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(Pullen/Bird) PT

February 2, 1975

DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS FOR NEWS MEDIA BREAKFAST,  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 1975

Good morning.

I don't know which I'm enjoying more -- the opportunity to meet some of the people who've been talking about me in print and on the air -- or eating a breakfast I didn't have to make myself.

I think meetings like this are very important. When I took this job, I promised to be a listening President. And the news business helps me to listen and to learn. But it is also important for me to meet with you and to hear your views first-hand and to share my problems and hopes with you.

One essential difference between democratic and autocratic governments is the dialogue between citizens . . . and their elected leaders. Your organizations are among the most effective vehicles for that dialogue -- including the resounding "yes" or "no" that officials get on election days.

I have come to Atlanta to promote this dialogue, and to ask specific help from each of you. The problems we face today cannot be solved without the understanding of the American people.

The major story this year is the economy -- a story you deal with daily. It is a story that requires your highest ability to communicate because it is complex. It hits people where they live. It has no easy cures.

Yesterday, I sent my budget message to Congress.

The budget is big. It calls for spending \$349 billion for the fiscal year beginning next July 1. That's nearly \$1 billion a day!

It will result in a large deficit for fiscal 1976 -- \$52 billion -- or \$1 billion per week! Believe me when I say the size of this deficit is of the deepest concern to me.

But if the Congress cooperates -- if it rejects the "easy" so-called cures and acts, we will be able to make such deficits unnecessary in the future. That requires the restoration of a healthy, productive economy. That is one of my most compelling long-range objectives.

Before we can end deficits, we must cope first with the recession -- by providing financial assistance to the unemployed and by stimulating the economy through tax rebates and reductions.

But the budget I propose also attacks our other two major problems . . . continuing inflation and our unacceptable dependence on imported oil.

My budget is part of an integrated total plan to restore the economy and achieve energy independence.

The need for action on recession and inflation is self-evident. You know it first-hand, as do individuals in unemployment lines and housewives in supermarkets.

But the need for reaching energy independence, while not as easily visualized as during the<sup>oil</sup> embargo, is just as real.

We must act on all three fronts, much as this Nation fought on simultaneous fronts in World War II.

It is essential that in the drive to end the recession we not add to the fires of inflation. Therefore, when I examined the programs of the executive departments in preparing the current budget proposals, I decided the Nation cannot afford any new spending programs, except for energy.

None is proposed. And I repeat to you what I told the Congress:

*✓*  
*not hesitate to*  
I will veto any new spending programs which are sent to me.

As businessmen and realists, I believe you will share my rejection of the idea that certain programs cannot be cut. No program that costs the taxpayers too much and cripples our ability to manage our financial affairs is sacred.

I have proposed curbs on programs that some political realists consider untouchable -- including welfare, government salaries, subsidized housing and some types of public assistance -- programs that account for \$165 billion in the 1976 budget, or almost half of the total.

I consider it unthinkable to block out half of the budget as untouchable. Just as other programs in the budget must be examined for reductions, so must those in this huge and ever-expanding category.

The opposing political arguments are obvious. Cuts of these so-called  
will  
"transfer payments"/hurt some people. But the reality is this. Not  
controlling our spending hurts all people.

Consider this: Various forms of payments to individuals have soared  
from almost \$42 billion in 1967 to \$165 billion in the proposed budget.

Unless this growth rate is checked, within two decades these  
expenditures could gobble up more than half of our entire gross national  
product.

A much maligned President, Calvin Coolidge, put the matter  
straight for all of us. He said: "I favor the policy of economy, not because  
I wish to save money, but because I wish to save people. The men and women  
of the country who toil are the ones who bear the cost of government."

We all know that far too many officials act as if someone other than  
the American people foots the bill for Government spending. A dangerous  
myth has grown up that it will be possible to solve our economic woes  
without some sacrifices by the American people.

Some people are now trying to use the same myth to solve the energy crisis.

This nation cannot deal with its economic problems and achieve energy independence without paying a price. We had a long and nearly free ride in energy. But the free ride is over and we must face the truth and respond with truth.

If we let the energy situation slide along without forceful action, we will find ourselves in the same terrible bind we now face with the budget and the \$52 billion deficit.

✓ By 1985, if the present trend is not stopped, the United States will be importing more than half of its oil. That must now <sup>T</sup> happen. The \$24 billion we paid last year alone for foreign oil was a terrible drain on our economy. And the current level of oil imports is a serious threat to our national security.

We must promote domestic production. We must reduce wasteful consumption. We must encourage more efficient use of energy, and we must find new energy sources.

Doing all of these things -- and reviving the economy -- will not be easy.

It requires honesty, it requires dollars, and it requires patience and forbearance from every American involved in the dialogue of free people.

Earlier, I said I was going to ask specific help from you.

I don't ask you to back the policies of this Administration blindly.

Such editorial subservence would drive your customers away in a few weeks.

But when you and your analysts have taken a deep look at the proposals I have made to turn this country around, I hope you will use your considerable skills as communicators to spread the news -- good and bad -- as you see it.



Whether you agree or disagree with the programs I proposed, I intend to keep on listening to what you have to say. I want to know your views.

Lyndon Johnson once said that the job of President isn't so much doing what's right -- as knowing what's right to do.

I need your help. Perhaps more than in any other jobs in this country, both yours and mine require us to keep abreast of the thinking of the American people. And from my experience so far, I know this: The American people want their problems solved. They want action now.

I have charted the direction. Now, it's up to the Congress. This one can write itself into history as the action-oriented 94th or into oblivion as another "do-nothing" Congress.

*For the good of our Nation I hope it is the former and I will work with the Congress to achieve that result.*

Through your publications and stations, you can help to make Members of the Congress alert to their opportunity and aware of their responsibility.

Thank you.

# # #

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN *A.J.*

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

February 2, 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: PAUL A. THEIS *PA*

SUBJECT: Atlanta Speeches

Attached in speech-size type are remarks for use before the White House Conference in Atlanta on Monday at 5:00 p.m. If you have revisions, they can still be made in the speech copy either Monday before you leave or on Air Force One enroute to Atlanta.

Regarding the Opportunities Industrialization Centers speech on Tuesday, we are coordinating your remarks at Don Rumsfeld's suggestion with Secretary Kissinger's speech before the National Press Club on Monday, since both will cover some of the same territory. The Secretary's speechwriter hopes to have a draft of the Press Club speech for us to go over later today. We will have a revised text to you in the morning.

In addition, attached is a text which you have not yet seen of suggested remarks to use before the Editors/Publishers media breakfast in Atlanta Tuesday morning. After you have had a chance to go over this draft, we can put it onto speech type either Monday before you depart for Atlanta or after you arrive there.

Attachments