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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

TALKING POINTS FOR WESTERN STATES REPUBLICAN CHAIRMEN'S MEETING, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1976, THE WHITE HOUSE

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome the Western States Republican Chairmen to the White House this evening.

Arthur Chapman once wrote that the West begins "out where the handclasp's a little stronger, out where the smile dwells a little a longer." It is obvious that you have brought that extra measure of friendliness and fellowship back East with you.

I may only be a mid-westerner myself, but I have always had great admiration and affection for the American West. That beautiful region of our country could have no better representatives than you here tonight.

As the Western leaders of the Republican Party, you have played a major, highly effective role in expanding our party's influence, in the continuing battle to increase its numbers and helping us win some very important elections at the local, statewide and national levels.

We will be counting once again on your good efforts in the coming campaign -- a campaign in which the American people will be faced with a very fundamental choice. They will be asked to choose between more -- and more expensive -- government, and less -- and more responsive -- government.

They will be asked to decide whether they want the Federal Government in Washington to make their decisions and their plans for them, or whether they want to regain a measure of the independence their ancestors fought so desperately to win for us 200 years ago.

I believe the American people, whether they live in Texas or Tennessee, New Mexico or New Hampshire, Colorado or Connecticut, will choose less government and more independence.

And fortunately for us, we stand today -- as our party has always stood -- firmly on the side of less government control over the lives of people and more individual freedom for all Americans.

The effort to reduce the power and the cost and the intrusions of government has already begun in this Administration. We have undertaken this effort with a commitment to sweeping reform -- not in any unrealistic way, not in a way that seeks to dismantle government services that truly help the people. Instead, we have charted a careful, orderly and positive course designed to enable the government to do better what it must do for people -- and to get the government off the backs of the American people, away from their pocketbooks -- and out of their hair!

That is our commitment, that is our promise, that is our record which we will present to the people in your states and in every State of the Union.

I am confident that, with your help, we can make 1976 a great year for the Republican Party by making it a great year for the American people -- a year in which the people's burdens are made lighter while their ambition is made greater, their lives made richer, their future made brighter and more secure.

Let's work together. Let's win a great victory in 1976 -- for the people. Thank you for coming.