

The original documents are located in Box 22, “1/30/76 - Remarks at a Meeting of Radio and TV News Directors (Drafts only, no reading copy)” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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January 30, 1976

Second Draft

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

RADIO - TV NEWS DIRECTORS, JANUARY 30, 1976

It is a pleasure to welcome to the White House this very distinguished assembly of radio and television news directors.

If any of you watched the Mary Tyler Moore show a few weeks ago, you know that Betty and I have a very good friend within your ranks: Lou Grant of WJM-TV in Minneapolis.

I know you've had a busy day, reviewing the State of the Union message, our budget proposals for fiscal 1977, and the economic report issued earlier this week.

Instead of going over the details involved in these various documents again, I think the best course would be to try to put into perspective the overall goals and direction of our policies and programs.

We are living at a critical point in America's history. While we celebrate our Bicentennial, we are preparing also for America's third century of independence. The world is in a state of transition.

There are still a great many tensions in the world which we are seeking to relax and reduce. Prime Minister Rabin of Israel was here earlier this week, and we engaged in some very productive discussions on the sensitive situation in the Middle East. These discussions followed by a few months a similar meeting with President Sadat of Egypt. Throughout these meetings I have reaffirmed my determination that there be no stagnation in the negotiating process.

As you know, Secretary Kissinger recently returned from the Soviet Union where we made good progress on a SALT II agreement. In an international environment where the continuation of unrestrained competition in strategic arms could seriously undermine world stability, we must try to secure a more stable nuclear relationship from which all will benefit. There is no alternative. As President, I am committed to the conclusion of a good balanced SALT agreement, which is in our interest and in the interest of all who share the goal of world peace.

Here at home, there is much that needs to be done to improve our quality of life in America.

This Administration is fully prepared to do its part in this effort.

But, as I said when I submitted the 1977 budget to the Congress, we do not hold out the false promise that the Federal government will immediately solve every problem or realize every ambition or every well-intentioned goal of the American people.

Instead, the budget reflects on every page the common sense, the new realism, the better balance between public and private initiatives and between the various levels of government that was the essence of my State of the Union Address.

In the 1977 fiscal year budget, we propose to arrest the rapid growth in Federal spending. We look to a rate of growth of 5.5 percent, less than half the average increase of the last ten years.

I am confident that we have struck a workable, honest balance.

We have set a course that should put the budget in balance within three years.

But even with this restraint in Federal spending, we have outlined

a program for progress in several vitally important areas:

GENERAL REVENUE SHARING -- One of the most important is our effort to restore a greater measure of authority and responsibility to the State and local levels of government.

Over the past forty years or so, the Federal system of shared responsibility and dual sovereignty has been dangerously eroded.

In this Bicentennial year, we should remember that "government by Washington decree" was not what the Founding Fathers had in mind.

Our general revenue sharing program, which we propose to extend through 1982, has already helped redress that imbalance. In fiscal year 1977 we are investing \$6.5 billion in this effort. I hope to see continued progress in this direction in the future.

DEFENSE -- In an effort to reverse another dangerous trend of the last several years, I have proposed a ten percent increase in defense spending, bringing our total defense budget to just over \$100 billion.

ENERGY -- The budget gives high priority to our energy research and development programs. We propose a 30 percent increase in these programs to accelerate our efforts to achieve energy independence for America.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT -- We are making a major investment in the future with the 1977 budget, proposing record funds for research and development in the areas of defense, energy, health and other vital programs.

ENVIRONMENT -- The budget emphasizes assistance to State and local governments for their pollution control and abatement programs. We have proposed outlays of \$3.8 billion, an increase of 60 percent over the 1976 figures and 95 percent over the 1975 level.

GRANT CONSOLIDATIONS -- We have proposed four major consolidations, involving 59 categorical grant programs.

In the HEALTH field, we are proposing consolidation of Medicaid and fifteen other programs, with our major emphasis on providing greater assistance to Americans with low income.

In EDUCATION, we propose consolidation of 27 programs, again in an effort to give better assistance to disadvantaged and handicapped children. We are also calling for a major reform in the impact aid program, which too often benefits well-to-do communities which do not need this kind of assistance.

In the area of CHILD NUTRITION, we hope to consolidate 15 programs, concentrating our resources on helping the most needy children.

We are also proposing the consolidation of some social service programs, and the elimination of requirements that the states provide matching funds for these programs.

MEDICARE -- We are proposing changes in the Medicare program which would increase the patient's share of Medicare costs, but would also set a maximum amount the patient would be required to pay for medical treatment, regardless of the total expense.

The proposal is designed to reduce the economic threat and fear of catastrophic illness. It would relieve a very great mental, emotional

and financial strain on those elderly Americans who are ill and who already have enough to worry about.

The projected impact of all these Federal programs on the national economy is outlined in the Economic Report prepared by Council of Economic Advisers.

That report predicts further improvements in our overall economic picture over the next 12 months, with the rate of inflation and the rate of unemployment both going down while other economic indicators go up.

It is a solid, honest forecast. It is not a product of wishful thinking. There will still be economic challenges to cope with at the end of 1976 and in the years that follow. But few would doubt that the American economy has turned around and is moving in the right direction.

We have established policies to give us real, solid, long-term economic growth without / We have no intention of accelerating the inflation. engines of our economy in an election year, only to see the economy

overheat in another year. We will pursue a steady, prudent course that will benefit this nation and its citizens, not only in the upcoming year, but through the end of this decade and beyond.

These are exciting and challenging times. Despite the wave of nostalgia we have experienced recently, I do not believe any of us would exchange his place in history with anyone in the past.

We have our problems, but we have always had problems. America today is richer, stronger, healthier, and better educated than it has ever been before. Thanks to you, it is also better informed than it has ever been before about what is going on in America and throughout the world.

I believe that we have more cause for hope than we have ever had before. Over the last several years we have been through a lot together -- wars, assassinations, social unrest, political scandals, a troubled economy. But through it all, our basic strengths as a people

and as a Nation have sustained us. I am confident they will continue
to sustain us as we enter our third century of American independence.

And that is good news, indeed.

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(Butler)

January 28, 1976
FIRST DRAFT

RADIO - TV NEWS DIRECTORS, JANUARY 30, 1976

It is a pleasure to welcome to the White House this very distinguished assembly of radio and television news directors.

If any of you watched the Mary Tyler Moore show a few weeks ago, you know that Betty and I have a very good friend within your ranks: Lou Grant of WJM-TV in Minneapolis.

But in the real world of radio and television news, where the bad news often overshadows the good, it's not always a laugh a minute. I understand that some people tend to blame you for the bad news -- which is obviously misdirected attribution.

Then again, you still have reason to count your blessings. In ancient times, the messenger of bad news was sometimes put to death. It was sort of a terminal decline in his ratings.

OPTIONAL

I know you've had a busy day, reviewing the State of the Union message, our budget proposal for fiscal 1977, and the economic report issued earlier this week.

Instead of going over the details involved in these various documents again, I think the best course would be to try to put into perspective the overall goals and implications of our policies and programs.

We are living at a critical point in America's history. While we celebrate our Bicentennial, we are preparing also for America's third century of independence. The world is in a state of transition.

There are still a great many tensions in the world which we are seeking to relax and reduce. Prime Minister Rabin of Israel was here earlier this week, and we engaged in some very productive discussions on the sensitive situation in the Middle East. These discussions followed by a few months a similar meeting with President Sadat of Egypt. As

you know, there is a very important debate on this subject now underway in the United Nations Security Council. I hope to make a personal visit to the Middle East sometime this year to get a first-hand assessment of the situation.

Here at home, there is much that needs to be done to improve our quality of life in America.

This Administration is fully prepared to do its part in this effort. But as I said when I submitted the 1977 budget to the Congress, we do not hold out the false promise that the Federal government will immediately solve every problem or realize every ambition or every well-intentioned goal of the American people.

Instead, the budget reflects on every page the common sense, the new realism, the better balance between public and private initiatives and between the various levels of government that was the essence of my State of the Union Address.

In the 1977 fiscal year budget, we propose to arrest the rapid growth in Federal spending. We look to a rate of growth of 5.5 percent, less than half the average increase of the last ten years.

For the present, I am confident that we have struck a workable, honest balance. For the future, we have set a course that should put the budget itself in balance within three years.

But even with this restraint in Federal spending, we have outlined a program for progress in several vitally important areas:

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