The original documents are located in Box 23, “2/14/76 - Remarks at Thomas A. Edison Pageant of Light Ceremony, Ft. Myers, Florida” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THANK YOU, SKIP (ba-FOUL-US introduces you)
CONGRESSMAN LOU FREY
CONGRESSMAN BILL YOUNG COL. LOU ARTHUR
CAS PEACOCK
REV. BROWNING
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS:

THOMAS A. EDISON PAGEANT OF LIGHT

FEBRUARY 14, 1976

IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE WITH YOU ALL IN THIS "SECOND HOME" OF THOMAS EDISON. IT IS CLEAR FROM THE GREAT PAGEANT OF LIGHT CELEBRATION TODAY THAT ALL FT. MYERS IS PROUD OF EDISON'S LONG ASSOCIATION WITH THIS CITY.
EDISON WAS TRULY A REMARKABLE MAN.

BESIDES HIS INVENTIVE GENIUS, HE WAS ALSO A MAN OF

INSIGHT AND COMMON SENSE.

HIS VIEWS ON HARD WORK ARE LEGENDARY.

"THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR HARD WORK," HE ONCE SAID.

AND HE DEFINED GENIUS AS "ONE PERCENT INSPIRATION AND

NINETY-NINE PERCENT PERSPIRATION."
HIS VIEWS ON GOVERNMENT WERE EQUALLY FORTHRIGHT.

HE KNEW THE IMPORTANCE OF FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY IN GOVERNMENT, OF HOLDING TAXES DOWN, AND OF KEEPING PRIVATE ENTERPRISE STRONG.

HE ONCE SAID: "THERE IS FAR MORE DANGER IN PUBLIC THAN IN PRIVATE MONOPOLY, FOR WHEN GOVERNMENT GOES INTO BUSINESS IT CAN ALWAYS SHIFT ITS LOSSES TO THE TAXPAYERS. GOVERNMENT NEVER MAKES ENDS MEET -- AND THAT IS THE FIRST REQUISITE OF BUSINESS."
IN THOSE FEW WORDS, EDISON SUMMED UP MUCH OF WHAT HAS GONE WRONG IN THIS COUNTRY -- GOVERNMENT NEVER MAKING ENDS MEET. WE'VE HAD A BALANCED BUDGET ONLY 7 TIMES IN THE LAST 44 YEARS. NO BUSINESS COULD MATCH THAT RECORD AND HOPE TO SURVIVE, MUCH LESS PROSPER.

I THINK WE CAN TURN THAT DANGEROUS TREND AROUND.

I THINK WE MUST TURN IT AROUND. BECAUSE IF WE DON'T DRAW THE LINE NOW AND MAKE ENDS MEET SOON, WE'RE GOING TO BE IN DEEP TROUBLE.
YOU AND I KNOW THAT VERY WELL, BUT IT LOOKS
LIKE IT MAY TAKE ANOTHER THOMAS EDISON TO MAKE THE
UNITED STATES CONGRESS SEE THE LIGHT.

IT WON'T BE EASY. A BUDGET ALREADY BLOATED
BY YEARS OF EXCESSES CAN'T BE SLIMMED DOWN OVERNIGHT.

BUT IT CAN BE PUT ON A DIET.
IF THE CONGRESS CAN RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO FEED IT BETWEEN MEALS AND I'LL VETO ANY ATTEMPTS TO DO THAT, WE CAN GET IT DOWN TO SIZE. AND WE CAN MAKE ENDS MEET, REALLY MEET, IN JUST THREE YEARS. AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS, ANOTHER TAX CUT WILL BE POSSIBLE.

NONE OF YOU HERE TODAY WOULD RUN A HOUSEHOLD THE WAY GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RUN IN THE PAST. YOU HAVE TO BALANCE YOUR BUDGET AT HOME -- OR YOU'RE IN TROUBLE.
WHEN GOVERNMENT DOESN'T MAKE ENDS MEET,
YEAR AFTER YEAR AFTER YEAR -- IT BREEDS INFLATION.
AND THAT'S REAL TROUBLE. YOU KNOW IT IN YOUR POCKETBOOKS.

YOU KNOW IT EVERY TIME YOU BUY A JAR OF PEANUT BUTTER AND
COMPARE THE PRICE STAMPED ON IT WITH THE ONE ON THE JAR IN YOUR
CUPBOARDS. AND THOSE OF YOU ON FIXED INCOMES REALLY KNOW
WHEN WHAT YOU ARE GIVING UP ARE NO LONGER LUXURIES --
BUT NECESSITIES.
I BELIEVE WE CAN BRING INFLATION UNDER CONTROL.

WE'VE CUT IT IN HALF ALREADY FROM WHAT IT WAS A YEAR AGO.

AND, WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE HARD-WORKING TAXPAYERS IN THIS COUNTRY, WE'LL CUT IT EVEN MORE IN THE FUTURE.

YESTERDAY, THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR ANNOUNCED THAT WHOLESALE PRICES WERE UNCHANGED IN JANUARY.

IN FACT, WHOLESALE PRICES HAVE SHOWN NO APPRECIABLE CHANGE SINCE OCTOBER. THIS IS MORE GOOD NEWS IN OUR FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION -- AND WE'RE GOING TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON.
IN MY STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS, I SPOKE OF THE NEED FOR MORE COMMON SENSE AND A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY AND PRIVATE EFFORTS.

THESE ARE NOT JUST SLOGANS FOR AN ELECTION YEAR -- THEY ARE THE UNDERLYING THEMES AND COMMITMENTS OF MY ADMINISTRATION, AND THEY ARE NECESSARY INGREDIENTS FOR THIS NATION'S SUCCESS IN ITS THIRD CENTURY OF INDEPENDENCE.
GOVERNMENT WILL DO ITS PART, BUT IT'S TIME

WE FACED THE FACT THAT GOVERNMENT CAN'T DO EVERYTHING.

I'VE SAID IT BEFORE, AND I'LL SAY IT AGAIN:

A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT

IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE FROM US EVERYTHING WE HAVE.

THE FEDERAL BUDGET I PROPOSED FOR FISCAL 1977

REFLECTS THAT BASIC TRUTH. IT ARRESTS THE RAPID GROWTH

IN FEDERAL SPENDING, CUTTING IN HALF THE AVERAGE GROWTH RATE

OF THE LAST TEN YEARS.
IT STRIKES A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO PAY TAXES AND THOSE WHO BENEFIT FROM FEDERAL SPENDING.

IT PROPOSES TAX CUTS FOR INDIVIDUALS,

AND TAX INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESS INVESTMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

IT STRIKES A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS AND OUR DOMESTIC NEEDS,

AND MAKES CERTAIN THAT OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE WILL CONTINUE TO BE SECOND TO NONE.
AND IT STRIKES A BETTER BALANCE BETWEEN FEDERAL CONTROL AND STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY, / THROUGH SUCH PROGRAMS AS REVENUE SHARING.

REVENUE SHARING HAS ALREADY BROUGHT A TOTAL OF TWO MILLION DOLLARS TO FORT MYERS SINCE 1972. I HAVE PROPOSED THAT THIS AMOUNT BE INCREASED TO 3.4 MILLION DOLLARS FOR THE PERIOD BETWEEN 1977 AND 1982.
LEE COUNTY HAS RECEIVED 4.3 MILLION DOLLARS SINCE 1972,

AND I'M ASKING THE CONGRESS TO RAISE THAT TO TEN MILLION DOLLARS

IN THE NEW EXTENSION LEGISLATION.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

WITH THIS PROGRAM AND OTHERS, I HOPE TO RESTORE

THE TRULY FEDERAL SYSTEM WHICH OUR FOREFATHERS ENVISIONED

AND ESTABLISHED IN THE CONSTITUTION.

I DO NOT WANT TO DISMANTLE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

I WANT TO MAKE IT WORK BETTER, MORE EFFICIENTLY AND

MORE EFFECTIVELY.