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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
CENTURY CLUB RECEPTION

MUSEUM OF SCIENCE

7:15 P.M. EST

Let me first thank John Sears and I do want to speak up very affirmatively about the wonderful efforts of Senator Ed Brooke, and, of course, I would be very negligent if I didn't say nice things about my former colleagues in the House of Representatives Sil Conte and Margaret Heckler. And I do appreciate Maria Ryerson's efforts as Chairman of this event. I am sure that she and those associated with her did a wonderful job in seeing to it that all of you came to help a cause that I believe in, I trust you believe in, we just have to get more people to believe in, and I think we can.  
(Laughter)

Before getting into a few other comments, I would like to set the record straight in two respects. Despite the election results in 1972 in the State of Massachusetts, your President is not going to abandon Massachusetts to the other side.

And let me cite some concrete evidence of how I can say that. Number one, within the last several months I have been to Massachusetts twice and I will comment later on what I expect to do in the future as far as Massachusetts is concerned.

Let me add that as solid evidence that the State of Massachusetts is making a great contribution to this Administration. We have four members of the Cabinet from Massachusetts. We have Henry Kissinger, John Dunlop, Pat Moynihan, and, of course, we are getting, very shortly, Elliot Richardson. That is four out of twelve. I am not sure I should remind people in other parts of the country of the near monopoly that Massachusetts has on the Cabinet of the Ford Administration. (Laughter)

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But let me make one other observation: the Republicans in 1976 can and will win in Massachusetts and national.

And let me give you some good evidence why I think you can in Massachusetts. You are going to -- or you do have -- there is some more evidence of the impact of Massachusetts. But in John Sears and Nancy Sennott you have darn good extra-fine people taking the Republican Party and giving it the kind of leadership it ought to have.

Now, having said that the Republicans are going to win in Massachusetts and in the country in 1976, let me say with quiet emphasis, your President is going to enter the primary in Massachusetts, he is going to campaign in that primary and I think he is going to win in Massachusetts.

And may I add, I am going to be in New Hampshire, in Florida, and we are going to go right down to the wire in the convention in Kansas City and win there, too. I never got in a ball game we didn't play until the last minute of the last quarter.

Now, let's talk, if we might, about some of the reasons, in all honesty, I think we can prevail. I believe that the Republican Party has a unique opportunity. And let me illustrate by just taking some statistics in your State, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As I understand the figures, and I hope I am quite right, you have, out of 240 members of your Lower House, you have 188 Democrats, and out of 40 members of the State Senate you have 33 Democrats. Do you think you are doing a good job?

Whatever happens, it is their fault and we welcome them to have the blame. (Laughter)

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But we can't just rest on the faults and mistakes and errors they make. We have to look beyond that. We have to have some affirmative programs, whether at home or abroad, and I think we will.

We have had a tough 12 months, really tough, both at home and abroad, but we had a steady course to take, we haven't panicked, we have kept moving forward, and the net result is -- although the results are not totally satisfactory, and I don't want to kid anybody -- we are on the way up. The economy is getting better and it is going to get progressively better. We are going to do for New England everything we possibly can, and in Ed and Margaret and Silvio you have got some people down there fighting for New England and Massachusetts on a daily basis. But the main thing is we should be optimistic about the future of this country both at home as well as abroad.

I happen to believe that this country is still the leader of the free world and what it does makes a difference as far as peace and security on a worldwide basis. We have had a setback or two but if you look at the balance on the scales, we have had a lot more success overseas than we have had disappointments. And I happen to believe that in the months ahead, whether it is NATO, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Latin America or otherwise, we are going to be moving ahead and insuring the prospects for a longer and more secure peace than at any time in this generation.

What really bothers me is that a lot of people are writing off America and I don't believe in that attitude. This country has gone through the peaks and valleys, the disappointments and the optimism in the years before us, even recently. But the people who fought at Concord and Lexington, they didn't quit, they stood up and fought. Every generation that followed them had the hope, the aspiration, the feeling that there was something different about America and that is why we have such a cosmopolitan population in this great country. Somebody told me one time that the beauty of Joseph's coat is its many colors and the strength of America comes from the diversity of our backgrounds.

But the point that we have to make is that the Republican Party is not a rich man's party, it is not a party of one nationality or one religion or one geography -- it is a broad national party.

We almost won a governorship in the State of Mississippi just last Tuesday. We came within less than one percentage point, as I recall. We are going to make every State a two-party State. Competition in the political arena is there. It is good in Massachusetts, it is good in Mississippi, and I don't like those odds that you have in the State legislature (Laughter) and I don't like them in the Congress, and I happen to think that -- you have Margaret and Silvio here, they are high on quality but they need a little more quantity.

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So it is my feeling that we have the programs both at home and abroad. We have to recruit the candidates. We have to go out with the time and the talents and the money.

This is a turning point in political history in 1976. We want a Republican candidate that can win. We want a Republican candidate who knows how to work with the Congress. We want a Republican candidate who knows that it is essential to win in the State Houses and in the State legislatures.

We can get that kind of a program and that kind of a candidate, and I hope and trust that when I come up here in the spring of 1976 I will see all of you.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 7:26 P.M. EST)