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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

(Gergen)

September 23, 1976

TALKING POINTS FOR PHILADELPHIA RECEPTION

I'm delighted to see so many old friends again and to thank you for your very generous welcome.

The last time I was here in Philadelphia was on July 4th. On that occasion, my purpose was to join in celebrating our nation's history. Tonight I haven't come to Philadelphia to celebrate history but to write a new chapter in history -- a chapter about the great accomplishments of America under four more years of a Ford Administration.

That's our goal, and with so many wonderful supporters and friends like you, I'm absolutely certain that we're going to succeed.

Tonight's debate was one of the most satisfying experiences of my public life. When I challenged Governor Carter to these debates, I did so because I thought the country deserved a chance to evaluate each of us face-to-face, to evaluate our leadership, judgment and integrity, and to look hard at our many political differences. I'm pleased by tonight's debate because the voters now have a much better understanding of which candidate offers the greatest hope for the future.

During the next few days, we're going to have a great deal of discussion in the press about who won and lost. I have my own opinion. I'm sure you have yours. Of course, we do have built-in advantages over our friends because:

- We're right on all the major issues;
- We have a good, solid record;
- And we have specific programs for the future
that will restore full prosperity and keep the peace.

Nevertheless, as the press dissects the results over the next few days, I hope we'll all remember one thing. Whichever candidate made the greatest impression, the real winners of these debates are the American people. They are the ones who can now make a more informed choice, and I am deeply grateful to the League, to the City of Philadelphia and to all of you for helping to make all of this possible.

Now let's relax -- before we're off to San Francisco and the second great debate.

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