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Office of the White House Press Secretary
Des Moines, Iowa

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BE DELIVERED AT THE IOWA STATE CAPITOL
DES MOINES, IOWA

Thank you for that warm Hawkeye welcome. And thank you, Governor Ray, for your kind remarks.

During my years in Congress, I have always been impressed by the men of both parties that Iowa has sent to Washington.

They have been strong men, independent men, men of great integrity, and men of action -- like your Governor, Bob Ray. He has provided the sort of independence and leadership that we have come to expect from Hawkeyes.

You have held onto something in Iowa that much of the rest of the Nation may have misplaced.

Iowa is solvent. You have a long history of stable government. You even have a balanced budget.

I have to admit that I was startled when Bob Ray told me that it was not only balanced, but had a \$200 million surplus. I was startled because it has been years since I heard the term "surplus" used back in Washington.

These are open spaces out here in which you have room to move and to bring up your children. You have achieved an urban-rural balance that is the envy of the Nation.

I was most impressed with the figures that your governor cited on stemming migration out of Iowa. For the first time since the 1890's, people are no longer pouring off the farms and leaving the State.

That is a pattern we may see developing across the Nation.

The problems we have been experiencing with our economy since the end of our involvement in Vietnam -- including shortages and scarcities -- have brought home a basic lesson to our people.

We must simplify our lifestyle. We must return to basics. We must make the best use of what we have. We must cut out waste. We must strip away non-essentials.

In short, we have to return to the state of mind and way of life that made us the greatest nation in the world.

As part of a community, people can directly influence things that shape their lives. People can determine their own priorities.

That sense of community has not been lost here in Iowa. In the coming years, we will continue to see Iowa and states like it serving as models for the rest of the Nation.

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You have what so many Americans are seeking. You have the basic values upon which this Nation was built.

When I think of Iowa, I think of stability, progress and balance. I like the balance you are achieving here between industry and agriculture.

Some of my advisers suggested that I avoid the subject of agriculture in today's remarks.

They said that Iowa's farmers and farmers throughout the Midwest are especially frustrated this year. I certainly can share the concern of farmers whose corn and soybean crops were stunted by drought and destroyed by early frosts.

The trend toward urbanization during the past few decades resulted in the downplaying of the farmer's central role in American society. But recent problems have refocused national attention on the farmer as one of our greatest assets.

This is the time to farming in America. Let us encourage young people to remain on the farms.

Iowa is aware of the importance of agriculture to the Nation and the world. It is absolutely essential to the well-being of our society. America can no longer expect the farmer to sacrifice so that others can live well. All Americans now realize, we are all in this together.

The American farmer can outplant, outgrow and outmarket any farmer in the world. If he gets a fair shake, the farmer can feed not only the people of the United States, but many human beings abroad.

In the immediate years ahead, American agriculture will be our greatest asset in the world trade market.

Food is a basic key to world peace. And America holds that key. As I said in my speech last month to the United Nations General Assembly, the United States recognizes the special responsibility we bear as the world's largest producer of food.

We recognize that responsibility and I know we will accept it. I know it because of the people I see here in Iowa today, especially these splendid young people -- the cream of Iowa's bountiful crop -- who are delegates to the United Nations Youth Conference Day. The decisions they make as citizens of this great food-producing State will directly affect the well-being of the citizens of the world. I know that everyone in this State is proud of them and the understanding they are developing of the world situation will serve us all well in the future.

I am convinced that the future is now here in Iowa. And I pledge to you today -- and especially to all you fine young people -- that I will do everything in my power to make sure that the American farmer is fully rewarded for services rendered. America owes that to the farmer. And so does the world.

Let me stress this point -- that I speak today not as a political partisan but as a partisan of the American system of government. Our system rests not only on the balance of urban and rural America but on the balance within our Federal Government.

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The basic principle underlying that system is balance -- the timeless balance conceived by the Founding Fathers among the three branches of Government, the delicate balance within the Congress and the country through the two-party system.

This year the polls are telling us that our delicately balanced two-party system is in trouble.

If one party upsets that balance because members of the other party were too apathetic to get out and vote, then we stand guilty of abusing the American electoral process and forfeiting hope for effective government.

I urge you to help keep this great, balanced system intact. Let's not lose it by default.

What concerns me greatly -- is the inclination of the American people to consider politics something they would rather not become involved in.

The sad fact is that less than one American in thirty has anything to do with politics -- with the selection of candidates, with working in a campaign, with researching the issues, with raising or contributing funds for the election of candidates, or even with running for office.

What this Nation needs less than two years from the celebration of its 200th birthday is more not less citizen participation in politics.

To those who say politics is a dirty word which should be eliminated from government, let me remind you that politics is government -- government in action. And there is nothing wrong with this political system of ours that a massive injection of citizen involvement will not cure.

Having spent a quarter century on Capitol Hill as a Member of the House of Representatives, I am convinced of the importance of getting out and away from Washington. I believe it is the duty of the President to discuss his programs and policies with the people. And I believe the people of America should have the opportunity to see and hear their President in person. That is why I am here today -- to not only discuss my views with you -- but to urge you to turn out on November 5th in record numbers.

Congressional, State and local elections are what America is all about. There is no weapon so mighty, no force so powerful, as the silent vote in the privacy of the voting booth.

It is the duty and the opportunity of every eligible voter to balance the ledger sheets of good government.

And so, my Iowa friends, get out this time and vote as if the American system depended on it. It does.

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