

The original documents are located in Box 23, “2/19/76 - Remarks at Keene High School, Keene, NH” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS - KEENE
HIGH SCHOOL

THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 19, 1976

7:30 P. M.

THANK YOU, JIM. (Former Mayor Masiello introduces you.)

JOHN CROTEAU (PH: CROW-TOE) Keene Jaycees Executive
Board Chairman -Event Sponsor)

REVEREND McCARTHY (Invocator)

BOB CLARK (Master of Ceremonies)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Charlie Burns.

IT'S VERY GOOD TO BE BACK IN NEW HAMPSHIRE AND

HERE IN THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF KEENE AGAIN. THE PURPOSE

OF MY VISIT CAN BE SUMMED UP IN JUST A FEW WORDS.

I BELIEVE IN A STRONG AND PROSPEROUS AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE

INDUSTRY. BUT I'M HERE TO SAY THAT THIS YEAR --

THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON TO TRADE IN YOUR FORD

ON A NEW MODEL SOME OF THOSE NEW MODELS COULD BE

MIGHTY EXPENSIVE!

I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR QUESTIONS BUT FIRST,

LET ME MAKE JUST A FEW BRIEF REMARKS•

I'VE BEEN PRESIDENT FOR ALMOST 19 MONTHS NOW•

WHEN I TOOK OFFICE IN AUGUST OF 1974, AMERICA WAS FACED

WITH SOME OF THE MOST PRESSING AND SERIOUS PROBLEMS

IN ITS HISTORY•

OUR ECONOMY HAD GONE HAYWIRE, WITH PRICES GOING UP
AT AN ANNUAL RATE OF MORE THAN 12 PERCENT, AND EVERYTHING
ELSE SLOWING DOWN•

OUR NATIONAL RESOLVE TO MEET OUR INTERNATIONAL
COMMITMENTS WAS BEING CALLED INTO QUESTION BY BOTH OUR ALLIES
AND OUR ADVERSARIES• THERE WAS GREAT DANGER TO PEACE
IN MANY AREAS OF THE WORLD•

UNDERLYING THESE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WAS A CRISIS
OF CONFIDENCE IN OUR GOVERNMENT, / A CRISIS OF THE SPIRIT
AMONG OUR OWN PEOPLE.

WITH THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE,
WITH YOUR PRAYERS AND YOUR SUPPORT AND YOUR HELP,
I SET ABOUT TO DO WHAT I COULD TO MEET THOSE CHALLENGES,
TO PUT AMERICA AT PEACE WITH ITSELF AND WITH ALL THE WORLD.

THE PAST 19 MONTHS HAVE SEEN MANY OF THESE EFFORTS

SUCCEED. I BELIEVE MY POLICY OF USING COMMON SENSE

AND A REALISTIC APPROACH TO AMERICA'S PROBLEMS HAS HELPED

RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT.

AS I SAID ON MY FIRST DAY AS PRESIDENT, "TRUTH IS THE GLUE

THAT HOLDS GOVERNMENT TOGETHER," AND AS LONG AS I'M

PRESIDENT, I INTEND TO BE ^{forefront} HONEST AND FRANK AND CANDID

WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, / AND MAKE THIS SYSTEM WORK

THE WAY IT SHOULD WORK.

AMERICA'S ECONOMIC PICTURE IS CONSIDERABLY BRIGHTER

TODAY THAN IT WAS 18 MONTHS AGO. THE INFLATION RATE

THAT WAS OVER 12 PERCENT HAS BEEN CUT ALMOST IN HALF.

THAT'S STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH, BUT THAT'S PROGRESS,

AND WE'RE GOING TO KEEP MAKING THAT KIND OF PROGRESS

IN THE MONTHS AHEAD.

WE'VE RECOVERED TWO MILLION, ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND

JOBS SINCE LAST MARCH.●

THAT'S 96 PERCENT OF ALL THE JOBS

WE LOST DURING THE RECESSION.●

UNEMPLOYMENT IS STILL TOO HIGH, BUT WE'RE HEADED IN THE

RIGHT DIRECTION. THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED

JUST YESTERDAY THAT PERSONAL INCOME HAS RISEN BY 9.2 PERCENT

IN THE PAST YEAR -- WELL ABOVE THE CURRENT RATE OF INFLATION.

THAT MEANS REAL EARNINGS, REAL PURCHASING POWER IS

CLIMBING, AND THAT'S GOOD NEWS FOR EVERY AMERICAN.

WE'RE ON THE ATTACK• AND WE'LL STAY ON THE ATTACK

AND WIN THIS VERY IMPORTANT VICTORY OVER INFLATION AND

UNEMPLOYMENT / AND EVERY OTHER ECONOMIC ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE•

IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WE HAVE PURSUED A POLICY

OF PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH. THAT POLICY HAS BEEN

SUCCESSFUL, / SO SUCCESSFUL THAT TONIGHT WE CAN SAY THAT

AMERICA IS AT PEACE WITH EVERY NATION ON EARTH, / AND WE ^{will} ~~WANT~~

~~TO~~ KEEP IT THAT WAY.

WE WILL KEEP IT THAT WAY BY KEEPING OUR DEFENSES

STRONG• AS LONG AS I AM PRESIDENT, AMERICA'S DEFENSES

WILL BE STRONG AND READY / AND WITHOUT EQUAL IN THE WORLD•

OUR STRENGTH MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO NEGOTIATE

WITH OTHER GREAT POWERS OF THE WORLD FROM A POSITION THAT

COMMANDS THEIR RESPECT AND INVITES THEIR COOPERATION•

WE ARE NEGOTIATING NOW WITH THE SOVIET UNION

FOR A FURTHER REDUCTION IN THE LEVEL OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR

ARMS, A REDUCTION IN THE POTENTIAL TERROR AND DESTRUCTION

EACH NATION CAN INFLICT ON THE OTHER.

WE HAVE ENTERED THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITH OUR EYES

our grandpa and our powder dog. Yankee Traders have always known the score.
OPEN. ~~THE YANKEE TRADERS OF THE UNITED STATES HAVE~~ *and we continue in that Tradition*

~~NEVER BEEN KNOWN TO TRADE AN ORCHARD FOR AN APPLE,~~

With our military strength we can strengthen peace and
~~AND WE WILL NOT TRADE PROGRESS TOWARD PEACE~~

not
~~FOR A RETURN TO THE COLD WAR, EITHER -- NOT AS LONG~~

~~AS I AM PRESIDENT.~~

ONE WAY TO REDUCE THE DANGERS TO PEACE IN THE WORLD
IS TO HAVE A RELIABLE, RESPONSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE
INTELLIGENCE GATHERING CAPABILITY. I HAVE TAKEN STEPS
TO REORGANIZE AND REFORM AMERICA'S INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY,
TO MAKE IT AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE AND AN OBJECT OF PRIDE
FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

ONE THING IS CERTAIN: WE CANNOT IMPROVE OUR
INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY BY DESTROYING IT. I HAVE
NO INTENTION OF SEEING THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY DISMANTLED,
ITS OPERATIONS PARALYZED OR ITS EFFECTIVENESS UNDERMINED.
THE IRRESPONSIBLE RELEASE OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION BY
PEOPLE WHO SHOULD KNOW BETTER MUST CEASE.

THE ABUSES OF THE PAST MUST BE CORRECTED AND

NEVER REPEATED. I HAVE MADE CONCRETE RECOMMENDATIONS


TO ENSURE THAT THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY KEEPS OUT

OF POLITICS AND OUT OF PEOPLE'S PRIVATE LIVES.

AS PRESIDENT, I INTEND TO SEE THAT THE FEDERAL

GOVERNMENT IS UNDER THE PEOPLE'S CONTROL, AND NOT THE

OTHER WAY AROUND.



WE MUST NEVER FORGET THAT A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH
TO GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH
TO TAKE FROM US EVERYTHING WE HAVE●

BUT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE KNOW THAT IT IS NOT ENOUGH
TO TALK ABOUT THE EVILS OF BIG GOVERNMENT. THEY KNOW
THAT IT JUST ISN'T REALISTIC, / NOR IS IT WISE, / TO TURN BACK
THE CLOCK AND UNDO ALL THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE WITH
those responsible & constructive
THE HELP OF GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.
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IT'S EASY TO SAY WE OUGHT TO CUT 90 BILLION DOLLARS

OR SO FROM THE FEDERAL BUDGET. IT'S EASY TO SAY WE OUGHT

TO TOSS A LOT OF VERY WORTHWHILE PROGRAMS INTO THE LAPS

OF INDIVIDUAL STATES / AND LET THEM ADMINISTER THOSE PROGRAMS

local *assume the extra burden*
IF THEIR TAXPAYERS WILL ~~PERMIT~~ IT.

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IT'S EASY TO SAY THAT PEOPLE WHO DON'T LIKE THE WAY

THE PROGRAMS ARE ADMINISTERED IN ONE STATE / CAN JUST VOTE
WITH THEIR FEET AND MOVE TO ANOTHER STATE•

I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT AMERICANS -- DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN --

VOTE WITH THEIR HEADS / NOT WITH THEIR FEET•

IT'S EASY TO SAY THAT THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND,

UPON WHICH SOME 32 MILLION OLDER AND DISABLED AMERICANS

DEPEND, SHOULD BE INVESTED IN THE STOCK MARKET, /

MAKING THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT A MAJOR STOCKHOLDER

IN MOST AMERICAN BUSINESSES. BUT THAT IS THE BEST

BLUEPRINT FOR BACKDOOR SOCIALISM I EVER HEARD.

I WANT TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM,

NOT CRIPPLE IT.

I WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT PROGRAM IS

STRONG, SOUND AND CERTAIN, / NOT ONLY FOR THE PRESENT

GENERATION OF BENEFICIARIES, / BUT FOR EVERY GENERATION

OF WORKING MEN AND WOMEN, / AND THAT'S WHAT I INTEND TO DO.

I WANT TO IMPROVE THE MEDICARE SYSTEM.

I WANT BETTER AND MORE COMPREHENSIVE MEDICAL COVERAGE

FOR OUR OLDER CITIZENS. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON

WHY OLDER AMERICANS -- OR THEIR LOVED ONES --

SHOULD HAVE TO GO BROKE JUST TO GET WELL OR STAY WELL

IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

AND THE LIST COULD GO ON AND ON.

WE HAVE TO BE REALISTIC ABOUT WHAT THE GOVERNMENT CAN DO

AND WHAT IT CAN'T DO. BUT WE MUST ALSO RECOGNIZE

THAT THERE ARE CERTAIN THINGS THE GOVERNMENT MUST DO.

AND DO BETTER, / IF WE ARE TO CONTINUE THE PROGRESS WE HAVE

MADE IN THE PAST.

WE HAVE A GREAT COUNTRY• I'M PROUD TO BE

AN AMERICAN, AND I'M PROUD OF AMERICA• WE HAVE OUR

PROBLEMS, AND WE AREN'T AFRAID TO ADMIT THEM•

BUT I THINK IT'S HIGH TIME PEOPLE STOPPED RUNNING AMERICA

DOWN•

I THINK IT'S TIME WE REMEMBERED THAT WE ARE THE
MOST RICHLY BLESSED NATION IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD.●
WE HAVE SPECIAL GIFTS AND SPECIAL RESOURCES AND SPECIAL
RESPONSIBILITIES GREATER THAN ANY OTHER NATION ON EARTH.●

FROM THE VANTAGE POINT OF THE PRESIDENCY, I CAN SEE
THE GREATNESS OF AMERICA AS I NEVER REALLY SAW IT BEFORE.
I CAN SEE ITS MANY PROBLEMS, ITS FRUSTRATIONS, ITS
STRENGTHS, ITS WEAKNESSES, ITS AMBITIONS. I CAN SEE
ITS PEOPLE -- WORKING, PLAYING, HOPING, PLANNING,
PRAYING, LIVING THEIR LIVES THE BEST THEY CAN. AND THEY
ARE GOOD LIVES, WHICH MOST OF MANKIND ENVY.

OBVIOUSLY, / ALL OF OUR PROBLEMS HAVE NOT BEEN SOLVED,

AND ALL OF OUR CHALLENGES HAVE NOT BEEN MET•

AS LINCOLN SAID, THE QUESTION IS NOT "CAN ANY OF US

IMAGINE BETTER?" / BUT "CAN WE ALL DO BETTER?"

OF COURSE, WE CAN, AND THAT IS WHY I'M ASKING
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT NEXT TUESDAY, NEXT NOVEMBER,
AND OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS•

NOW, I'D BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS
YOU MAY HAVE•

END OF TEXT