

The original documents are located in Box 38, “9/25/76 - Remarks at the Toulouse Street Wharf at Jackson Square in New Orleans, LA (Draft only, no reading copy)” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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51
(Mihalec)

September 24, 1976
THIRD DRAFT

~~THE~~ PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS AT JACKSON SQUARE, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA,
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1976

One month ago, in Kansas City, Missouri, I went before the American people to promise a national campaign for the Presidency of the United States. I said I would not concede one single state. I said I would not concede one single vote.

Today I stand before you on the historic site of Jackson Square to make good that promise. We are here to win and we are going to carry Louisiana on November 2nd.

We chose to begin our campaign in Jackson Square for a reason. Andrew Jackson is just about the only Democratic President who never gets a plug in our opponents' campaign speeches; and we don't think he should be left out.

Actually, too much of this campaign so far has been focused on old memories.

This campaign is not a game of "name the Presidents." Anyone who tries to run on the coat-tails of history is ignoring the present and shortchanging the future.

This election is not about the distant past. Rather, it is about where America is today, and where it is going tomorrow.

Let's talk about the present. When I took office in August of 1974, the average American family was locked in a foot race with inflation -- and a losing race at that!

In just two years we have cut that inflation rate in half.

That's the Ford record and I'm proud of it.

What about jobs? Since the bottom of the recession last year, we've added over four million Americans to the job rolls. More Americans went home with paychecks last month than in any month of our Nation's history. That's the Ford record and I'm proud of it.

When I took office two years ago, America's defense

policies were a question mark. Friend and foe alike wondered aloud about America's ability to defend her interests.

Today no one is wondering. Despite a Congress that repeatedly does its best to cripple a strategic weapons system, we have moved to meet the challenge of Soviet technology. In crisis and in calm, the Ford Administration has shown that it has what it takes to secure and defend the peace.

Today no American serviceman is in combat anywhere on the globe. That's the Ford record and I'm proud of it.

But democracy requires more than a healthy economy and a healthy defense. It also requires a healthy belief in the basic morality of its leaders. That, my friends, has changed in the last two years, too. Honesty is not just my campaign promise. It is not just my intention. It is the proven bottom line of the Ford Administration.

The scorecard on these last two years is posted for all the world to see. It shows that America has gone from

international conflict to international cooperation, from economic stagnation to economic strength, and from political deception to political decency.

What about the future? We have the opportunity to turn a dramatic comeback into a sustained period of national growth and progress.

Together we can do just that.

We can continue to reach for our 200 year old dreams ... but only if we continue to follow our 200 year old blueprint.

That means placing the rights of the individual American first.

It means remembering that a society in which government overpowers the citizen is not a great society ... it is not even a good one.

It means following the path of steady progress, rather than engaging in a constant and frantic search for short cuts and quick fixes to serious national problems.

During the past two years, I've talked with Americans from every State and every region.

Regardless of where I go , I find there is much that we all have in common. We all want a productive economy. We all want homes in decent neighborhoods. We all want physical security against crime and financial security against medical catastrophe. We all want peace in the world.

The way to achieve these goals is not by playing region off against region, or group against group, or individual against individual. But in making the tough decisions that are necessary to achieve the common good. That takes leadership.

Leadership is doing what you believe is right rather than what your pollster tells you is popular.

Leadership is not trying to be all things to all people.

Leadership is placing your Nation ahead of your political party, and the future ahead of the present.

The hard truth is that on many key issues facing America, the right decision to make is also a tough decision to make. Often the wise thing to do in the long run is not the popular thing to do in the short run.

I have never -- I will never -- play political softball with America's future.

As we move into America's third century -- the century of the individual -- that's what leadership is all about.

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