The original documents are located in Box 16, “9/19/75 - Remarks at the Oklahoma State Fair” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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OKLAHOMA STATE FAIR - REMARKS
FRIDAY - SEPTEMBER 19, 1975

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU, HENRY.  (Senator Bellmon introduces you.)

GOVERNOR BOREN

SENATOR BARTLETT

CONGRESSMEN
JOHN JARMAH
TOM STEED
TED RISENHOOVER

ED GAYLORD  (Incoming State Fair President-owns 2 papers - 2 TV stations in Oklahoma)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
AS A FORMER COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYER, I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW PLEASED I AM TO BE HERE IN OKLAHOMA AGAIN -- THE HOME OF THE NUMBER ONE TEAM IN THE COUNTRY TODAY, THE OKLAHOMA UNIVERSITY SOONERS!
I like coming to Oklahoma because adventure still lives here. The pioneering spirit of the founders of Oklahoma -- independent and self-reliant -- exists as surely as your mighty plains and cities and people.
IT REPRESENTS, AS WILL ROGERS USED TO SAY ABOUT

OKLAHOMANS, THE WORK OF THE "BIG, HONEST MAJORITY."

I SALUTE YOU FOR YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND COMMEND YOU FOR

YOUR VISION OF AN EVEN BRIGHTER FUTURE.
TODAY, THE FARMERS AND RANCHERS OF OKLAHOMA AND OF OTHER PARTS OF OUR COUNTRY HAVE BECOME THE MOST PRODUCTIVE IN THE WORLD.

LAST YEAR ALONE, THE UNITED STATES EXPORTED NEARLY $22 BILLION IN VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.
WITHOUT THESE EXPORTS; OUR COUNTRY WOULD HAVE HAD A
HUGE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICIT. OUR DOLLAR WOULD
HAVE BEEN WEAKENED IN FOREIGN MARKETS AND WE WOULD PAY
HIGHER PRICES FOR THE ITEMS WE IMPORT FROM ABROAD.
IN SHORT, THE AMERICAN FARMER NOT ONLY RAISES CROPS —

BUT RAISES THE OVERALL STANDARD OF LIVING OF ALL AMERICANS.
AS YOU KNOW, I ADVOCATED A POLICY OF FULL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION LAST YEAR. IT IS NOT IN THE LONG-TERM INTEREST OF THE AMERICAN FARMER OR CONSUMER TO LIMIT THE PRODUCTION OF WHEAT, FEED GRAINS OR ANY OTHER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCT.
OUR COUNTRY HAS NOW ACHIEVED A RECORD WHEAT CROP AND A RECORD CORN CROP IS EXPECTED BY THE END OF THE YEAR. IT IS A RECORD THAT EVERY AMERICAN FARMER CAN BE PROUD OF.
I read in a news magazine that when it comes to bread, the food product that seems to get the most attention, the farmer only receives 17 percent of the total retail price of that loaf of bread. Middlemen get the rest. The American farmer is not the beneficiary of inflation along with every other American, he is the victim.
Fortunately, we have some good news today regarding inflation and I would like to share it with you.

The latest figures released this morning indicate that in August, the cost of living rose only two tenths of one percent.
THIS IS THE SMALLEST MONTHLY INCREASE IN MORE THAN TWO YEARS.

AND CONTRARY TO ALL THE FINGER-POINTING AT FARMERS --

FOOD PRICES HELD STEADY AND THE SMALL RISE WAS ACCOUNTED

FOR BY OTHER COMMODITIES AND SERVICES.
NOW I'VE BEEN AROUND LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT

THE GOOD NEWS OF ONE MONTH DOES NOT MEAN THE BATTLE IS WON--

BUT I DO BELIEVE IT MEANS WE ARE WINNING THE BATTLE AGAINST

INFLATION IF WE JUST KEEP THE PRESSURE ON.

BUT LET ME ASSURE YOU, THIS VICTORY WILL NOT BE

ACHIEVED AT THE EXPENSE OF OUR NATION'S FARMERS.
THE AMERICAN FARMER WANTS AND WITH GOOD REASON TO SELL ALL OF HIS PRODUCTION EITHER AT HOME OR ABROAD.

I AM HERE TODAY TO TELL HIM AND TO TELL YOU THAT WE ARE WORKING NIGHT AND DAY TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT FARMERS WILL BE ABLE TO SELL WHAT THEY PRODUCE IN A FREE MARKET AND AT FAIR PRICES.
WE HAVE BUILT REGULAR PROFITABLE GRAIN TRADING RELATIONS
WITH TRADITIONAL BUYERS IN EUROPE, JAPAN AND ELSEWHERE.

THEREFORE, WE CAN GENERALLY COUNT IN ADVANCE ON A CERTAIN
LEVEL OF SALES TO THESE FOREIGN CUSTOMERS.
FARMERS CAN PLAN FOR THEM AND OUR MARKET CAN ACCOMMODATE THEM WITHOUT DISRUPTION. THE SOVIET UNION REPRESENTS A RELATIVELY NEW FACTOR IN UNITED STATES AGRICULTURAL TRADING.
FARMERS HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO PREDICT SOVIET GOVERNMENT PURCHASES AND OUR MARKET HAS BEEN DISRUPTED WHEN SOVIET PURCHASES ARE UNUSUALLY LARGE OR SMALL.
I am now giving priority attention to reaching an agreement that will enable us to trade with the Soviets on a more predictable basis. It would permit us to make additional sales this year and guarantee sales in years to come.
SO THERE WILL BE NO MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THESE GRAIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION, LET US LOOK AT OUR LAST FIVE CROP SEASONS:
SOVIET GRAIN PURCHASES FROM THE UNITED STATES HAVE FLUCTUATED WILDLY IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS. IN 1971-72, THE UNITED STATES SOLD 2.8 MILLION METRIC TONS OF GRAIN TO THE SOVIET UNION.
IN 1972-73, THAT FIGURE SOARED TO 13.8 MILLION METRIC TONS; IN 1973-74 IT DROPPED TO 6.8 MILLION METRIC TONS AND THEN PLUMMETED TO 2.2 MILLION METRIC TONS IN 1974-75. IN THIS CROP YEAR WE HAVE ALREADY SOLD 10.2 MILLION METRIC TONS AND THE SOVIETS WANT STILL MORE.
THESE WIDE FLUCTUATIONS HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS IN PRICE AND MARKETING BOTH HERE AT HOME AND AROUND THE WORLD. THEY HAVE CAUSED SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING COMPLICATIONS.
THE UNITED STATES WANTS A SOLID AGREEMENT FROM THE SOVIET UNION ON FUTURE GRAIN PURCHASES. THE AMERICAN FARMER WOULD BENEFIT TREMENDOUSLY FROM SUCH AN AGREEMENT.
IT WOULD ENABLE HIM TO PLAN AHEAD AND PRODUCE FOR A MORE RELIABLE MARKET. IT WOULD STRENGTHEN THIS NATION'S REPUTATION AS A DEPENDABLE SUPPLIER AND INCREASE OUR LONG-TERM SALES.
At the same time, full production would assure American consumers of plentiful supplies at reasonable prices.

Also, we must be in a position to deliver the grain we sell. That, too, determines whether we are dependable suppliers.
ONCE GRAIN STARTS MOVING FROM THE WHEAT FIELDS OF OKLAHOMA TO THE RUSSIAN DOCKS, OR TO OTHER NATIONS, IT MUST CONTINUE TO MOVE OR THE TOTAL SALE IS JEOPARDIZED. THIS WOULD CAUSE UNFAVORABLE REPERCUSSIONS ON MARKETS AND ON JOBS HERE AT HOME.
THE PURPOSE AND RESULT OF MY DISCUSSIONS WITH LABOR REPRESENTATIVES WAS TO KEEP THE GRAIN MOVING THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN SOLD WHILE WE NEGOTIATED FOR A LONG-TERM CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIET UNION.
ENCOURAGING PROGRESS IS BEING MADE ON AN AGREEMENT WHICH WILL ENABLE US TO MAKE ADDITIONAL SALES THIS YEAR AND SUBSTANTIAL SALES ON A REGULAR BASIS OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.
Neither our government nor the Soviet government would set the price. The Soviets would pay the full market price throughout the length of the agreement.
I am optimistic that the United States and the Soviet Union will reach an agreement which will benefit American farmers and American consumers -- an agreement that will benefit both our countries so that the temporary halt in grain sales can be lifted.
THERE IS STILL ANOTHER URGENT CHALLENGE FACING THE UNITED STATES AND THE PEOPLE OF THIS STATE -- TO MAKE CERTAIN WE PRODUCE ENOUGH ENERGY FOR OUR GROWING Needs AND PRODUCE IT HERE AT HOME.
MANY PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES APPARENTLY DO NOT BELIEVE THERE IS AN ENERGY PROBLEM -- INCLUDING TOO MANY MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS. BUT I SAY TO YOU TODAY IN ALL SERIOUSNESS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS HEADED FOR DEEP TROUBLE. UNLESS WE ACT WHILE WE HAVE TIME, WE WILL SOON HAVE TIME ONLY TO REACT -- AND THAT WILL BE TOO LATE.
WE ARE ENGULFED IN APATHY ON THE PART OF SOME... DISTRUST ON THE PART OF OTHERS... AND INDECISION AMONG STILL OTHERS.
LET ME REPEAT: THE ENERGY THREAT IS REAL. IT WILL NOT GO AWAY. IT WILL GROW STEADILY WORSE UNTIL THE UNITED STATES MAKES SOME HARD, TOUGH CHOICES ABOUT ITS ENERGY FUTURE.
SINCE 1971, THE AMOUNT OF MONEY WE HAVE BEEN
SENDING OVERSEAS FOR FOREIGN OIL HAS SKYROCKETED BY
700 PERCENT. OUR ANNUAL BILL FOR FOREIGN OIL WAS JUST
OVER $3 BILLION FOUR YEARS AGO AND TODAY HAS BALLOONED
TO $25 BILLION.
THAT $25 BILLION COULD HAVE PROVIDED MORE THAN ONE MILLION JOBS FOR UNEMPLOYED AMERICANS HERE AT HOME. AS AMERICAN DOLLARS POUR OUT OF OUR COUNTRY, SO DOES OUR ECONOMIC STABILITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY.
EIGHT MONTHS AGO, I PROPOSED TO THE CONGRESS THIS NATION'S FIRST COMPREHENSIVE NATIONAL ENERGY PROGRAM.

WELL, LET ME JUST TELL YOU HOW MANY TIMES SINCE THEN I HAVE TRIED TO WORK OUT AN ENERGY SOLUTION WITH THE CONGRESS.
BETWEEN JANUARY FIRST OF THIS YEAR -- AND AS OF A WEEK AGO --

I HELD 48 ENERGY OR ENERGY-RELATED MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS OF

THE CONGRESS. I HAVE MET AT LEAST ONCE WITH 51 OF THE 100

SENATORS -- AND AT LEAST ONCE WITH 304 OF THE 435 MEMBERS

OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.
I LISTENED TO PLEAS AND PROMISES FROM MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS, ASKING FOR MORE TIME TO ACT. I OFFERED COMPROMISE AND SOUGHT COOPERATION ALL WITHOUT AVAIL.

BUT WE ARE NO CLOSER NOW TO A POSITIVE ENERGY-PRODUCING PROGRAM FROM THE CONGRESS THAN WE WERE EIGHT MONTHS AGO.
I HAVE MET THE CONGRESS MORE THAN HALFWAY.

IT IS TIME FOR THE CONGRESS TO COOPERATE AND ACT TO

PROTECT THE FUTURE SECURITY AND PROSPERITY OF THE UNITED

STATES.
THE PROBLEM IS OBVIOUS: IF WE DON'T GET A PROGRAM ON THE BOOKS THIS YEAR, YOU CAN BET IT WON'T HAPPEN IN A NATIONAL ELECTION YEAR. ALL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE WILL BE SET BACK EVEN FURTHER.
DON'T BELIEVE THOSE WHO TELL YOU THEY ARE FIGHTING TO HOLD DOWN YOUR ENERGY COSTS. WE HAVE A GROWING DOMESTIC SCARCITY OF ENERGY.
GOVERNMENT CONTROLS TO ALLOCATE THIS SCARCITY CANNOT WORK BECAUSE OUR ENERGY SHORTFALL IS CONSTANTLY INCREASING.

THOSE WHO PROCRASTINATE ARE NOT FIGHTING TO HOLD DOWN YOUR ENERGY COSTS. THEY ARE FIGHTING TO PUT OFF THE CRITICAL DECISIONS WE MUST MAKE AS A NATION.
The truth is that the American consumer can no longer enjoy cheap energy -- at least, not in the lifetime of most of us. Prices have increased and they will go on increasing because foreign oil producers -- who sell us 40 percent of our needs -- have combined to raise their prices.
THEY WILL INCREASE EVEN MORE AS WE BECOME INCREASINGLY DEPENDENT ON FOREIGN OIL. THAT DEPENDENCE CONTINUES TO GROW EVERY DAY AS OUR DOMESTIC PRODUCTION CONTINUES TO DECLINE. THAT IS WHY I INSIST ON A NEW DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE -- ENERGY INDEPENDENCE.
UNDER THE PLAN I HAVE SET FORTH, WE WILL PAY

AMERICAN DOLLARS TO AMERICAN COMPANIES TO PRODUCE AMERICAN

ENERGY FOR AMERICAN JOBS AND AMERICAN PROFIT AND

AMERICAN TAXES.
THE REAL DANGER TO OUR ECONOMY IS NOT THE

ACTIONS I PROPOSE BUT THE INACTION THAT STIFLES MORE

PRODUCTION HERE AT HOME AND INCREASES OUR DEPENDENCE

ON OIL FROM ABROAD.
THAT IS THE GREAT DANGER: THE LOSS OF ECONOMIC FREEDOM

BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA -- THE RECKLESS RISK OF

PLACING OUR NATIONAL LIVELIHOOD AND SECURITY IN THE HANDS

OF OTHERS.
THAT DOESN'T REPRESENT AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, SELF-RELIANCE
OR THE PIONEERING SPIRIT -- IT IS JUST PLAIN CHICKEN AND
I DON'T THINK AMERICANS ADMIRE IT/ WANT IT/ OR WILL STAND
FOR IT.
I AM COUNTING ON YOU -- THE "BIG, HONEST

MAJORITY," AS WILL ROGERS CALLED YOU -- AND MILLIONS OF

OTHERS LIKE YOU ACROSS AMERICA WHO WILL DECIDE OUR NATION'S

FATE ... AND WHO, IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, WILL BE THE

PRODUCERS AND PROTECTORS OF AMERICA'S GREATNESS.

THANK YOU. GOD BLESS YOU.

END OF TEXT