

**The original documents are located in Box 16, “9/22/75 - Remarks at Meeting of AFL - CIO Construction Trades” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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**THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....**

**AFL-CIO CONSTRUCTION TRADES MEETING**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1975**

LET ME THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS INVITATION

TO BE A PART OF THIS GREAT CONVENTION. IT'S ALWAYS A

PLEASURE TO SEE SO MANY OLD AND NEW FRIENDS AGAIN --

AND IN PARTICULAR, TO BE ABLE TO VISIT WITH MY GOOD

FRIEND, BOB GEORGINE TODAY. BOB IS WELL-KNOWN AS A

MAN OF MANY OUTSTANDING ACCOMPLISHMENTS -- A DEMONSTRATED

LEADER, AN EXCEPTIONAL ADMINISTRATOR, A CONCERNED

CITIZEN -- AND A CELEBRATED GIN RUMMY PLAYER.

I SAY A CELEBRATED GIN RUMMY PLAYER BUT

PERHAPS I'D BETTER EXPLAIN THAT TERM. BOB DOESN'T

CELEBRATE - HIS OPPONENTS DO.

AS A FRIEND, I WON'T SAY HOW GOOD A GIN RUMMY

PLAYER BOB GEORGINE IS - BUT TWO MORE GAMES AND YOU

COULD HAVE A BRAND NEW NAME: THE A.F.L.-C.I.O. - I.O.U!

LAST JANUARY, I WENT TO A TESTIMONIAL DINNER

IN WASHINGTON HONORING BOB GEORGINE. I ASKED BOB

AND THE SKILLED CONSTRUCTION TRADES TO HELP AMERICA

ACHIEVE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE -- AND HE HAS HELPED.

I HAVE JUST SEEN A COPY OF THE SEPTEMBER ISSUE OF THE

AFL-CIO "AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST" IN WHICH BOB GEORGINE

AGAIN SPEAKS OUT ON THE ENERGY CRISIS. BOB, \ NOTHING

COULD MAKE ME HAPPIER THAN YOUR REPORT THAT UNIONS

ARE STILL PRESSING SO VIGOROUSLY FOR ENERGY GROWTH.

I KNOW THAT CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ARE AMONG  
THOSE SUFFERING THE HEAVIEST IMPACT OF RECESSION AND THE  
ENERGY CRISIS. WHEN YOU SUFFER, AMERICA SUFFERS.

THE MISSION OF THE SKILLED CONSTRUCTION TRADES  
REPRESENTED HERE IS TO BUILD AMERICA. THAT IS ALSO  
MY GOAL AS PRESIDENT. TWO CENTURIES OF CONSTRUCTION  
ENABLED AMERICA TO ACHIEVE ITS SPECIAL STATUS AMONG THE  
NATIONS.

I SALUTE YOU AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MILLIONS OF MEN

AND WOMEN WHO HAVE HAD A PART IN THIS GREAT BUILDING

PROCESS. AS AMERICA COMPLETES TWO HUNDRED YEARS OF

HISTORY, WE FACE SOME VERY SERIOUS PROBLEMS. BUT

WE -- \ YOU AND I TOGETHER -- \ WILL SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS.

IF ANY NATION OR GROUP OF NATIONS IN THE WORLD -- \ INCLUDING

THOSE FAVORED BY NATURE WITH GREAT OIL RESOURCES -- \ THINK

AMERICA IS FINISHED, \ THAT WE NO LONGER CONTROL OUR DESTINY

AND OUR FINANCES, \ THEN THEY HAVE ANOTHER THINK COMING.

THE FOUR MILLION SKILLED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

YOU REPRESENT, AND MULTITUDES OF OTHER AMERICANS WILL

SHOW THE WORLD THAT UNCLE SAM ISN'T ABOUT TO SAY "UNCLE."

YOU AND I KNOW WE CAN PRODUCE OUR OWN

ENERGY.

YOU AND I KNOW WE CAN PROTECT OURSELVES

AGAINST ARBITRARY PRICE INCREASES BY FOREIGN NATIONS.

YOU AND I KNOW WE CAN PROVIDE MORE JOBs.



*and*

YOU AND I KNOW WE CAN BRING AN END TO THE

INTOLERABLE SITUATION IN WHICH AMERICA EXPORTS MORE

THAN \$25 BILLION A YEAR TO PAY FOR IMPORTED OIL, WHILE

PLENTY OF ENERGY IS POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE AT HOME.

THE MONEY WE WILL PAY OUT THIS YEAR FOR FOREIGN OIL

WOULD PAY THE WAGES FOR ONE MILLION MORE AMERICAN

WORKERS.

WHEN I TALK ABOUT ENERGY I AM TALKING ABOUT

JOBS -- AMERICAN JOBS.

LAST YEAR, ABOUT THREE-FOURTHS OF ALL PLANNED  
NUCLEAR PLANTS, AND OVER ONE-FOURTH OF ALL COAL PLANTS  
SCHEDULED TO BE BUILT IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS WERE POSTPONED  
OR CANCELLED. DOMESTIC OIL PRODUCTION RIGHT HERE  
IN THE GOOD OLD U. S. A. HAS FALLEN BY 11 PERCENT SINCE  
EARLY 1973. NATURAL GAS PRODUCTION HAS DECLINED SO  
SERIOUSLY THAT THOUSANDS OF JOBS ARE THREATENED THIS  
VERY WINTER.

LAST YEAR THE AVERAGE AMERICAN HOME PAID  
ABOUT \$360 FOR FOREIGN OIL COMPARED WITH ONLY \$45 IN  
1970. OIL PRODUCING NATIONS KNOW THAT WE ARE MORE  
DEPENDENT AND MORE VULNERABLE THAN EVER.

THERE IS NOW A POSSIBILITY THAT THE OPEC  
NATIONS' FOREIGN OIL CARTEL WILL ONCE AGAIN RAISE PRICES.  
WE DON'T HAVE TO TAKE THIS LYING DOWN - AND WE WON'T!

FOR STARTERS, LET'S SPEND HERE AT HOME FOR  
AMERICAN JOBS SOME OF THE BILLIONS WE'VE BEEN SPENDING  
ABROAD FOR FOREIGN OIL AND FOREIGN PAYROLLS.

WE CAN CREATE CONSTRUCTION JOBS FOR WORKERS, CAPITAL  
FOR INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION, AND NEW ENERGY FOR ALL  
AMERICANS. THAT'S WHAT INDEPENDENCE IS ALL ABOUT.

IN RESPONSE TO THOSE NATIONS WHICH WOULD  
CONTROL OUR ENERGY-SUPPLY AND PRICES AND HENCE OUR  
FUTURE, I SAY TO INDUSTRY, TO CONSTRUCTION WORKERS,  
AND TO ALL AMERICANS: "LET'S GO INTO BUSINESS FOR  
OURSELVES." LET'S PRODUCE AMERICAN ENERGY IN AMERICA  
WITH AMERICAN WORKERS.

LAST JANUARY, I ASKED THE CONGRESS TO ACT,  
THE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM I THEN OUTLINED WAS BASED  
UPON MY DEEP BELIEF IN AMERICA. BY 1985 I ENVISIONED:

-- 200 MAJOR NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

-- 250 MAJOR NEW COAL MINES.

-- 150 MAJOR COAL-FIRED POWER PLANTS.

-- 30 MAJOR NEW OIL REFINERIES.

(more)

-- 20 MAJOR NEW SYNTHETIC FUEL PLANTS.

-- THE DRILLING OF MANY THOUSANDS OF NEW

OIL WELLS.

-- THE INSULATION OF 18 MILLION HOMES.

-- AND THE MANUFACTURE AND SALE OF MILLIONS

OF NEW AUTOMOBILES, TRUCKS, AND BUSES THAT USE MUCH

LESS FUEL.

I HAPPEN<sup>To</sup> BELIEVE WE CAN DO IT. IN ANOTHER

CRISIS -- THE ONE IN 1942 -- PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D.

ROOSEVELT SAID THIS COUNTRY WOULD BUILD 50,000 WAR PLANES

A YEAR. OUR ENEMIES SCOFFED. BUT BY 1943, OUR

PRODUCTION REACHED 125,000 AIRCRAFT ANNUALLY. WE DID

IT THEN. WE CAN DO IT AGAIN!

FRANKLY, WE CANNOT WAIT ANY LONGER FOR THE  
CONGRESS TO ACT ON MY COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY PROGRAM.

LONG-RANGE SECURITY, JOBS, AND ENERGY ARE  
INSEPARABLE. THE TIME HAS COME FOR ACTION ON ENERGY  
INDEPENDENCE.

ACCORDINGLY, I WILL SHORTLY ASK THE CONGRESS  
TO ERASE ALL DOUBT ABOUT THE CAPACITY OF AMERICA TO  
RESPOND. I WILL PROPOSE AN ENTIRELY NEW \$100 BILLION  
GOVERNMENT CORPORATION TO WORK, WITH PRIVATE ENTERPRISE  
AND LABOR, TO GAIN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE FOR THE UNITED  
STATES IN 10 YEARS OR LESS.



THIS ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY WILL HAVE  
THE POWER TO TAKE ANY APPROPRIATE FINANCIAL ACTION --  
TO BORROW AND TO LEND -- IN ORDER TO GET ENERGY ACTION.  
IT WILL SERVE AS A CATALYST AND STIMULANT, WORKING  
THROUGH -- NOT IN PLACE OF -- AMERICAN INDUSTRY.  
-- IT CAN STIMULATE ECONOMIC GROWTH.  
-- IT CAN CREATE NEW JOBS.  
-- IT CAN GIVE US CONTROL OVER OUR OWN DESTINY.

(more)

-- IT CAN END RUNAWAY ENERGY PRICES IMPOSED  
BY FOREIGN NATIONS.

-- IT CAN GIVE FOREIGN NATIONS A NEW LOOK AT  
WHAT AMERICANS CAN DO WITH OUR GREAT  
RESOURCES WHEN WE STOP TALKING AND START  
ACTING.

THAT IS MY ANSWER TO THOSE WHO TELL US

AMERICANS CAN NO LONGER DO WHAT THEY SET OUT TO DO.

I SPEAK TODAY TO THE GREAT MAJORITY WHO  
BELIEVE IN AMERICAN CAPACITIES RATHER THAN IN AMERICAN  
INCAPACITY.

I SPEAK TO ALL AMERICANS WHO KNOW THAT THIS  
IS STILL THE SAME NATION THAT MADE UP ITS MIND DURING  
WORLD WAR TWO TO DEVELOP SNYTHETIC RUBBER -- AND DID SO;  
WHO KNOW THIS IS STILL THE SAME NATION THAT DECIDED TO  
HARNESS THE ATOM BY THE MANHATTAN PROJECT AND ACCOMPLISHED  
THAT OBJECTIVE; WHO KNOW THAT THIS IS STILL THE SAME NATION  
THAT SAID IT WOULD PUT THE FIRST MAN ON THE MOON -- AND  
DID SO. PEOPLE SAID ALL THESE PROJECTS WERE IMPOSSIBLE.  
BUT AMERICANS HAVE DONE THE "IMPOSSIBLE."

THE PROPOSED ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY

WOULD HAVE A TEN YEAR LIFE AND BE SELF-LIQUIDATING.

IT IS DESIGNED TO ACHIEVE WHAT MANY REGARD AS IMPOSSIBLE --

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE BY 1985. ■ IT IS A PROGRAM TO

SECURE OUR JOBS, OUR STANDARD OF LIVING, AND THE

NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES.

THIS NEW GOVERNMENT CORPORATION WOULD BE  
AN INDEPENDENT FEDERAL AUTHORITY REPORTING DIRECTLY TO  
THE PRESIDENT. THIS CONCEPT IS BIGGER THAN PARTISANSHIP.  
I AM DETERMINED TO APPOINT AS ITS DIRECTORS AMERICANS  
OF STATURE WITHOUT REGARD TO THEIR POLITICS.

THE NEW ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY WILL

SEEK:

-- NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT OR DIRECTLY

PRODUCE OR TRANSPORT AMERICAN ENERGY;

-- TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT AMERICAN NUCLEAR

DEVELOPMENT;

-- AND ELECTRICAL POWER FROM AMERICAN COAL,

NUCLEAR AND GEO THERMAL SOURCES.

THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY WILL

UNDERTAKE ONLY THOSE PROJECTS WHICH PRIVATE BUSINESS

CANNOT UNDERTAKE ALONE.

IT WILL NOT REPLACE THE PRIVATE

ENTERPRISE SYSTEM

IT WILL SUPPLEMENT IT.

MY VISION IS OF DRAMATIC ACTION TO PRODUCE

OIL AND GAS FROM COAL, SAFE AND CLEAN NUCLEAR AND

COAL-GENERATED ELECTRIC POWER, HARNESS THE ENERGY OF

THE SUN AND THE NATURAL HEAT WITHIN THE EARTH, AND BUILD

NUMEROUS OTHER ENERGY FACILITIES.

THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY WOULD ACT  
TO FINANCE THOSE PROJECTS VITALLY NEEDED FOR AMERICA'S  
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE THAT WILL NOT BE FINANCED EVEN BY  
AMERICA'S GREAT PRIVATE CAPITAL RESOURCES.

WE WILL NEED OVER \$600 BILLION OF ENERGY  
INVESTMENTS OVER THE NEXT DECADE TO FINANCE AMERICAN  
ENERGY INDEPENDENCE. AS ALWAYS, MOST OF THAT  
INVESTMENT WILL COME FROM PRIVATE SOURCES.



BUT I AM CONVINCED THAT WE CANNOT WAIT FOR OUR EMERGING  
TECHNOLOGIES TO BECOME CONVENTIONAL TECHNOLOGIES.

WE MUST ACT NOW TO SPEED THEIR DEVELOPMENT. WE MUST

ALSO ENSURE THAT CONVENTIONAL PROJECTS WITH VERY LARGE

CAPITAL NEEDS WILL HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO INVESTMENT

RESOURCES.

THE CENTRAL DEFECT OF AMERICA'S PRESENT ENERGY

SYSTEM IS THAT IT RELIES MOST ON OUR LEAST PLENTIFUL

DOMESTIC ENERGY SOURCES - OIL AND NATURAL GAS --

AND RELIES LEAST ON OUR MOST ABUNDANT ENERGY RESOURCES --

COAL AND NUCLEAR POWER.

MY VISION IS OF CRASH DEVELOPMENT - IN

HARMONY WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION - OF THESE

ABUNDANT RESOURCES. AMERICA'S OIL SHALE RESOURCES

ARE MORE VAST THAN ALL THE OIL RESERVES OF THE MIDDLE EAST.

AMERICA'S COAL RESOURCES ARE TEN TIMES

GREATER THAN OUR OIL SHALE RESOURCES.      AND AMERICA'S

ABILITY TO HARNESS THE ATOM IS LEGENDARY -- WITH THE

KNOWN POTENTIAL OF PRODUCING UNLIMITED AMOUNTS OF CLEAN,

SAFE ENERGY.

WITHOUT THIS ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY,  
THESE VAST TREASURES OF AMERICA MIGHT NEVER BE DEVELOPED --  
OR DEVELOPED TOO LATE TO KEEP AMERICA'S LEADERSHIP IN THE  
WORLD. WITH AN ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY, WE WILL  
HAVE THE FINANCIAL MEANS TO TAP ALL THIS ENERGY DURING  
THE NEXT CRUCIAL DECADE.

THE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AUTHORITY WILL BE AN  
IMPORTANT NEW ELEMENT, BUT ONLY ONE ELEMENT IN OUR TOTAL  
NATIONAL ENERGY INDEPENDENCE EFFORT.

WE NEED DRAMATIC ACTION TO PRODUCE SYNTHETIC  
FUELS - AT LEAST A MILLION BARRELS A DAY - FLOATING  
NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS MOUNTED ON BARGES, NEW PIPELINES  
FOR OIL AND GAS, AND VAST ENERGY PARKS THROUGHOUT  
AMERICA.

MY VISION IS OF AMERICA GOING BACK TO WORK

AS A CHAIN REACTION OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY SPREADS

THROUGHOUT ALL FIFTY STATES. TO BUILD ENERGY IS TO

CREATE ENERGY - AND JOBS - IN ALL SECTORS OF NATIONAL

LIFE.

IT HAS BEEN ESTIMATED THAT FOR EACH JOB CREATED

DIRECTLY IN INDUSTRY, THE RIPPLE EFFECT THROUGHOUT THE

ECONOMY CREATES AT LEAST ANOTHER UNRELATED JOB.

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF JOBS GENERATED WILL MORE THAN DOUBLE

THE ENERGY-RELATED JOBS.

LET ME CITE AN EXAMPLE:

FOUR HUNDRED THOUSAND MAN YEARS OF LABOR

ARE REQUIRED TO CONSTRUCT PLANTS AND MANUFACTURE EQUIPMENT

FOR FIFTY NUCLEAR PLANTS. THIS REPRESENTS 650,000 MAN

YEARS OF LABOR IN THE TIME FRAME REQUIRED.

I WANT TO SEE MILLIONS OF NEW JOBS IN THE

NEXT TEN YEARS WITH HEALTHY, WIDENING RIPPLES OF GROWTH

THROUGHOUT THE ECONOMY.

I AM DIRECTING MY ENERGY AND ECONOMIC ADVISERS  
TO TAKE ALL STEPS REQUIRED, IN THE SHORTEST TIME POSSIBLE,  
TO MAKE THIS VISION A REALITY. AND I AM ALSO COUNTING  
ON YOU, THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS WHO WILL DO THE JOB.

YOU HAVE THE SKILLS. YOU HAVE THE COURAGE.

YOU HAVE THE DEDICATION WHICH HAS ENABLED AMERICA TO  
DEFEND ITSELF IN TIMES OF WAR AND TO DEVELOP IN TIMES OF  
PEACE.



I AM CONFIDENT OF YOUR ABILITY AND THAT OF ALL  
AMERICANS, \ LABOR AND MANAGEMENT; \ DEMOCRATS AND  
REPUBLICANS, \ AND INDEPENDENTS; \ EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED; \  
RICH, \ POOR, \ AND STRUGGLING; \ OLD AND YOUNG; \ TO UNITE  
BEHIND THIS BOLD NEW PROGRAM.

AS AMERICA'S POPULATION GROWS, AND OUR  
ECONOMY EXPANDS, WE MUST CREATE SOME ELEVEN MILLION  
MORE JOBS BY 1980. THIS IS A BIG ORDER. IT CANNOT  
BE FILLED BY GOVERNMENT ALONE OR BY INDUSTRY ALONE,  
OR BY UNIONS, OR BY POLITICIANS ACTING ON THEIR OWN,  
BUT THE PROBLEM CAN AND WILL BE SOLVED IF WE ALL WORK  
TOGETHER, JUST AS YOU IN THIS HALL ARE TODAY UNITED TO  
BUILDING AMERICA.

THE DOOR TO THE WHITE HOUSE WILL REMAIN OPEN,

AS IT HAS SINCE I HAVE BEEN PRESIDENT, TO THOSE WHO

CHAMPION THE CAUSE OF AMERICA'S WORKING PEOPLE.

NOR WILL I EVER CLOSE MY HEART TO THE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

WHO ARE NOW UNABLE TO FIND WORK.

I WILL NOT REST AS LONG AS ANY AMERICAN WHO

WANTS TO WORK CANNOT FIND EMPLOYMENT. TOO MANY

PEOPLE REMAIN WITHOUT JOBS. I HAVE HEARD REFERENCES

TO SO-CALLED "ACCEPTABLE" RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

I DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE ACCEPTABILITY OF ANY LEVEL OF

UNEMPLOYMENT AS LONG AS PEOPLE CAN'T FIND JOBS.

I AM DETERMINED TO HELP CREATE NEW JOBS, ON A SOUND

ECONOMIC BASIS - GOOD JOBS, REAL JOBS AND NOT

MAKE-WORK \$2 AN HOUR JOBS.

WHEN STATISTICS ARE ISSUED ON THE LOSS OF  
JOBS, THERE ARE SOME LOSSES WHICH ARE NOT PUBLISHED.

I REFER TO THE LOSS OF HOPE AMONG THE YOUNG PEOPLE SEEKING

THEIR FIRST REAL JOB, THE LOSS OF SELF ESTEEM AMONG HEADS

OF HOUSEHOLDS WHO ARE LAID OFF, THE LOSS OF SECURITY

AND STANDARDS OF LIVING THAT PEOPLE WORKED FOR YEARS

TO ACHIEVE, AND, MOST IMPORTANT, THE LOSS OF FAITH

IN AMERICA'S FUTURE.

THESE ARE TRAGIC LOSSES.      THEY ARE LOSSES

THAT THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CANNOT AND WILL NOT  
PERMIT.

THE NEED FOR SKILLED CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

TO BUILD NEW ENERGY INSTALLATIONS AND FOR NEW OPERATORS

TO RUN THEM WILL BE ENORMOUS.      BY PLANNING AND WORKING

NOW, WE CAN ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT IS ORDERLY AND THAT

PROGRESS IS CONTINUOUS.

AS WE ENTER OUR THIRD CENTURY, AMERICANS  
CAN LOOK BACK WITH GREAT PRIDE UPON OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

IN PROVIDING SAFE, HEALTHFUL, STABLE AND PRODUCTIVE

JOBS. BUT WE STILL HAVE MUCH TO DO. LET'S GO TO

WORK TOGETHER.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT