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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
GOP STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE LUNCHEON  
  
FRESNO CONVENTION CENTER

12:13 P.M. PST

Paul Haerle, Congressman John Rousselot, Congressman Bell, Congressman Clair Bergener, and if Barry Goldwater, Jr. is here -- Barry, it is nice to see you again -- Ev Younger, Mayor Pete Wilson, distinguished members of the State Legislature, delegates and guests:

It is a very high honor and a very great privilege for me to be here in Fresno and to participate in this Republican State Central Committee meeting of the great State of California. Let me pay my deepest respects, of course, to the wonderful people of Fresno, the hosts of this convention. I appreciate this very warm welcome, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to say a few words here this morning.

Let me add a very special word of encouragement and support for the Republican Woman's Task Force, and especially for the 27 outstanding women who are candidates for the State Legislature, as well as the United States Congress this year. I wish you all the very, very best.

It is my understanding that this is more than twice the number of women who ran for office in this area two years ago. I think this is a great and I hope growing trend, and I hope the example that you set here in California will be followed in every one of the States of our great Union.

Obviously, I wish that I could stay for your reception and dinner tonight with our good friends, and I thank our great National Chairman, Mary Louise Smith, but Betty wants me to get home tonight. (Laughter) And, as all of you well know, Betty and I never disagree about anything. (Laughter)

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Let me also thank those of you who participated in this morning's precinct walk. Grass roots politics is a lot of hard work, but it also can be an awful lot of fun, and I hope that all of you, as you did this constructive work in the City of Fresno, did enjoy it.

We who are in public office know very well the great contribution that this kind of an effort does, and I hope and trust that in the months ahead, that you can do it in every community in every State because it produces results.

I congratulate you, and thank you for all of us, who are the beneficiaries of your efforts.

We meet in 1976 in a year of important decision for the American people, a year in which they will close their political leadership for the remainder of the 1970s, a year which begins in the third century of American independence.

I am waging my campaign this year on the powerful issues of freedom, peace and rising prosperity for the American people. This is a record of solid accomplishment, which I am presenting to the American people, the record that we have tried to build in the 19 months that I have had the honor and privilege of being President of the United States.

In those 19 months, we have cut the inflation rate in half. In this year's Federal budget, I have cut the rate of growth in Federal spending also in half.

We have recovered 100 percent of the jobs Americans lost during the recession, the worst recession in the last 40 years.

Consumer confidence is more than double what it was a year ago. Industrial production is up, housing starts are up, personal income is up, prices are stabilizing.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that America is on the road to a new prosperity, and we are not about to take any detours now thrust upon us by a Democratic Congress.

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We will pursue a steady constructive, firm course, the same kind of a course that I chartered for America at the outset of the recession when I proposed tax cuts for individuals, tax incentives for business expansion and job production and extended assistance for those Americans who lost their jobs during the recession.

I rejected the attempts of the Democratic majority in the Congress to try and spend our way out of the recession rather than doing it the typical American way of working our way to prosperity.

In fact, I vetoed 46 bills in the last 19 months and they tell me that is something of a record. If it is I am darned proud of it.

But the most important record is that we got the Congress to sustain 39 of those 46 vetoes and I am very happy to report to you that we saved the American taxpayers \$13 billion in the process. Obviously with more Republicans in the House and Senate we could have done even better and that is the challenge that we all face in 1976.

In the Senate and in the House of Representatives in Washington, D. C., Republicans are outnumbered better than two to one. Those are tough odds. I know in the State of California in the House of Representatives you have an outstanding delegation. They are high in quality, the best, but doggone it, we need more quantity.

I know that John Rousselot down here has been working as the Chairman of the Republican delegation in the House of Representatives for the State of California to recruit candidates to help to elect them and I know that we are trying desperately in this State to elect a Republican United States Senator.

And although I think it is fairly important to get a good vote for our candidate for President in the State of California, it is vitally important that we elect a Republican United States Senator in California and a lot more Republican Congressmen from the State of California.

We have been talking about those vetoes and I think those vetoes which were made and sustained were done without weakening our economic recovery and without straying from the steady course of economic stability and economic growth which I have pursued and we will pursue in the next four years.

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We will also pursue a firm, steady course internationally. We cherish the peace that America enjoys today, the peace that finds no Americans in combat anywhere throughout the globe, and yet we know that the freedoms we have defended so often are being challenged today.

We know that our strength, our power, our constant vigilance, and our resolve, our will, are the foundation of mankind's hope for peace and stability throughout the globe.

In the last 19 months I have taken affirmative action to insure that America's alliances are strong, our commitments are worthwhile and our defenses are without equal in the world in this controversial globe in which we live, and let me assure you without any equivocation, hesitation, that we are going to keep those defenses the best.

The record is clear, we are strong enough to deter aggression, we are strong enough to maintain the peace and we are strong enough to protect our national security and keep America free. In my Presidency, I have proposed to the Congress the two largest peacetime military budgets in the history of the United States reversing a trend that has reduced our defense expenditures year by year to levels dangerously low. Our aim is to make peace secure throughout the world.

We are conducting our foreign policy with our eyes open, our guard up and our powder dry. We know that peace and national security cannot be pursued on a one-way street, but we also know that a return to a collision course in a thermonuclear age can leave the human race in ashes.

I will not lead the American people down the road to needless danger and senseless destruction. I will lead them to the path of peace through strength and we will live in peace and freedom in the United States of America.

When we look at this great country, 50 States and our territories and 215 million Americans, we know that when you combine our industrial strength, our tremendous agricultural productivity, our scientific and technological capability, our military strength, our moral and spiritual commitment, the United States, by any standard, is number one, and we are going to keep it there.

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This adds up to something that I can say here and will say across the length and the breadth of the United States. We are proud to be Americans, and we are proud of America. The peace that we enjoy and the prosperity within our cities, these are the clearest guideposts to victory in November and in 1976. They are both on the Republican side of the road.

Our victory this year will be important to America for years to come. It will be a clear signal to our own citizens, to our allies and to our adversaries, that we will stand tall and strong among the nations of the globe.

It will be a mandate to continue the politics and policies of economic strength and growth, of limited Government, of decision-making at the local and State level, of fiscal restraint and tax relief, which so many millions and millions of Americans are demanding, and to which our party has always been committed.

Our victory this year will be a covenant with the American people to promise only what we can deliver and deliver everything we promise. It will be a recognition by the American people that the Government cannot do everything and should not be expected to.

We should never forget one very basic truth -- a Government big enough to give us everything we want is a Government big enough to take from us everything we have. But, it will also be an agreement with the American people that whatever Government does, it must do better and more efficiently than it has in the past.

History may well record that the election of 1976 was a landmark in American politics. All of us are very, very fortunate to have a part in this great effort, and each of us has a very special role to play.

The grass roots politics that you practiced this morning is every bit as important and the grand strategies of national campaigns. In fact, none of those strategies can succeed unless we succeed at the grass roots level.

I commend you, and I thank you for all of your commitment to the Republican cause. It is a cause to which I have been firmly committed for more than 27 years of public life as a Member of the Congress, as a Republican leader of the House of Representatives, as a Vice President, and for the past 19 months as your President.

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In those 19 months alone, there has been great progress in combatting the serious problems that beset our nation, in putting America at peace with itself and all the world around us. There is much, much more to be done, and we will do much, much more in the four challenging years ahead.

As you walk the precincts of the great State of California this year, I invite you and all Americans to walk with me in the path of peace on the road to prosperity, on the way, on the path, and the road to victory in November of 1976.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 12:30 P.M. EST)