

The original documents are located in Box 32, “5/14/76 - Remarks at a Public Rally at Freedom Hall Civic Center, Johnson City, Tennessee” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS AT FREEDOM HALL
CIVIC CENTER, JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE
MAY 14, 1976

deeply
I appreciate Jim Dumbler's generous
endorsement + support. ^{Worked / friends} He + I have
worked together for 9 years for the medical
school project. ^{Energy}
Senators Baker + Brock. ^{Intelligence} { Attorney
Budget
Gov. DeLoach. ^{U.S.}
Tenn.

FREEDOM HALL CIVIC CENTER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THANK YOU, CONGRESSMAN JIM QUILLEN

SENATOR BAKER

FORMER GOVERNOR DUNN

ED WILLIAMS

REV. JOHNSON

FELLOW AMERICANS

AT THE OUTSET, LET ME CONGRATULATE AND THANK THE EAST

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY MARCHING BAND AND THE OTHER

FINE BANDS AND GROUPS ON HAND TODAY.

IT'S GREAT TO BE IN JOHNSON CITY --

HOME OF THE EAST TENNESSEE BUCCANEERS,

THE SCIENCE HILL HILLTOPPERS, THE CONSTITUTION HALL BANDITS

AND THE INDEPENDENCE HALL REBELS.

MY MESSAGE TODAY TO THE PEOPLE OF TENNESSEE

CAN BE SUMMED UP IN JUST A FEW WORDS: AS MUCH AS I BELIEVE

IN A STRONG AND PROSPEROUS AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY,

I AM HERE TO SAY THIS YEAR / THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON

TO TRADE IN YOUR FORD / ON ANOTHER MODEL.

I HAVE HAD THE HONOR TO SERVE AS YOUR PRESIDENT

FOR MORE THAN 21 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 TWELVE PERCENT, AND
WITH AMERICA ON THE BRINK OF THE WORST RECESSION IN FORTY
YEARS.

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

UNDERLYING THESE SERIOUS PROBLEMS WAS A CRISIS
OF CONFIDENCE IN OUR GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY IN THE WHITE
HOUSE.

THERE WAS A CRISIS OF SPIRIT AMONG THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE, MANY OF WHOM BEGAN TO QUESTION WHETHER OUR BEST
DAYS WERE ALREADY BEHIND US.

TWENTY-ONE MONTHS LATER, THE AMERICAN SCENE
HAS BEEN DRAMATICALLY IMPROVED.

THAT TWELVE PERCENT INFLATION RATE HAS BEEN
CUT IN HALF.

IN FACT, IT WAS DOWN TO LESS THAN THREE PERCENT IN THE FIRST

THREE MONTHS OF 1976 -- AND THAT'S A 75 PERCENT REDUCTION.

9 7/8

AFTER SEEING UNEMPLOYMENT RISE TO NEARLY NINE

PERCENT LAST MAY, \ AT THE LOW POINT OF THE RECESSION, \ WE

HAVE RECOVERED MORE THAN THREE MILLION JOBS IN THE LAST

YEAR ALONE.

EIGHTY-SEVEN MILLION, 400 THOUSAND AMERICANS

ARE ON THE JOB TODAY, AND THAT IS MORE THAN EVER BEFORE IN

THE HISTORY OF OUR COUNTRY - AND I'D SAY THAT'S A PRETTY

GOOD COMEBACK FROM WHERE WE WERE JUST TWELVE MONTHS AGO.

INTERNATIONALLY, AMERICA IS AT PEACE WITH EVERY

NATION ON EARTH. NOT ONE AMERICAN IS IN COMBAT ANYWHERE

IN THE WORLD TODAY - AND I INTEND TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.

WHEN I TOOK THE OATH OF OFFICE AS PRESIDENT,

I SAID THAT TRUTH IS THE GLUE THAT HOLDS GOVERNMENT

TOGETHER.

TWENTY-ONE MONTHS LATER, \ THE RECORD OF MY

ADMINISTRATION IS ONE OF CANDOR, INTEGRITY AND OPENNESS.

IT IS A RECORD THAT HAS RESTORED THE PEOPLE'S
TRUST IN THE WHITE HOUSE, AND IT IS A RECORD I AM PROUD OF•

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE LOOKING TO THE FUTURE
WITH FAITH NOW, INSTEAD OF FEAR• AND THAT FUTURE CAN
BE AS BRIGHT AND AS SUCCESSFUL AS WE WANT TO MAKE IT•

ECONOMICALLY, WE ARE ON A COURSE OF STEADY GROWTH
AND RISING PROSPERITY. WE HAVE DONE BATTLE WITH THE WORST
RECESSION IN FORTY YEARS, AND WITH THE WORST INFLATION IN
MORE THAN FIFTY YEARS, AND WE HAVE WON.

OUR NEXT BATTLE IS WITH DEFICIT SPENDING BY THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT -- AND I HAVE ALREADY BEGUN THAT BATTLE,
WITH 49 VETOES AS MY AMMUNITION.

DESPITE A SUPPOSEDLY "VETO-PROOF" TWO-THIRDS

DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN THE CONGRESS, WE GOT 42 OF THOSE

VETOES SUSTAINED, / AND THOSE 42 VETOES WILL SAVE THE

AMERICAN PEOPLE 13 BILLION DOLLARS• THAT AVERAGES OUT TO

ABOUT 200 DOLLARS A FAMILY• AND IF THE CONGRESS KEEPS

SENDING ME BUDGET BUSTING BILLS, I WILL USE MY VETO AGAIN /

AND AGAIN / AND AGAIN•

I WILL NOT BE SATISFIED UNTIL WE BALANCE THE

FEDERAL BUDGET, AND THE SOONER THE BETTER. MY PLAN IS TO

COMBINE SPENDING CUTS WITH TAX CUTS AND REDUCE THE GROWTH

OF GOVERNMENT ACROSS THE BOARD.

WE CUT YOUR TAXES LAST YEAR, AND THAT LED TO

A MAJOR INCREASE IN CONSUMER SPENDING. AND THAT

INCREASE WAS A VERY BIG FACTOR IN OUR ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

LAST JANUARY I ASKED THE CONGRESS FOR ANOTHER TAX CUT

OF TEN BILLION DOLLARS STARTING JULY FIRST OF THIS YEAR --

BUT INSTEAD IT LOOKS LIKE THE MAJORITY IN THE CONGRESS WANTS

TO SPEND 17 BILLION DOLLARS MORE THAN I PROPOSED, ELIMINATING

THE TAX CUT AND INCREASING THE NATIONAL DEBT TO

713 BILLION DOLLARS.

FURTHERMORE, WITH THE NEW BUDGET I PROPOSED
IN JANUARY, WE WOULD CUT THE RATE OF GROWTH IN FEDERAL
SPENDING IN HALF -- AND GET TO A BALANCED BUDGET IN 1979.

IF WE CAN GET A FEW MORE HOWARD BAKERS AND

BILL BROCKS AND JIMMY QUILLENS AND JOHN DUNCANS AND

ROBIN BEARDS IN THE CONGRESS, WE CAN CUT GOVERNMENT

SPENDING.

WE CAN BALANCE THE BUDGET.

WE CAN WIN

THE BATTLE; AND I HOPE YOU'LL HELP US DO IT.

THE SOUND OF REAL BATTLE IS ONLY FAINTLY HEARD

IN THE WORLD TODAY, AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF WAR. THE

UNITED STATES CAN BE PROUD OF THE ROLE IT HAS PLAYED IN

BRINGING PEACE TO THE WORLD AND IN PROMOTING THE CAUSE OF

FREEDOM AND HUMAN DIGNITY IN THE WORLD.

WE CAN PLAY THAT ROLE SUCCESSFULLY BECAUSE WE
ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO COMMAND THE CONFIDENCE OF OUR ALLIES
AND THE RESPECT OF OUR ADVERSARIES.

AFTER YEARS AND YEARS OF LOWER AND LOWER
DEFENSE BUDGETS IMPOSED BY THE CONGRESS, WE HAVE REVERSED
THAT DANGEROUS TREND.

I HAVE PROPOSED THE TWO LARGEST DEFENSE BUDGETS IN

AMERICAN HISTORY, AND I HOPE WE HAVE FINALLY CONVINCED

THE CONGRESS THAT IT CAN'T SHORTCHANGE OUR NATIONAL DEFENSE

ANY LONGER.

THE PURPOSE OF AMERICA'S MIGHTY ARSENAL IS

NOT TO TERRIFY THE WEAK, TO PROVOKE ARMED CONFRONTATION,

OR TO LAY CLAIM TO THAT WHICH IS NOT OURS.

OUR PURPOSE IS TO DEFEND FREEDOM AND TO

MAINTAIN A FOUNDATION OF STRENGTH ON WHICH TO BUILD A

BETTER AND SAFER WORLD.

BUT OUR STRENGTH DOES NOT REST IN OUR MILITARY

POWER ALONE.

ONE MAJOR SOURCE OF STRENGTH IS THE

PRODUCTIVITY AND SUCCESS OF THE AMERICAN FARMER, WHO IN

THE LAST THREE YEARS HAS ENJOYED HIS HIGHEST NET INCOME

IN HISTORY, AND WHOSE EXPORTS HAVE HIT NEW RECORDS.

THOSE EXPORTS HAVE HELPED PUT AMERICA BACK

ON THE ROAD TO PROSPERITY, AND THE FARMER DESERVES THE

THANKS OF EVERY AMERICAN.

THAT DOESN'T JUST MEAN THE BIG FARM OPERATOR ~~—~~ IT MEANS

THE SMALL FAMILY FARMER RIGHT HERE IN EAST TENNESSEE.

TO PRESERVE THAT FAMILY FARM, AND OTHER FAMILY
ENTERPRISES, I HAVE PROPOSED RAISING THE ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION
FROM 60,000 TO 150,000 DOLLARS, STRETCHING OUT THOSE PAYMENTS
OVER A 25-YEAR PERIOD AT LOW INTEREST RATES, AND EXEMPTING
FROM TAXATION THE TRANSFER OF PROPERTY BETWEEN HUSBAND
AND WIFE.

I WANT TO SEE THESE FAMILY ENTERPRISES STAY IN
THE FAMILY, RATHER THAN BE SACRIFICED TO PAY THE
TAX COLLECTOR.

THE FAMILY TRADITION, LIKE THE AMERICAN TRADITION,
IS ONE OF SECURITY, ONE OF RICH HERITAGE, ONE OF PRIDE
AND HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

THERE HAVE NOW BEEN EIGHT GENERATIONS OF

INDEPENDENT AMERICANS -- EACH ONE WORKING, PLANNING,

AND PRAYING THAT LIFE WOULD BE EVEN BETTER FOR THE NEXT

GENERATION THAN FOR THEIRS.●

IN A VERY SPECIAL SENSE, I WANT TO CONTINUE AS
PRESIDENT BECAUSE I WANT THIS GENERATION OF AMERICANS TO
LEAVE A BETTER AMERICA TO THE NEXT GENERATION.

I WANT TO ENSURE THAT REALISTIC, RESPONSIBLE
POLICIES THAT ARE RIGHT FOR AMERICA / THAT HAVE BEEN
PROVEN RIGHT OVER THE LAST 21 MONTHS - - WILL CONTINUE.

I WANT TO MAINTAIN THE PEACE WE NOW ENJOY,

TO SECURE THAT PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH, AND TO MAKE CERTAIN

THAT LEGACY OF PEACE CONTINUES FOR OUR CHILDREN AND

GRANDCHILDREN.

I WANT TO CONTINUE THE POLICIES OF RELIANCE

ON THE PRIVATE ECONOMY, OF CUTTING TAXES AND BUREAUCRACIES

AND USELESS REGULATIONS AND WASTEFUL SPENDING.

THESE POLICIES HAVE BROUGHT US BACK FROM THE
DEPTHS OF RECESSION TO A SUSTAINED RECOVERY, AND THEY CAN
HELP US ENSURE THAT RUNAWAY INFLATION NEVER AGAIN ROBS US
OR OUR LOVED ONES OF THE REWARDS OF HONEST WORK AND
LIFETIME SAVINGS•

FINALLY, I WANT TO FINISH THE MOST IMPORTANT
JOB I HAVE BEGUN, THE RESTORATION OF FAITH AND TRUST IN
THE PRESIDENCY ITSELF.

THE GREAT INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT, CRAFTED
WITH SUCH GREAT CARE BY OUR FOUNDING FATHERS, HAVE THEIR
FOUNDATION IN THE PEOPLE'S TRUST.

IN THE PAST 21 MONTHS, THAT FOUNDATION HAS
BEEN STRENGTHENED RATHER THAN SHAKEN, AND WE WILL
STRENGTHEN IT STILL MORE IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS.

TELLING THE TRUTH IS THE SECRET TO SUCCESS IN
GOVERNMENT, AS IN EVERYTHING ELSE.

IN MY ADMINISTRATION WE HAVE FACED MANY OF
THE UNPLEASANT FACTS OF AMERICAN LIFE, AND WE HAVE DEALT WITH
THEM IN A FORTHRIGHT AND EFFECTIVE WAY.

WE HAVE AVOIDED MAKING FANCY PROMISES AND
RAISING FALSE HOPES, / AND IN THE FUTURE, / AS IN THE PAST, /
I WILL PROMISE NO MORE THAN I CAN DELIVER, AND DELIVER
EVERYTHING I PROMISE.

PEACE, PROSPERITY AND TRUST ARE THE SUM OF

MY PERFORMANCE IN THE NEARLY TWO YEARS SINCE I BECAME
PRESIDENT.

THEY ARE A PRESCRIPTION FOR PROGRESS IN AMERICA

TODAY, AND THEY CAN BE THE GREATEST LEGACY ANY GENERATION
OF AMERICANS HAS EVER LEFT TO ITS CHILDREN.

THAT IS WHY I ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT ON MAY 25,
NOVEMBER 2, AND IN THE FOUR CHALLENGING YEARS AHEAD.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT
