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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN....

THIS IS PRESIDENT FORD.

MANY OF YOU IN THE LISTENING AUDIENCE MAY NOT HAVE DECIDED YET HOW YOU WILL VOTE IN THE COMING ELECTION. OTHERS MAY NOT THINK IT'S WORTH VOTING.

BUT THIS IS A VITALLY IMPORTANT ELECTION, AND TODAY I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU WHY.

AMERICA IS NOW AT A FORK IN THE ROAD.

FOR TOO MANY YEARS, WE HAVE BEEN PILING ONE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM ON TOP OF ANOTHER, ONE NEW LAW ON TOP OF ANOTHER, ONE NEW TAX ON TOP OF ANOTHER.

NO PEOPLE CAN LIVE BEYOND THEIR MEANS VERY LONG WITHOUT PAYING A HEAVY PRICE.

THE DAY OF RECKONING BEGAN FOR THE UNITED STATES IN THE EARLY 1970'S AS WE WERE DRIVEN INTO THE WORST INFLATION IN OUR PEACETIME HISTORY -- INFLATION THAT EVENTUALLY CAUSED OUR WORST RECESSION IN 40 YEARS.

THAT WAS WHAT I FOUND WHEN I CAME TO THE WHITE HOUSE IN 1974, AND I HAVE TRIED VERY HARD TO PUT THE NATION ON A NEW COURSE. I HAVE HELD DOWN SPENDING. I HAVE CUT BACK ON GOVERNMENT RED TAPE. AND I HAVE SOUGHT AND SUCCESSFULLY OBTAINED THE BIGGEST TAX CUTS IN OUR HISTORY.

TODAY PRICES ARE NOT GOING UP AS FAST AS THEY WERE. MORE PEOPLE HAVE GONE BACK TO WORK IN THE LAST 18 MONTHS THAN IN ALMOST ANY OTHER PERIOD IN OUR HISTORY.

IN THIS ELECTION, HOWEVER, WE COULD REVERSE THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE. MY OPPONENT ERRATICALLY PROMISES MORE PROGRAMS AND MORE GOVERNMENT; BUT HIS PROGRAMS INEVITABLY MEAN MORE TAXES AND MORE INFLATION.

THIS IS NO TIME TO FALL BACK ON DISCREDITED OLD HABITS; THIS IS NO TIME TO RETURN TO THE ROAD THAT LED US INTO THE QUAGMIRE. INSTEAD, THIS IS THE TIME TO STAY ON THE NEW COURSE THAT WE BEGAN TWO YEARS AGO -- TO BEGIN LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS AND TO GIVE THE WORKING PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY GREATER RELIEF FROM THE CRUSHING BURDEN OF TAXATION AND REGULATION.

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*Nov 2nd*

IN YOUR VOTE ~~THIS~~ TUESDAY, YOU MUST DECIDE  
WHICH ROAD YOU WILL CHOOSE FOR AMERICA.

ANOTHER CRUCIAL ISSUE IN THIS ELECTION YEAR  
IS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THIS NATION WILL MAINTAIN  
THE STRENGTH AND THE WILL TO KEEP THE PEACE. MY  
OPPONENT WANTS TO CUT BILLIONS OF DOLLARS FROM  
OUR DEFENSE BUDGET; HE WANTS TO WITHDRAW AMERICAN  
TROOPS FROM SOUTH KOREA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE  
PACIFIC; HE WANTS TO REDUCE THE AMERICAN PRESENCE  
IN EUROPE.

WE MUST NOT LISTEN TO SUCH VOICES OF WEAKNESS  
AND RETREAT.

AS I SPEAK TO YOU TODAY, NOT A SINGLE ONE OF  
OUR BOYS IS FIGHTING OR DYING ON FOREIGN BATTLEFIELDS;  
THE THREAT OF THE DRAFT NO LONGER HANGS OVER THE HEADS  
OF OUR YOUNG MEN.

BUT AMERICA IS AT PEACE ONLY BECAUSE AMERICA HAS BEEN WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE FOR A MIGHTY MILITARY FORCE.

IF THE DAY EVER COMES WHEN WE SEND A PRESIDENT TO THE BARGAINING TABLE WITH ONE HAND TIED BEHIND HIS BACK, HE WILL RETURN NOT ON HIS FEET BUT ON HIS KNEES.

THERE IS ONE MORE QUESTION YOU OUGHT TO CONSIDER. IT IS THE QUESTION OF TRUST AND EXPERIENCE.

FOR OVER A QUARTER OF A CENTURY, I HAVE BEEN PRIVILEGED TO SERVE IN OUR NATION'S CAPITAL.

I KNOW HOW HARD IT IS TO LEARN YOUR WAY AROUND WASHINGTON, MUCH LESS AROUND THE CAPITALS OF OTHER NATIONS.

I ALSO KNOW THAT IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES -- WHOEVER HE IS -- MUST MAKE MANY HARD DECISIONS. HE MUST NEGOTIATE A NEW TREATY ON STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES WITH THE SOVIET UNION BEFORE THE CURRENT ONE EXPIRES IN 1977. HE MUST DEFUSE THE POWDERKEG IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HE MUST CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. HE MUST GUIDE THE NATION CLOSER TO ENERGY INDEPENDENCE. HE MUST TAKE MANY AFFIRMATIVE STEPS TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL AMERICANS.

AS VOTERS, ONLY YOU CAN DECIDE WHETHER THIS IS A TIME TO TURN OVER THE REINS OF POWER TO A MAN MOST OF YOU HAD NEVER HEARD OF ONLY A YEAR AGO AND WHO HAS HAD NO NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE.

THESE, THEN, ARE THE ISSUES OF THIS CAMPAIGN:

-- WILL WE RETURN TO THE OLD PATH OF MORE TAXES AND MORE INFLATION, OR WILL WE CONTINUE THE PROGRESS OF THE LAST TWO YEARS, CUTTING TAXES AND CREATING A HEALTHIER ECONOMY?

-- WILL WE RETREAT FROM A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP IN WORLD AFFAIRS, OR WILL WE REMAIN STRONG, EFFECTIVE, AND AT PEACE?

-- FINALLY, WILL WE GAMBLE WITH OUR FUTURE, OR WILL WE RELY UPON TRUSTED, PROVEN LEADERSHIP?

THE CHOICE IS CLEAR. IT IS A CHOICE ONLY YOU CAN MAKE. TODAY I ASK FOR YOUR SUPPORT. I ASK FOR YOUR VOTE. AND I ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS SO THAT AS WE BEGIN OUR THIRD CENTURY TOGETHER, AMERICA CAN REMAIN PROUD, HAPPY AND FREE.

THANK YOU.