

The original documents are located in Box 32, “5/14/76 - Remarks at Ceremonies Dedicating the Commerce Square Fountain, Memphis, Tennessee” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

MID AMERICA MALL

THANK YOU, SENATOR BAKER.

CONGRESSMAN JIMMY QUILLEN

GOVERNOR WINFIELD DUNN

MAYOR CHANDLER

MAYOR NIXON

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

FELLOW AMERICANS

-1-

IT IS GREAT TO BE BACK IN TENNESSEE AGAIN, AND I AM GLAD

TO SEE A FEW RAZORBACKS FROM ACROSS THE RIVER IN ARKANSAS, TOO.

I'M PARTICULARLY HAPPY TO BE WITH ALL OF YOU THIS AFTERNOON HERE

wonderful
AT THE BEAUTIFUL NEW MID-AMERICA MALL.

THE MALL IS A ^{perfect} FINE EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN BE DONE

TO REVITALIZE AND BEAUTIFY OUR NATION'S CITIES. AND YOU DID

IT WITH LOCAL FUNDS, THROUGH LOCAL EFFORT AND WITHOUT THE

INVOLVEMENT OF FEDERAL MONEY OR FEDERAL BUREAUCRATS.

Congratulations Memphis.
~~I SALUTE MEMPHIS FOR IT.~~

AS ALL OF YOU KNOW, WE ARE HEADED INTO THE

FINAL ROUNDS OF A FIGHT WHICH I BELIEVE WILL DETERMINE

THE DIRECTION OUR COUNTRY WILL TAKE IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS.

I KNOW TENNESSEE WELL ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT

YOU APPRECIATE STRAIGHT TALK, AND THAT'S WHAT I'VE GIVEN YOU

SINCE I TOOK OFFICE AS PRESIDENT. AND HERE'S SOME MORE:

THE DAY I WAS SWORN IN, I SAID OUR LONG

NATIONAL NIGHTMARE WAS OVER. AND IT IS. WE HAVE

DISPELLED THE CLIMATE OF DARKNESS AND DESPAIR THAT HUNG

OVER WASHINGTON AND LET THE SUN SHINE IN.

I won't let you down in the next

4 years.

WE LEVELED WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

I SAID IT IN MY SECOND STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

AND I SAY IT AGAIN TODAY: WE WILL PROMISE ONLY WHAT

WE CAN DELIVER, BUT WE WILL DELIVER EVERYTHING THAT

WE PROMISE.

CONSIDER, [~~FOR A MOMENT~~] WHERE WE WERE IN THE

FIRST MONTHS OF MY PRESIDENCY.

THEN, SOME WELL KNOWN LABOR AND POLITICAL LEADERS
WERE PREDICTING THAT WE WERE HEADED INTO A DEPRESSION
AND THAT ONLY MASSIVE ACTION BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
COULD AVERT TRAGEDY.

INFLATION WAS OVER TWELVE PERCENT.
UNEMPLOYMENT WAS CLIMBING. WE WERE, ~~IN FACT~~
HEADING INTO OUR WORST RECESSION IN FORTY YEARS.

BUT, INSTEAD OF LISTENING TO THE PROPHETS OF DOOM
WITH THEIR QUICK-FIX SOLUTIONS INVOLVING MORE BIG GOVERNMENT,
WE PURSUED A CALM, STEADY POLICY OF RELYING UPON THE
AMERICAN ^{Energy and} SYSTEM OF PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

AS A RESULT, WE MEET TODAY / NOT IN THE GLOOM
OF A RECESSION / BUT IN THE FULL SURGE OF A STEADY,
CONFIDENT ECONOMIC RECOVERY.

WE HAVE TURNED THE COUNTRY AROUND,
AND WE ARE ON THE ROAD TO RENEWED PROSPERITY,
MUTUAL TRUST AND A LASTING PEACE.

WE CUT THE ANNUAL RATE OF INFLATION BY MORE THAN
ONE-HALF. WE HAVE INCREASED EMPLOYMENT BY THREE MILLION,
300 THOUSAND JOBS SINCE THE LOW OF LAST YEAR.

THE INDEX OF CONSUMER CONFIDENCE IS DOUBLE WHAT IT WAS
A YEAR AGO.

OUR RECOVERY DIDN'T JUST HAPPEN.

IT TOOK PLACE BECAUSE I REJECTED BIGGER SPENDING,

BIGGER DEFICITS, AND BIGGER GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION.

I USED THE VETO POWER 49 TIMES, AND 42 OF

THOSE VETOES WERE SUSTAINED, SAVING AMERICAN TAXPAYERS

SOME 13 BILLION DOLLARS. THAT AVERAGES OUT TO ALMOST

200 DOLLARS FOR EVERY HOUSEHOLD.

If the Congress
~~AND THERE ARE PLENTY~~

sends more of these budget busting spending bills to the
~~MORE VETOES WHERE THOSE CAME FROM.~~

White House I'll veto them again, again & again

I LEARNED THIS BASIC TRUTH A LONG TIME AGO:

THAT A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO GIVE US

EVERYTHING WE WANT IS A GOVERNMENT BIG ENOUGH TO TAKE

FROM US EVERYTHING WE HAVE.

I know

~~I HAVE ALSO LEARNED~~ THAT AS A NATION,

OUR BEST HOPE FOR CONTINUED PEACE IS TO REMAIN STRONG ENOUGH

TO PRESERVE THE PEACE.

THROUGHOUT MY 27 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE
IN THE CONGRESS AND THE WHITE HOUSE, MY RECORD IS ONE
OF TOTAL COMMITMENT TO A NATIONAL DEFENSE EQUAL TO ANY
CHALLENGE -- AND A POLICY OF PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH.

FOR TEN LONG YEARS THE CONGRESS HAS HACKED AWAY
- cutting 50 billion dollars in the last
AT THE DEFENSE BUDGET TO PAY FOR THEIR FAVORITE SOCIAL
10 years.
PROGRAMS. LAST YEAR, THEY CUT ANOTHER SIX AND ONE HALF
BILLION DOLLARS FROM THE VERY FIRST DEFENSE BUDGET I SUBMITTED
AS PRESIDENT.

NOW, AT LAST, IT LOOKS LIKE I HAVE TURNE
THEM
AROUND. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE CONGRESS WILL PASS
THE RECORD 113 BILLION DOLLAR DEFENSE BUDGET I SUBMITTED
IN JANUARY.

I AM DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN THE PEACE WE NOW
ENJOY, AND MAKE CERTAIN THAT THIS LEGACY OF PEACE
CONTINUES FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FOR THE GENERATIONS TO COME.

WITH OUR NATION AT PEACE, I AM CONTINUING
THE TASK I UNDERTOOK ON THE DAY I BECAME PRESIDENT,
WHICH IS THE RESTORATION OF CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN OUR
INSTITUTIONS, IN OURSELVES AND IN OUR FUTURE.

THE RECORD OF MY FIRST TWO YEARS IN THE
WHITE HOUSE IS PEACE, PROSPERITY, PERFORMANCE IN OFFICE
AND TRUST. IT IS A RECORD THAT I AM PROUD OF AND ASK
FOR YOUR MANDATE TO CONTINUE.

THE COURSE WE TAKE IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

WILL SHAPE AMERICA'S FUTURE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

I WANT TO PURSUE THE STEADY COURSE THAT LEADS TO PEACE

THROUGH STRENGTH, / FROM RECESSION TO RECOVERY, / FROM FEAR

TO FAITH.

WITH YOUR HELP WE WILL PURSUE THAT COURSE.