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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
MYRIAD CENTER GOP PUBLIC RALLY

MAIN ARENA

1:05 P.M. CDT

Thank you very, very much, Senator Henry Bellmon. Thank you, Happy Camp. Thank all of you for being here.

It is a great, great opportunity for me to meet many, many of you again and to see so many enthusiastic, vigorous individuals -- Republicans, Democrats, and Independents -- who want to make sure that Henry Bellmon is re-elected.

It should be obvious to you that it is a great pleasure for me to be back in Oklahoma again, the home of Will Rogers, who never met a man he didn't like, and the hope of the Oklahoma Sooners, a team who never met a team they couldn't lick.

Yes, it is great to be here in Switzer Land again.

As an old football player -- I mean old -- when I played it was back when the ball was round -- it is nice to see Ron Shotts here and Rod Choate. It is wonderful to see one of those great All-American running backs. As a former lineman myself, I have always envied -- as I am sure Rod does over here -- those men in the backfield who seem to get a little more publicity than some of us linemen.

I never regretted their achievements. We always thought we helped a bit. But let me say this. I was once introduced at a dinner given at the University of Michigan. I was introduced by an old teammate from the University and I will never forget his introduction.

He happened to say in the course of that introduction, "It might interest you to know that I played football with Jerry Ford for two years, and it made a lasting impression on me. I was a quarterback. Jerry Ford was the center. And you might say it gave me a completely different view of the President." (Laughter)

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(OVER)

Let me comment, if I might, on some views and perceptions of the coming election. I am convinced that a campaign can come from behind and win, and you are going to do it in Oklahoma.

I am totally convinced that this State has energy, not only in its oil fields, on its football fields, but also in the open-minded spirit of its population, including Democrats and Independents, as well as Republicans.

Oklahoma, as a State, has produced a great winning football team and it is going to produce a great winning Republican team this fall.

I am deeply honored to be introduced by one of the most independent men in the United States Senate, and I refer to your distinguished Senator, Henry Bellmon, who is so highly regarded in Washington -- and I say this with some authority and great respect. He is respected by both Democrats as well as Republicans. I have heard that Henry Bellmon is the only honest-to-goodness dirt farmer in the United States Senate. He calls the shots as he sees them.

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And a person with that strength of independence obviously, on some occasions, will differ with me, but I respect that independence of thought, that independence of action, as well as his total dedication to honesty and candor and forthrightness serving in the United States Senate. You must re-elect Henry Bellmon.

In the 25-plus years that I served in the House of Representatives I found that it takes some courage to make unpopular decisions. It takes some courage to be your own man and I say with the depth of my conviction that I respect individuals who have those qualities.

Henry, because of his background, is a top authority on agriculture and the expansion of food production. He is, therefore, a person of utmost importance in our battle against inflation.

In addition, Henry is sought on both sides of the political aisles for his knowledge about oil and energy, and I am glad to know that Henry Bellmon is energetically seeking a vast new nuclear development park through the Atomic Energy Commission near Muskogee and I commend and congratulate you, Henry, for that effort.

A man who served four years in the State House as Governor, a man who has served almost six years as the United States Senator does not have to prove his devotion to the people of Oklahoma. It is obvious that he has their best interests at heart and as a team, he and Senator Dewey Bartlett represent, in my judgment, Oklahoma's finest, especially in the areas of food and energy, the State's leading industries and both of them are vitally important to us in the other 49 States.

Since all but one of Oklahoma's delegation, Happy Camp, are Democrats, a balance is provided by keeping these two Republican Senators in the Senate delegation but Happy needs some help in the House and we have some good Republican candidates on the ticket in other districts.

In the First District, George Mizer, Jr., of Oklahoma Cherokee heritage, is a forthright, courageous man. A former U.S. Navy pilot, he has shown brilliance in management as well as in business. He has acquired a reputation of integrity and he has accumulated considerable political experience. I think you and Oklahoma need George in Washington.

In the Second District, Ralf Keen is an excellent candidate. Ralph is a distinguished attorney. He has served as general business manager of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma. He is the kind of a man who will represent all the people of this great State regardless of political labels or background. You need Ralph in Washington.

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In the Fifth District, Marvin "Mickey" Edwards, an outstanding newspaperman, is your candidate. He served in the national leadership of the Young Republicans as a member of the State Republican Executive Committee and as a delegate to the 1972 GOP National Convention. Mickey needs your help.

And now, if I might say just a word about my former colleague and dear friend, Happy Camp. Six years ago I visited Enid, Oklahoma to campaign for Happy as a new candidate for the House of Representatives. All the promises that were made to me that Happy would be an excellent Member of the House, all those promises were kept by his performance. It would certainly make me happy to see Happy back in the House of Representatives and I think it would make you happy, too.

Traveling around the country as I am pleased and honored to do -- as a matter of fact, for several years I traveled about 200,000 miles a year -- I had the opportunity of meeting many Governors of various States, Democrats and Republicans, and you learn after a period of time to look at their records to see them. I can say, after having met Jim Inhofe, that your candidate for Governor is a first-class candidate and I hope he is elected.

But now, let's talk about 1974, not 1976. This is a year of decision, as I see it, for the survival of the two-party system in our great country. It is a year when we seek to elect a new Congress in the war against inflation. It is a year in which I strongly appeal to all voters -- Democratic, Republican and Independent -- to elect candidates who will fight against inflation.

Henry Bellmon has a reputation not only in Oklahoma but in Washington as a tight-fisted man with your tax dollar. He has been a general in the war against wasteful Federal spending. He has been against top-heavy bureaucratic dictatorship in Washington. He has been against a legislative dictatorship by those who would wreck the budget and waste our dollars on far-out schemes and programs. I think you need -- we do, I do -- Henry Bellmon to continue as the man in his command post in the coming attack against the Federal treasury.

You need the other Republican candidates who are here today to help Henry and Dewey Bartlett and Happy Camp. You can expand your Oklahoma delegation of inflation fighters.

Now, let me ask you this very simple question: Why do I, as your President, call for the election of more fighters in the war against inflation? If the Democrats, for example, gain seven Senate seats on November 5th and 25 or more House seats on that day, they will have, in effect, the Congress veto-proof.

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Such a Congress, unrestrained by any veto powers of the President, could resurrect those wild spending programs of the years of 1965 and 1966. Refresh your memory, if you will. The election of these additional extremists in the Democratic Party, and they would come from that element, could threaten the internal balance of our legislative process.

In my judgment, this would endanger our basic concept of Government in America, the system of checks and balances. I have found in my time in the Congress of the United States that one of the greatest protections we all have -- it is not a part of the Constitution as such, but it has grown up with our political history -- I have found that a two-party system is good for America in every State -- in all 50 States -- and I am deeply concerned that this system of checks and balances through a two-party system faces its greatest threat in our lifetime on November 5th.

I ask all voters across the political spectrum -- Democrat, Independent and Republican -- to think as inflation fighters and not along strictly partisan political lines.

The record ought to be reviewed, and let me take just a minute, if I might. The Democrats have controlled the national legislature, our Congress in Washington, for 38 out of the last 42 years; the last 20 years they have controlled it consecutively. Fiscal responsibility has not been in this instance, for this span of time, honored except in words -- they certainly have not honored it in votes.

During this period of time, unfortunately, Pandora's box of inflation has been opened. Today's Congress is stacked, in my judgment, against fiscal responsibility.

Let me cite another thing here that ought to awaken our concern, our interest. For 19 out of the 25-plus years that I served in the House we ended up with deficits in the Federal treasury. For 19 out of 25 years, your Federal Government spent more money than it took in. Twenty-three of the 25-plus years that I served in the House the Democrats controlled the Congress. I think these statistics, these facts, illustrate who has been responsible for the irresponsible spending of your tax dollars.

Now, if this heavy spending majority in the Congress of the United States is substantially increased in the next Congress, the two-party system will be in jeopardy. We must not permit a legislative dictatorship. We must elect an inflation-proof Congress and not a veto-proof Congress.

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It is essential to every working man, every housewife, every citizen that we have a Congress in the great tradition of our political history, a Congress that respects the common sense of checks and balances, the common sense of protecting your pocketbook and your job. From my experience, a veto-proof Congress for 1975 and 1976 could literally run the country through a lopsided power over legislation and spending. It could mean a Congress so deficient, so lacking in internal balance through a huge influx of a group of freshmen Democrats -- unfortunately, the probability is they would be the most liberal spenders, more liberal in spending your tax dollars than even those who have been there -- that a mandate for more spending will be what many will read on November 5th.

Let me refresh your memory just a moment, if I might. Think back what happened in 1964. The Democrats gained 34 House seats giving them a total of 295 to 140 on our side of the aisle. For two years, unsound legislation was pushed through the Congress by a vigorous President and a rubber-stamp House and Senate.

Interest rates climbed, the value of the dollar began to decline. We have been trying ever since to repair that damage. We recovered some ground in 1966.

The American people saw the mistake they made in 1964. There was a net gain of 47 Republicans in the House. To this extent, this righted that imbalance. We prevented, as a consequence, the unsound legislation being further pushed and we, to some extent, recaptured and held the lid. But let me say this as I look at the past.

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The Republican party is resilient, it is strong, because of the sound principles that I have learned in my time in political life. It is in the great tradition of our great country. We have good people, good candidates, and we, as a party, have the capability and the ability to come back to start from your own two-yard line and score on November 5.

The man and woman power in this audience here today, if you will rally around the great candidates that you have, if you explain the true legislative issues and the differences between one candidate and another, the difference between an inflation fighter and an inflationary spender -- I am sure that your friends and your fellow Oklahomans will understand and make the right decision November 5.

I must repeat a point with great emphasis. A veto-proof Congress could roadblock vital legislation, including measures that I have recommended to increase energy on the one hand, and stifle and handicap the anti-inflation proposals that I have made on the other.

A veto-proof Congress would undermine the philosophy of revenue sharing which gives to local people far more control in the use of their tax dollars. A veto-proof Congress would mean a flow of power away from the local communities. A veto-proof Congress would mean the concentration of power again in Washington, D.C.

I think most of us in this audience agree that you get wiser spending, better spending, if your locally-elected officials and your State officials have the power. We can do infinitely better in solving the problems if you can keep your eye on those people right here locally. You can do it far better, and your money will be infinitely better spent than if you have to go 1,200, 1,500 miles to Washington to see what is being done.

I think with the efforts that you can make, you can retain that power at home and keep it from the bureaucrats in Washington.

I am not a peddler of despair. I happen to believe that games can be won, political elections can be won, with a massive effort and determination. We must correct what is wrong, strengthen what is right, and move forward rather than backward.

I think this will help to solve the problems at the local, the State and the national level.

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I don't know of a State in the Union that I have found that has more belief in and dedication to the free enterprise system, to individual initiative, and Oklahoma is the leader in making certain and positive that our country continues to have the adherence and the belief in, the conviction in free enterprise and individual freedom. And I think the people in this audience, whether they are Democratic or Republican or Independent, share that view.

As a result, if we do what we should between now and November 5, we can continue to move forward as a great Nation. We can reduce Federal spending. We can whip inflation. We will open a new era of achievement in State and local governments. The body politic and the economic condition and resources of America can be strengthened.

We have in our heart and our minds in some 213 million Americans the capability of continuing to be a leader in the world. We are entering the final stretch. It is like the last few minutes of a ballgame. We are in the final days of a great political campaign, convinced that we have the right philosophy, the best candidates, and a good organization.

I am not downhearted about the fate of the Republican party in Oklahoma or elsewhere, and I am far from downhearted about the prospects for our great country. As I travel around--and I am delighted that I am here because of the enthusiasm--I see nothing but strength and optimism and dedication and conviction on the part of our Americans everywhere I go.

Now if I might, let me conclude with one final observation. We have to whip inflation now. We have to strengthen our economy, and we must have peace abroad.

When I came to the Congress on January 3, 1949, we had a Democratic President -- I think a good one -- Harry Truman. We had a Republican Congress for the two previous years. Recall, if you will, that this was right after World War II, a war that involved some 16 million Americans on a global basis, and there was the feeling in our country and a bipartisan attitude that if Democrats and Republicans joined together, we could lay the foundation for peace on a global basis.

This bipartisanship -- a Democratic President and a Republican Congress -- did lay the foundation. We helped to rebuild, we strengthened our relations on a global basis, and as a result, I think there has been great progress in meeting the challenges from enemies as well as friends.

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I am concerned about the breach of this bipartisanship between a Republican President and a Democratic Congress, but I hasten to add, a very good friend of mine, a good and fine Oklahoman -- the Speaker of the House, Carl Albert of **Bug Tussle** Oklahoma -- understands that there has to be a working relationship, a unity, a bipartisanship, in foreign policy, but unfortunately this Congress, dominated by the opposition, does not seem to understand it.

I am concerned that if we get a Congress that is veto-proof, a Congress that has the wrong philosophy -- both domestically and internationally -- the possibility for the next two years when our country faces the challenges in the Middle East, the challenges in the Mediterrean, the challenges in the Caribbean and Latin America, the challenges in the Pacific -- as we try to work to broaden detente, as we try to continue the normalization of relations with the People's Republic of China, as we, in the White House, and those in the Congress who understand bipartisanship and who believe that partisanship should end at the water's edge -- if we get the wrong kind of Congress, peace could be in jeopardy.

So I end my remarks here today by **pleading with** you to give to America -- not to me -- a Congress that will be farsighted, visionary, imaginative, and cooperative, so that we can have peace abroad, so we can work on our problems at home.

I thank you for the welcome. I urge you to send back Henry Bellmon, Happy Camp, and a good slate of Republicans.

Thank you very much.

END (1:35 P.M. CDT)