

The original documents are located in Box 33, “5/25/76 - Remarks at Public Forum, Walnut Creek, CA (Includes drafts) (2)” of the President’s Speeches and Statements: Reading Copies at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN . . .

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE COURT OF FLAGS

ROSSMOOR ADULT COMMUNITY

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

MAY 25, 1976

I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF
THE UNITED STATES TO SPEAK HERE AT ROSSMOOR●

NOW THAT I'VE SEEN YOUR HANDSOME COMMUNITY AND MET MANY
OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE, I'M SORRY I DIDN'T GET HERE
SOONER●

YOU ARE PROVING THAT RETIREMENT NEED NOT BE A
RETREAT FROM LIFE, BUT A FRESH OPPORTUNITY TO DO ALL OF
THE THINGS YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO. IT'S GOOD TO
SEE YOU TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE OF THAT OPPORTUNITY.

MY MESSAGE TODAY CAN BE SUMMED UP IN JUST A

FEW WORDS:

AS MUCH AS I BELIEVE IN A STRONG AND PROSPEROUS
AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY, I HAVE COME HERE TO SAY THAT
THIS YEAR -- THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON TO TRADE IN YOUR
RELIABLE FORD -- FOR A FLASHIER MODEL.

LET ME TELL YOU WHY I AM ASKING MY FELLOW

AMERICANS TO LET ME GO ON BEING PRESIDENT FOR THE NEXT

FOUR YEARS: BECAUSE I HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB●

BECAUSE I HAVE TURNED THINGS AROUND AND WE ARE NOW GOING
IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. BECAUSE I WANT A MANDATE FROM
CALIFORNIA AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO FINISH THAT JOB.

ONE OF THE TASKS I WANT TO CONTINUE IS THE
ASSURANCE OF THE DIGNITY, THE SECURITY AND THE QUALITY
OF LIFE EXPERIENCED BY OUR OLDER AMERICANS.

FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS, AMERICA HAS MADE A
FIRM COMMITMENT OF SUPPORT FOR OLDER CITIZENS IN OUR
SOCIETY -- NOT ONLY FOR THOSE WHO NEED HELP, BUT THOSE
WHO HAVE EARNED A RETIREMENT INCOME DURING THEIR WORKING
YEARS.

AS YOU ALL KNOW, THERE ARE PROBLEMS FACING
OUR SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM. NEXT YEAR, UNLESS MY
REFORMS ARE ADOPTED, THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND
WILL RUN A DEFICIT OF 3.5 BILLION DOLLARS.

LET ME ASSURE YOU OF ONE THING VERY EMPHATICALLY:

MY ADMINISTRATION FULLY INTENDS TO PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY

AND THE SOLVENCY OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM FOR YOUR

BENEFIT AND THAT OF ALL WORKING AMERICANS - - NOW AS WELL

AS IN THE FUTURE.●

TO PREVENT A DECLINE IN THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST
FUND, WHICH NOW PAYS OUT MORE IN BENEFITS THAN IT RECEIVES
IN TAXES, I HAVE PROPOSED A SMALL PAYROLL TAX INCREASE OF
THREE-TENTHS OF ONE PERCENT APPLYING TO BOTH EMPLOYEES AND
EMPLOYERS. THE LARGEST INCREASE WOULD BE LESS THAN ONE
DOLLAR A WEEK.

I ALSO ANNOUNCED IN JANUARY A DECISION TO SUBMIT
LEGISLATION TO CORRECT A FLAW IN THE CURRENT SYSTEM.

ACCORDING TO OUR CURRENT BEST ESTIMATE, SOCIAL SECURITY MAY
FACE A SIZABLE FINANCING PROBLEM AFTER THE TURN OF THE
CENTURY.

THERE ARE A NUMBER OF WAYS TO DEAL WITH THIS SITUATION, AND

THERE IS AMPLE TIME TO ANALYZE IT CAREFULLY AND CORRECT IT.

BUT THE TIME TO BEGIN IS NOW.

MY PROPOSAL, WHICH WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS IN
JUNE, WOULD BE A SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD ELIMINATING
THIS PROJECTED LONG-RANGE PROBLEM.

THESE TWO PROPOSALS WILL HELP TO STABILIZE

THE TRUST FUND SO THAT CURRENT AND FUTURE RECIPIENTS WILL BE

FULLY ASSURED OF THE BENEFITS THEY ARE ENTITLED TO●

AS PART OF MY PROGRAM, I AM RECOMMENDING IN
MY BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1977 THAT THE FULL COST OF LIVING
INCREASE IN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS BE PAID DURING THE
COMING YEAR.

AS LONG AS I AM PRESIDENT, WE ARE GOING TO
KEEP SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION AND EVERY OTHER
RETIREMENT PROGRAM STRONG, SOUND AND CERTAIN●
YOU CAN COUNT ON THAT●

I HAVE ALSO PROPOSED MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN
THE MEDICARE PROGRAM TO MAKE IT SERVE YOU BETTER.

ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENTS WOULD PROVIDE
FOR THE PAYMENT OF ALL BUT A VERY SMALL FRACTION OF THE COST
OF CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS AND EXTENDED CARE.

THERE IS NO REASON THAT OLDER AMERICANS SHOULD
HAVE TO GO BROKE JUST TO GET WELL OR STAY WELL IN THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

UNDER MY PROPOSAL, THE INDIVIDUAL'S CONTRIBUTION
TO MEDICARE WOULD GO UP SLIGHTLY, BUT CONSIDER WHAT THE
INCREASE WOULD PROVIDE: NOBODY ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICARE WOULD
HAVE TO PAY MORE THAN 500 DOLLARS A YEAR FOR HOSPITAL OR
NURSING HOME CARE.

MEDICARE WOULD PAY THE REST OF THE BILL, WHETHER IT IS
1,000 DOLLARS, 10,000 DOLLARS OR 50,000 DOLLARS●

IT IS A GOOD PROGRAM, AND IF THE CONGRESS
PASSES IT, THE RUINOUS ECONOMIC BURDEN OF CATASTROPHIC
ILLNESS IS ONE THING YOU WILL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT
AGAIN.

I AM ASKING CONGRESS TO AUTHORIZE TWO
OTHER PROGRAMS THAT WILL BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO OLDER
AMERICANS.

ONE WILL EASE THE BURDEN OF ESTATE TAXES.

WHILE THE VALUE OF THE DOLLAR HAS ERODED, OUR SYSTEM
OF ESTATE TAX LAW HAS CHANGED VERY LITTLE SINCE THE 1930's●
TO RESTORE FAIRNESS TO THE SYSTEM, I HAVE PROPOSED
INCREASING THE PRESENT 60,000 DOLLAR ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION
TO 150,000 DOLLARS●

A SECOND PROPOSAL OF MINE IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE
TO MARRIED COUPLES. AT PRESENT, TRANSFERS OF ASSETS
BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES ARE OFTEN SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIAL
TAXATION. I HAVE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WHICH WILL MAKE
THOSE TRANSFERS TOTALLY TAX FREE. THIS COMMON-SENSE
TREATMENT OF THE ASSETS OF A HUSBAND AND WIFE IS LONG OVERDUE.

IF I HAD TO SUM UP THE RECORD OF MY
ADMINISTRATION IN JUST A FEW WORDS, IT WOULD BE PEACE,
PROSPERITY AND TRUST.

TODAY AMERICA IS AT PEACE. YOUR SONS

ARE NOT BEING DRAFTED, / THEY ARE NOT DYING ON ANY BATTLEFIELD.

I WANT TO MAINTAIN THE PEACE, / ADVANCE PEACE
AMONG ALL NATIONS, / SECURE THAT PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH
AND PERSEVERANCE / AND LEAVE THAT LEGACY OF PEACE FOR OUR
CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN.●

I WILL CONTINUE MY POLICIES OF CUTTING YOUR
TAXES, EXPANDING THE PRIVATE ECONOMY, REDUCING BUREAUCRACY
AND USELESS REGULATION, AND RESTRAINING SPENDING.

MY POLICIES HAVE BROUGHT US FROM THE DEPTHS OF RECESSION
TO A SUSTAINED RECOVERY, AND WILL ENSURE THAT RUNAWAY
INFLATION NEVER AGAIN ROBS US OR OUR LOVED ONES OF THE
REWARDS OF HONEST WORK AND LIFETIME SAVINGS●

I WANT TO PURSUE THE STEADY COURSE THAT HAS LED
FROM WAR TO PEACE, FROM RECESSION TO RECOVERY, FROM
CYNICISM TO CONFIDENCE, FROM FEAR TO FAITH●

FINALLY, I WANT TO FINISH MY MOST IMPORTANT
JOB, RESTORATION OF TRUST IN THE PRESIDENCY ITSELF.

I DID NOT SEEK THIS OFFICE, BUT NEITHER WILL I SHIRK IT.

AS YOUR PRESIDENT, I WILL PROMISE NO MORE THAN
I CAN DELIVER AND I WILL DELIVER EVERYTHING THAT I PROMISE.

THE REASON I AM IN THIS RACE TO STAY IS TO ENSURE
PEACE, PROSPERITY AND TRUST FOR THE FUTURE.

THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO COME AFTER US.

WE AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT LIFE WILL BE
BETTER FOR OUR CHILDREN THAN IT WAS FOR US. BECAUSE LIFE
FOR US HAS BEEN BETTER THAN IT WAS FOR OUR PARENTS.

WHAT DO I SEE AHEAD FOR THIS WONDERFUL COUNTRY
OF OURS?

I SEE A STRONG AND CONFIDENT AMERICA, SECURE
IN A STRENGTH THAT CANNOT ALONE BE COUNTED IN MEGATONS
AND REJOICING IN RICHES THAT CANNOT BE ERODED BY INFLATION
OR TAXATION.

I SEE AN AMERICA WHERE LIFE IS VALUED FOR ITS
QUALITY AS WELL AS ITS COMFORT, WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL IS
INVIOLATE IN HIS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, WHERE THE
GOVERNMENT SERVES AND THE PEOPLE RULE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT

21.

RIGHT NOW, IT LOOKS LIKE THE CONGRESS WOULD

RATHER SPEND THAT TEN BILLION DOLLARS -- AND ALMOST EIGHT

BILLION MORE -- RATHER THAN LET YOU KEEP IT.

28.

WITH FOUR ADDITIONAL YEARS AND WITH A SOLID MANDATE
FROM YOU, WE WILL FINISH THE JOB AND MAKE AMERICA TRULY
SECURE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

35.

FREEDOM IS WHAT AMERICA'S BICENTENNIAL IS ALL

ABOUT -- AND I CAN THINK OF NO BETTER WAY TO CELEBRATE OUR

BICENTENNIAL THAN TO EXERCISE THAT FREEDOM.

36.

WE DO IT BY INVOLVEMENT. WE DO IT BY HONORING

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS FREE CITIZENS. WE DO IT BY VOTING.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN.....

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE COURT OF FLAGS

ROOSMOOR ADULT COMMUNITY

WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

MAY 25, 1976

*Kentucky
Tanner*

I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE

UNITED STATES TO SPEAK HERE AT ROSSMOOR. NOW THAT I'VE SEEN

YOUR HANDSOME COMMUNITY AND MET MANY OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE

HERE, I'M SORRY I DIDN'T GET HERE SOONER.

YOU ARE PROVING THAT RETIREMENT NEED NOT BE A

RETREAT FROM LIFE, BUT A FRESH OPPORTUNITY TO DO ALL OF THE

THINGS YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO DO.

~~IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU~~

~~TAKING FULL ADVANTAGE OF THAT OPPORTUNITY.~~

MY MESSAGE ~~TODAY~~ CAN BE SUMMED UP IN JUST A

FEW WORDS:

AS MUCH AS I BELIEVE IN A STRONG AND PROSPEROUS

AMERICAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY, I ~~HAVE COME HERE TO~~ SAY THAT

THIS YEAR -- THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO REASON TO TRADE IN YOUR

RELIABLE FORD -- FOR A FLASHIER MODEL.

LET ME TELL YOU WHY I AM ASKING YOU - MY FELLOW

AMERICANS - FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

BECAUSE I HAVE DONE A GOOD

JOB UNDER TOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES.

BECAUSE WE HAVE MAINTAINED THE PEACE AND MOVED AMERICA ON THE

ROAD TO PROSPERITY AND RESTORED CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN

THE PRESIDENCY. I WANT A MANDATE FROM CALIFORNIA AND

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO FINISH THAT JOB.

ONE OF ^{my} ~~THE~~ GOALS I ~~HAVE~~ SET IS THE ASSURANCE

OF THE DIGNITY, THE SECURITY AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE EXPERIENCED

BY OUR OLDER AMERICANS.

FOR MORE THAN FORTY YEARS, AMERICA HAS MADE A
FIRM COMMITMENT OF SUPPORT FOR OLDER CITIZENS IN OUR SOCIETY
NOT ONLY FOR THOSE WHO NEED HELP, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE EARNED
A RETIREMENT INCOME DURING THEIR WORKING YEARS.

AS YOU ~~ALL~~ KNOW, THERE ARE PROBLEMS FACING

OUR SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM. NEXT YEAR, UNLESS MY REFORMS

ARE ADOPTED, THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND WILL RUN A DEFICIT

OF THREE AND A HALF BILLION DOLLARS.

LET ME ASSURE YOU OF ~~ONE THING~~ VERY EMPHATICALLY:

MY ADMINISTRATION FULLY INTENDS TO PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY

AND THE SOLVENCY OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM FOR YOUR

BENEFIT AND THAT OF ALL WORKING AMERICANS // - NOW / AS WELL

AS IN THE FUTURE.

AS PART OF MY PROGRAM, I AM RECOMMENDING IN

MY BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1977 / THAT THE FULL COST OF LIVING

INCREASE IN SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS / BE PAID DURING THE

COMING YEAR.

~~██████~~ 11

AS LONG AS I AM PRESIDENT, WE ARE GOING TO

KEEP SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION AND EVERY OTHER RETIREMENT

PROGRAM STRONG, SOUND AND CERTAIN.

YOU CAN COUNT ON THAT.

I HAVE ALSO PROPOSED MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS IN THE

MEDICARE PROGRAM TO MAKE IT SERVE YOU BETTER. ONE OF THE MOST

IMPORTANT IMPROVEMENTS WOULD PROVIDE FOR THE PAYMENT OF ALL

BUT A VERY SMALL FRACTION OF THE COST OF CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS

AND EXTENDED CARE.

IT IS A GOOD PROGRAM, AND IF THE CONGRESS

PASSES IT, THE RUINOUS ECONOMIC BURDEN OF CATASTROPHIC

ILLNESS IS ONE THING YOU WILL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT

AGAIN.

THERE IS NO REASON THAT OLDER AMERICANS SHOULD

HAVE TO GO BROKE JUST TO GET WELL / OR STAY WELL IN THE UNITED

STATES OF AMERICA.

I AM ASKING CONGRESS TO AUTHORIZE TWO OTHER

PROGRAMS THAT WILL BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO OLDER AMERICANS.

ONE WILL EASE THE BURDEN OF ESTATE TAXES.

WHILE THE VALUE OF THE DOLLAR HAS ERODED, OUR SYSTEM

OF ESTATE TAX LAW HAS CHANGED VERY LITTLE SINCE THE 1930's

TO RESTORE FAIRNESS TO THE SYSTEM, I HAVE PROPOSED INCREASING

THE PRESENT 60,000 DOLLAR ESTATE TAX EXEMPTION TO 150,000

DOLLARS.

A SECOND PROPOSAL OF MINE IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE

TO MARRIED COUPLES. AT PRESENT, TRANSFERS OF ASSETS BETWEEN

HUSBANDS AND WIVES ARE OFTEN SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIAL TAXATION.

I HAVE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WHICH WILL MAKE THOSE TRANSFERS

TOTALLY TAX FREE. THIS COMMON-SENSE TREATMENT OF THE ASSETS

OF A HUSBAND AND WIFE IS LONG OVERDUE.

~~IF I HAD~~ TO SUM UP THE RECORD OF MY

ADMINISTRATION IN JUST A FEW WORDS; IT WOULD BE PEACE;

PROSPERITY AND TRUST.

~~19~~ 19

TODAY AMERICA IS AT PEACE. THERE ARE NO

AMERICAN BOYS FIGHTING ANYWHERE ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH ~~---~~

AND I INTEND TO KEEP IT THAT WAY.

I WILL MAINTAIN THE PEACE

-- SECURE THAT PEACE

THROUGH STRENGTH AND PERSEVERANCE

-- AND LEAVE THAT LEGACY OF

PEACE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND THEIR CHILDREN.

I WILL CONTINUE MY POLICIES OF CUTTING YOUR TAXES;

EXPANDING THE PRIVATE ECONOMY; / REDUCING BUREAUCRACY AND

USELESS REGULATION; / AND RESTRAINING FEDERAL SPENDING.

MY POLICIES HAVE BROUGHT US FROM THE DEPTHS OF RECESSION

TO A SUSTAINED RECOVERY, AND WILL 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 MY MOST IMPORTANT JOB --

RESTORATION OF TRUST IN THE PRESIDENCY ~~ITSELF~~.

AS YOUR PRESIDENT, I WILL PROMISE NO MORE THAN

I CAN DELIVER ~~+~~ AND I WILL DELIVER EVERYTHING THAT I PROMISE.

I NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO ENSURE PEACE, PROSPERITY

AND TRUST FOR THE FUTURE.

THE GOOD, SECURE, SATISFYING

FUTURE WE OWE TO OUR CHILDREN AND TO OUR GRANDCHILDREN.

AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS WANTED LIFE TO BE BETTER FOR

OUR CHILDREN THAN IT WAS FOR US -- BECAUSE LIFE FOR US HAS

BEEN BETTER THAN IT WAS FOR OUR PARENTS.

WHAT DO I SEE AHEAD FOR THIS GREAT COUNTRY, ~~DE~~

~~OVERS?~~

I SEE A STRONG AND CONFIDENT AMERICA, SECURE IN

A STRENGTH THAT CANNOT ALONE BE COUNTED IN MEGATONS -- AND

A NATION REJOICING IN ^{Blessings} ~~RICHES~~ THAT CANNOT BE ERODED BY INFLATION

OR TAXATION.

I SEE AN AMERICA WHERE LIFE IS VALUED FOR ITS

QUALITY AS WELL AS ITS COMFORT / WHERE THE INDIVIDUAL IS

INVIOLEATE IN HIS CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS / WHERE THE GOVERNMENT

SERVES AND THE PEOPLE RULE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

END OF TEXT

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Susan -

These would appear to go with the Walnut Creek Speech --- I checked them out with Nell -- the President pulled them out --- did not use them.

Trudy