

The original documents are located in Box 29, “4/23/76 - Remarks at a Public Forum at Peachtree High School, DeKalb County, Georgia” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

PUBLIC FORUM AT PEACHTREE HIGH SCHOOL

DE KALB COUNTY, GEORGIA

FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PEACHTREE HIGH SCHOOL

THANK YOU, MR. HUFF.

(DeKalb County Chamber
of Commerce)

MR. SNODERLY

(Peachtree High School
Principal)

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

STUDENTS, FACULTY AND GUESTS OF PEACHTREE HIGH SCHOOL

I AM DELIGHTED TO BE BACK IN GEORGIA,

AND I APPRECIATE YOUR VERY WARM WELCOME HERE AT PEACHTREE

HIGH SCHOOL -- HOME OF THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE FIGHTING

PATRIOTS.

I SPENT MOST OF TODAY IN ATLANTA,

AND I NOTICED THAT THERE'S A PRETTY BIG FORD PLANT

THERE ON I-75. NOW AS MUCH AS I FAVOR A STRONG AND

PROSPEROUS AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY,

I HAVE COME TO GEORGIA TO TELL YOU THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY

NO REASON TO TRADE IN YOUR FORD ON ANOTHER MODEL IN 1976.

WHEN WE LOOK BACK OVER THE 20 MONTHS

I HAVE HAD THE HONOR TO SERVE AS YOUR PRESIDENT,

WE CAN SEE THAT A GREAT DEAL OF PROGRESS HAS BEEN

MADE IN THE AREAS OF GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO YOU.

THE WORST ECONOMIC RECESSION AMERICA

SUFFERED IN 40 YEARS HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A STRONG

AND STABLE RECOVERY.

TODAY EVERYTHING THAT IS SUPPOSED TO BE

GOING UP IS GOING UP, AND EVERYTHING THAT IS SUPPOSED

TO BE GOING DOWN IS GOING DOWN.

TODAY MORE AMERICANS ARE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED

THAN EVER BEFORE IN THE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY.

EIGHTY-SIX MILLION, SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND AMERICANS

WERE WORKING IN MARCH 1976 -- AND THAT IS OVER TWO AND A HALF

MILLION MORE THAN WERE ON THE JOB A YEAR AGO.

AT THE SAME TIME, UNEMPLOYMENT IS COMING DOWN --

FROM A HIGH OF NEARLY NINE PERCENT LAST MAY TO SEVEN AND

A HALF PERCENT TODAY. THAT'S STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH,

BUT THAT'S PROGRESS, AND THERE IS MORE WHERE THAT

CAME FROM.

REAL EARNINGS FOR THE AMERICAN WORKER

ARE UP DRAMATICALLY OVER A YEAR AGO. TOTAL RETAIL

SALES ARE UP MORE THAN 17 PERCENT FROM LAST YEAR.

AUTO SALES ARE UP 43 PERCENT, FURNITURE AND APPLIANCE

SALES ARE UP MORE THAN 17 PERCENT, FOOD SALES UP MORE

THAN NINE PERCENT, GENERAL MERCHANDISE SALES ARE UP

13 PERCENT.

THE INDEX OF CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IS DOUBLE

WHAT IT WAS A YEAR AGO.

THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT

ANNOUNCED EARLIER THIS WEEK THAT THE GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT

ROSE AT AN ANNUAL RATE OF SEVEN AND A HALF PERCENT

IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1976.

THE CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, RELEASED JUST TWO
DAYS AGO, SHOWED THAT THE ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION
IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THIS YEAR WAS ONLY 2.9 PERCENT,
THE LOWEST QUARTERLY INFLATION RATE SINCE THE SUMMER OF 1972•

IT'S EASY TO GET LOST IN A SEA OF STATISTICS

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT THE ECONOMY, BUT ALL OF THESE

STATISTICS POINT TO ONE SIMPLE, UNDENIABLE FACT:

WE'RE ON THE ROAD TO A NEW AND LASTING PROSPERITY

IN 1976, AND WE'RE NOT ABOUT TO BE SIDETRACKED NOW.

THE DANGERS OF TOO MUCH GOVERNMENT ARE

CLEARER TODAY THAN THEY HAVE EVER BEEN BEFORE.

WE CAN SEE THOSE DANGERS MOST CLEARLY IN THE TREMENDOUS

COST OF BIG GOVERNMENT AND IN THE WIDESPREAD GOVERNMENTAL

INTRUSIONS IN OUR EVERYDAY LIVES.

AS PART OF MY EFFORT TO HOLD DOWN THE COST

OF GOVERNMENT, I HAVE VETOED 48 BILLS SENT TO ME

BY THE CONGRESS IN THE LAST 20 MONTHS --

AND THERE MAY BE MORE.

THIRTY-NINE OF THOSE VETOES HAVE BEEN SUSTAINED,

AND THOSE 39 VETOES WILL SAVE YOU 13 BILLION DOLLARS.

WE HAVE MADE PROGRESS TOWARD REDUCING

GOVERNMENT RED TAPE, TOO.

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PROGRAM IS A GOOD EXAMPLE.

ON MY ORDERS, FEDERAL REGULATIONS FOR

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT HAVE BEEN SIMPLIFIED AND REDUCED

FROM TWO THOUSAND, ²⁶⁰⁰ SIX HUNDRED PAGES TO JUST 25 PAGES.

INSTEAD OF FILLING OUT FIVE APPLICATIONS TOTALLING

¹⁴⁰⁰ ONE THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED PAGES, A COMMUNITY NOW HAS

TO COMPLETE ONLY ONE 50-PAGE APPLICATION.

WHILE PROCESSING AND APPROVAL OF THESE
APPLICATIONS USED TO AVERAGE MORE THAN TWO YEARS,
WE HAVE REDUCED THAT TIME TO LESS THAN TWO MONTHS.

WHEN I SAY I WANT TO GET THE GOVERNMENT OFF
YOUR BACK AND OUT OF YOUR HAIR, IT'S MORE THAN JUST
TALK. WE'VE ALREADY STARTED, AND WE HAVE A LOT
MORE IMPROVEMENTS PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE.

I HAVE PROPOSED A FIVE-YEAR, NINE-MONTH
EXTENSION OF THE GENERAL REVENUE SHARING PROGRAM,
WHICH I LIKE TO THINK OF AS A SORT OF HOMETOWN
"DO-IT-YOURSELF" PROJECT.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLECTS THE MONEY
AND DISTRIBUTES IT TO YOUR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS,
BUT YOUR OWN LOCAL OFFICIALS DECIDE HOW BEST TO SPEND
THAT MONEY, AND THEY'VE DONE A VERY GOOD JOB WITHOUT
A LOT OF BUREAUCRATIC INTERFERENCE FROM WASHINGTON.

IN FACT, THE TOTAL COST OF WASHINGTON'S
ADMINISTRATION OF THIS PROGRAM AMOUNTS TO ONLY ONE-EIGHTH
OF ONE PENNY OF EVERY DOLLAR SPENT IN THE REVENUE SHARING
PROGRAM -- AND THAT'S THE KIND OF SOUND, LOW-COST MANAGEMENT
WE CAN ALL TAKE PRIDE IN.

UNDER THE REVENUE SHARING EXTENSION BILL

I HAVE PROPOSED, DEKALB COUNTY WOULD RECEIVE

32.6 MILLION DOLLARS / AND ALL OF GEORGIA WOULD RECEIVE

MORE THAN 830 MILLION DOLLARS OVER THE NEXT FIVE AND

THREE-QUARTER YEARS.

IN PROPOSING A NEW LEASE ON LIFE FOR
REVENUE SHARING, AND IN REDUCING THE RED TAPE OF
FEDERAL PROGRAMS, I AM ACTING ON A BELIEF I HAVE
HELD AS LONG AS I HAVE BEEN IN PUBLIC LIFE.

THAT BELIEF CAN BE SUMMED UP IN A SINGLE SENTENCE:

A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE US EVERYTHING WE WANT

IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE FROM US EVERYTHING

WE HAVE.

WHAT WE NEED IN AMERICA IS NOT A GOVERNMENT
THAT PROMISES MORE AND MORE ALL THE TIME●

WHAT WE NEED -- AND WHAT MY ADMINISTRATION HAS
TRIED TO ACHIEVE -- IS A GOVERNMENT THAT PROMISES
ONLY WHAT WE CAN DELIVER, AND DELIVERS EVERYTHING
WE PROMISE●

WE ALL KNOW THAT IT WASN'T AN ALL-
POWERFUL GOVERNMENT THAT MADE AMERICA GREAT
AS A NATION. THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE WAS TO GUARANTEE
THE PEOPLE'S FREEDOM TO BUILD A NATION FOR THEMSELVES.

WITH THAT FREEDOM, WE HAVE BUILT THE GREATEST NATION
IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD. AMERICA TODAY IS UNSURPASSED
IN MILITARY CAPABILITY. WE HAVE THE GREATEST INDUSTRIAL
CAPACITY IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND. OUR FARMERS
OUT-PRODUCE EVERYONE IN HISTORY. WE LEAD THE WORLD
IN EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. WE HAVE THE
GREATEST MORAL AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES OF ANY MODERN NATION.

I SEE EVEN MORE PROGRESS IN STORE FOR
AMERICA AS WE ENTER OUR THIRD CENTURY OF INDEPENDENCE.

I SEE AMERICA REGAINING CONFIDENCE IN ITSELF AND IN ITS

DESTINY. I SEE A NATION LIVING IN PEACE AND IN

FREEDOM, AND MORE THAN 200 MILLION AMERICANS LIVING

IN DIGNITY AND SECURITY AND PROSPERITY.

