

**The original documents are located in Box 26, “3/20/76 - Remarks at Airport Rally, Avery County, N.C.” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.**

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . . .

REMARKS AT AIRPORT RALLY

AVERY COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

MARCH 20, 1976

FIRST LET ME SAY THAT IT'S A PLEASURE

TO BE BACK IN NORTH CAROLINA AGAIN, AND IT'S A PARTICULAR  
PLEASURE TO BE HERE IN THE TRI-COUNTY AREA WITH SO MANY FRIENDS.

THE FORD FAMILY HAS HAD A TWO GENERATION

LOVE AFFAIR WITH NORTH CAROLINA.

A LONG TIME AGO I WENT TO THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH CAROLINA LAW SCHOOL. AND IN THE EARLY DAYS OF  
WORLD WAR II, I WAS STATIONED AT THE PRE-FLIGHT SCHOOL AT  
CHAPEL HILL. MORE RECENTLY, MY OLDEST SON MIKE, AND  
HIS WIFE GAYLE, GRADUATED FROM WAKE FOREST.



SO IF YOU DON'T HAVE A NATIVE SON IN THE  
WHITE HOUSE, YOU HAVE THE NEXT BEST THING, A MAN WHO LOVES  
THIS STATE, ITS PEOPLE AND ITS BEAUTY.

I DON'T HAVE TO DREAM UP NICE THINGS

TO SAY ABOUT NORTH CAROLINA -- I'VE LIVED THEM.

AND CAMPAIGNING HERE IS LIKE CAMPAIGNING IN MY OWN

BACKYARD.

AND I INTEND TO DO A GOOD DEAL MORE OF IT  
IN THE FUTURE, TO DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP OTHER REPUBLICAN  
CANDIDATES CAMPAIGNING FOR THE STATE LEGISLATURE,  
THE CONGRESS AND THE STATE HOUSE.

WE NEED MORE MEN OF THE CALIBRE AND QUALITY OF GOVERNOR

JIM HOLSHOUSER TO SERVE THIS STATE AND OUR NATION.

NOW LET ME GIVE YOU A LITTLE STRAIGHT TALK

ABOUT AMERICA'S ECONOMIC PICTURE, BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I KNOW

YOU'RE INTERESTED IN.

SINCE I TOOK OFFICE SOME 19 MONTHS AGO,  
I HAVE NOT PROMISED MORE THAN WE COULD DELIVER, AND I HAVE  
DELIVERED EVERYTHING WE PROMISED -- AND THAT IS WHAT YOU  
CAN EXPECT FROM ME IN THE FUTURE.

FIRST I WANT YOU TO KNOW I AM FOR  
BUDGETARY SANITY -- A BALANCED BUDGET.

I HAVE BEEN WORKING TOWARD THIS GOAL

EVER SINCE I TOOK OFFICE, AND WITH YOUR HELP, WE WILL SEE

THIS ACCOMPLISHED IN 1979. AND WHEN WE DO BALANCE

THE BUDGET, AN ADDITIONAL MAJOR TAX CUT WILL BE POSSIBLE.

WE HAVE TO GET AMERICA BACK ON THE RIGHT

FISCAL TRACK. WE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD THE BIG SPENDERS

AND BUDGET BUSTERS. TO DO THIS I VETOED 46 BILLS IN

THE LAST 19 MONTHS, WHICH IS A RECORD. THIRTY-NINE

OF THOSE VETOES WERE SUSTAINED BY THE CONGRESS, AND IN THE

PROCESS / I SAVED YOU, THE TAXPAYERS, 13 BILLION DOLLARS.



-II-

AND IF THE CONGRESS KEEPS SENDING ME BILLS

WHICH I KNOW ARE ILL-CONSIDERED OR INFLATIONARY, I WILL

CONTINUE TO VETO THEM -- AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN•

I KNOW ALL OF YOU RECOGNIZE THAT FOR THE

LAST 19 MONTHS THIS COUNTRY HAS GONE THROUGH A VERY DIFFICULT

TIME• WHEN I TOOK OFFICE, INFLATION WAS RUNNING AT A RATE

OF 12 PERCENT OR MORE PER YEAR• WE TOOK INFLATION OUT OF

THE DOUBLE DIGIT COLUMN -- ACTUALLY CUT IT IN HALF• AND WE

ARE CONTINUING TO REVERSE THE TREND OF THE PAST DECADE•

IN FACT, IN FEBRUARY, CONSUMER PRICES  
INCREASED ONLY ONE-TENTH OF ONE PERCENT, THE SMALLEST MONTHLY  
HIKE IN MORE THAN FOUR YEARS.

I TOOK OFFICE ON THE BRINK OF THE WORST ECONOMIC

RECESSION THIS COUNTRY HAS HAD IN FORTY YEARS.

UNEMPLOYMENT WAS CLIMBING UP AND UP AND UP.

AS ALWAYS, SOME PEOPLE CAME UP WITH  
QUICK-FIX SCHEMES, SCHEMES WHICH WOULD ADD MASSIVE NUMBERS  
OF PEOPLE TO THE FEDERAL PAYROLL, SCHEMES WHICH WOULD  
HAVE SENT THE BUDGET THROUGH THE CAPITOL DOME.

INSTEAD OF BUSTING THE BUDGET, I USED SOME

COMMON SENSE. I REJECTED BIGGER SPENDING, BIGGER DEFICITS,

BIGGER GOVERNMENT. INSTEAD I INITIATED TAX CUTS FOR

INDIVIDUALS, AND TAX INCENTIVES FOR BUSINESS EXPANSION

AND JOB CREATION.

WE HELD THE LINE ON FEDERAL SPENDING

BECAUSE I WANT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO MAKE YOUR TAX DOLLARS

WORK AS HARD FOR YOU / AS YOU DID FOR THEM.

AND BECAUSE WE DIDN'T PANIC, BECAUSE WE DIDN'T

LOSE OUR COOL, WE HAVE COME OUT OF THAT RECESSION.

WE HAVE ALREADY GAINED BACK ALL THE JOBS WE LOST TO THE

RECESSION, WITH OVER NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND AMERICANS

ADDED TO PAYROLLS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY ALONE.



AND THESE ARE PERMANENT JOBS, / JOBS IN PRIVATE  
INDUSTRY, / JOBS TO BUILD A FUTURE ON -- AND THESE JOBS HAVE  
BOLSTERED THE AMERICAN ECONOMY INSTEAD OF DRAINING AWAY  
YOUR TAX DOLLARS IN FEDERALLY SUBSIDIZED PROGRAMS.

IN THE MONTHS AHEAD THE EMPLOYMENT PICTURE  
IS GOING TO GET EVEN BETTER BECAUSE AMERICA'S ECONOMY  
CONTINUES TO BRIGHTEN.

BUT WE STILL HAVE TO GUARD AGAINST THOSE  
WHO WOULD EXPAND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WHILE TAKING  
AUTHORITY FROM STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

BELIEVE ME, NOTHING SANCTIFIES THE WISDOM OF

THE PEOPLE IN THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

I HAVE GREAT FAITH IN GREAT GOVERNORS LIKE

JIM HOLSHOUSER.

I DON'T AGREE WITH THOSE WHO THINK THAT

EVERY PROGRAM, EVERY INITIATIVE, AND EVERY DECISION HAS

TO COME FROM WASHINGTON.

I DON'T WANT THIS TO HAPPEN AND I KNOW YOU

DON'T WANT THIS TO HAPPEN. IF THERE IS ONE THING WE MUST

NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF, IT'S THIS:

A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE US EVERYTHING

WE WANT, IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE FROM US

EVERYTHING WE HAVE.

NOW, LET ME SAY A FEW WORDS ABOUT OUR

STRENGTH AS A NATION.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO HAVE ALLEGED

THAT WE ARE WEAK, THAT WE ARE SECOND CLASS CITIZENS

OF THE WORLD, THAT THE SUN HAS SET ON THIS REPUBLIC.

LET ME SAY THIS AS FIRMLY AS I KNOW HOW:

THEY'RE DEAD WRONG.

AMERICA REMAINS SECOND TO NONE.

NO ONE HAS GREATER ARMS OR GREATER CAPABILITY.

AND THAT'S THE WAY I INTEND TO KEEP US, SO THAT AMERICA CAN

MEET ANY CHALLENGE UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.

FRANKLY I AM PROUD OF AMERICA AND PROUD TO

BE AN AMERICAN, AND I KNOW ALL OF YOU ARE TOO.

WE REMAIN THE STRONGEST GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM

IN THE WORLD AND I SHALL CONTINUE TO PURSUE A POLICY OF PEACE

THROUGH STRENGTH.



BUT AMERICA'S STRENGTH IS MEASURED BY MORE

THAN ARMAMENTS ALONE.

AMERICA TODAY IS THE GREATEST

AGRICULTURAL POWER, THE MOST PROLIFIC PRODUCER OF FOOD

AND FIBER IN THE WORLD.

THAT IS A CREDIT NOT ONLY TO THE MASS PRODUCTION  
FARMERS IN THE MIDWEST BUT ALSO TO THE SMALL FAMILY FARMERS  
RIGHT HERE IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA, AND I COMPLIMENT YOU  
FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE, AND WHAT YOU ARE DOING.

I WANT TO SEE THE FAMILY FARMS SURVIVE AND

THRIVE IN AMERICA.

I WANT TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE

TO PASS ON THEIR FARMS, THE PRODUCT OF MANY YEARS OF HARD

WORK AND LOVE AND FAITH, TO THEIR SONS AND TO THEIR DAUGHTERS.

I WANT TO MAKE IT EASIER TO KEEP THOSE FARMS IN THE FAMILY

RATHER THAN SACRIFICING THEM TO THE TAX COLLECTOR.

I PROPOSE TWO MEASURES TO HELP PROMOTE

THAT RESULT.

FIRST, I PROPOSED THAT THE CONGRESS ACT TO

STRETCH OUT THE ESTATE TAX PAYMENT AT GREATLY REDUCED INTEREST

RATES OVER A 25-YEAR PERIOD, AND SECONDLY, I HAVE PROPOSED

AN INCREASE IN THE ESTATE EXEMPTION FROM 60 THOUSAND DOLLARS

TO 150 THOUSAND DOLLARS.

I LOOK FORWARD TO THEIR ADOPTION BY THE CONGRESS

AND I AM SURE YOU DO TOO.

ANOTHER THING I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IS NEXT

TUESDAY, BECAUSE WITH YOUR SUPPORT I KNOW WE ARE GOING TO WIN.

WE'VE GOT THE MOMENTUM NOW.

WE WON IN NEW HAMPSHIRE -- WE WON IN  
VERMONT -- WE WON IN MASSACHUSETTS -- WE WON IN FLORIDA --  
WE WON IN ILLINOIS -- AND ON TUESDAY, MARCH 23rd,  
WE ARE GOING TO WIN IN NORTH CAROLINA AS WELL.

AND WHEN WE HAVE WON IN THE PRIMARIES --

WHEN THE NOMINATION IS OURS IN KANSAS CITY -- THEN WITH  
YOUR HELP WE'RE GOING ON TO WIN THE BIG ONE IN NOVEMBER.

THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT