECISIONS. LATER THIS

EVENING, FOR INSTANCE, I PLAN TO CONFER WITH A NUMBER OF UNION

MEMBERS FROM THIS AREA -- TO GET THEIR VIEWS FIRST-HAND ON THE

PROBLEMS WE ARE TRYING TO WHIP.

*Cattle/Dairy/*

IF I HAD MY WAY -- AND PRESIDENTS SELDOM DO, I FIND -- I

WOULD RETURN TO GRAND RAPIDS MORE OFTEN. I LIKE TO LISTEN TO YOUR

VIEWS AND LEARN ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS. SINCE I AM UNABLE TO DO THIS,

I CONSTANTLY LOOK FOR OTHER WAYS TO STAY IN TOUCH. FOR INSTANCE,

I HAVE INVITED THE 30/30 CLUB, OUR 1930 FOOTBALL TEAM FROM SOUTH HIGH,

*Art Brown / Al Elliott / John Hengsten / Swede Jofstra / Lichi Mc Neel /*  
DOWN TO THE WHITE HOUSE FOR OUR ANNUAL THANKSGIVING REUNION. *Greg Barr*

*CLIFF GETTINGS*

*Danny Rose / Pop Churn / Howard Wechelt*

*Leon Jofstra / Archie Rose /*  
*Bob Nelson / Pete Dool / Jim Tange /*  
*Ray Warr*

EVEN THOUGH WE DON'T PLAY FOOTBALL ANYMORE, A LOT OF THIS

CLUB'S MEMBERS ARE STILL CALLING SIGNALS -- IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, IN

THEIR BUSINESS LIFE, IN THE PLACES THEY WORK. AND AS A GOOD CENTER,

I WANT TO HEAR THESE SIGNALS --- AND SIGNALS FROM OTHERS ACROSS THE

NATION -- AND ACT ON THEM.

BECAUSE THE GREAT PROBLEMS OF THIS NATION ARE THE  
PROBLEMS OF INDIVIDUALS AND OF FAMILIES, IT IS INDIVIDUALS AND  
FAMILIES WHO ARE KEYS TO SOLVING OUR NUMBER ONE PROBLEM --  
INFLATION.

BUT JUST AS INDIVIDUAL ACTION IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR  
GOVERNMENT ACTION, SO GOVERNMENT ACTION IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR  
INDIVIDUAL ACTION. IT TAKES BOTH TO WHIP INFLATION. I HAVE ASKED  
CONGRESS AND ALL OF YOU AS INDIVIDUALS TO JOIN ME IN WHAT I BELIEVE  
WILL BE THE MOST CONCERTED ATTACK EVER MADE IN THIS COUNTRY ON A  
PROBLEM THAT AFFECTS ALL OF US.

MY FRIENDS, YOU KNOW THAT GRAND RAPIDS HAS A VERY  
SPECIAL PLACE IN MY HEART. AND AS A GOOD CROSS-SECTION OF THIS  
NATION, I AM CERTAIN THE SPIRIT EXPRESSED HERE TODAY REPRESENTS SO  
MUCH OF WHAT IS TAKING PLACE ACROSS AMERICA. WITH THAT OLD SPIRIT  
INTACT, WITH A NEW SPIRIT IN CONGRESS, WE CAN DEFEAT OUR NUMBER ONE  
ENEMY -- INFLATION -- AND GO ON TO CELEBRATE OUR 200TH BIRTHDAY IN  
1976 BOTH PROSPEROUS AND AT PEACE.