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

-1-

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

-8-

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

-0-

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

-11-

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.

-10A-

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

I,000 DOLLARS, I0,000 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

-19-

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 EXEMTPION

TO 150,000 DOLLARS.

TREATMENT OF THE ASSETS OF A HUSBAND AND WIFE IS LONG OVERDUE.

THOSE TRANSFERS TOTALLY TAX FREE. THIS COMMON-SENSE

TAXATION. I HAVE PROPOSED LEGISLATION WHICH WILL MAKE

BETWEEN HUSBANDS AND WIVES ARE OFTEN SUBJECT TO SUBSTANTIAL

TO MARRIED COUPLES. AT PRESENT, TRANSFERS OF ASSETS

A SECOND PROPOSAL OF MINE IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE

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.

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.

WITH FOUR ADDITIONAL YEARS AND WITH A SOLID MANDATE

FROM YOU, WE WILL FINISH THE JOB AND MAKE AMERICA TRULY

SECURE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

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.

WE DO IT BY INVOLVEMENT. WE DO IT BY HONORING

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

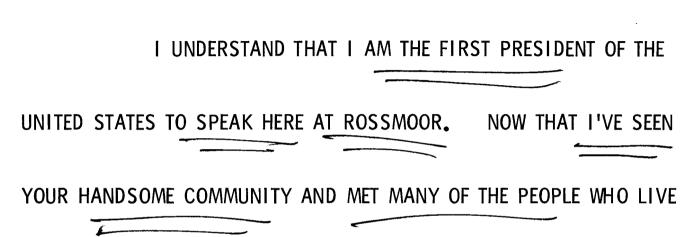
PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AT THE COURT OF FLAGS

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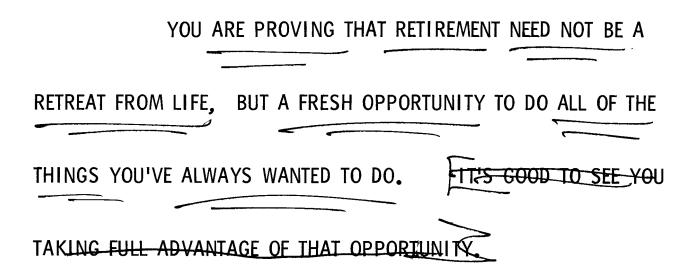
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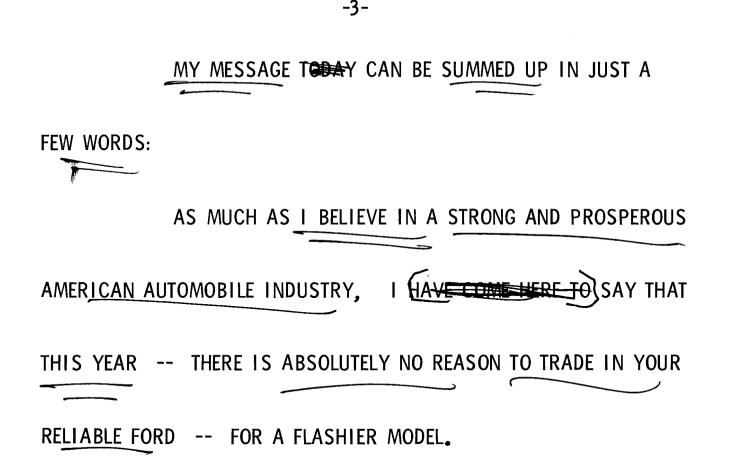


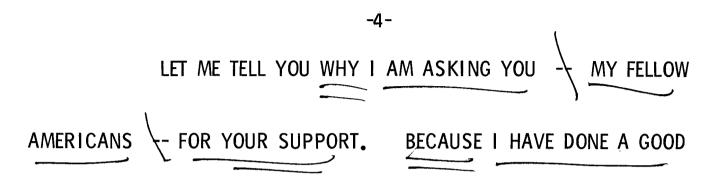
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HERE, I'M SORRY I DIDN'T GET HERE SOONER.

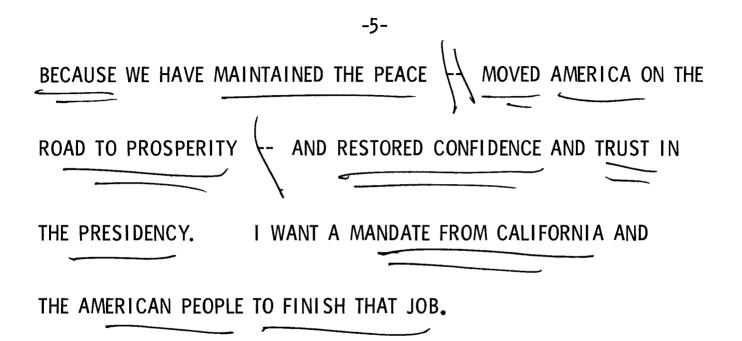


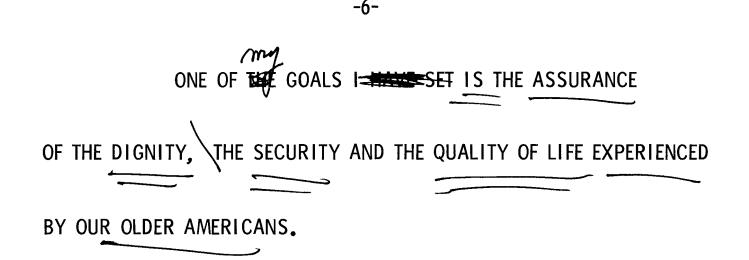
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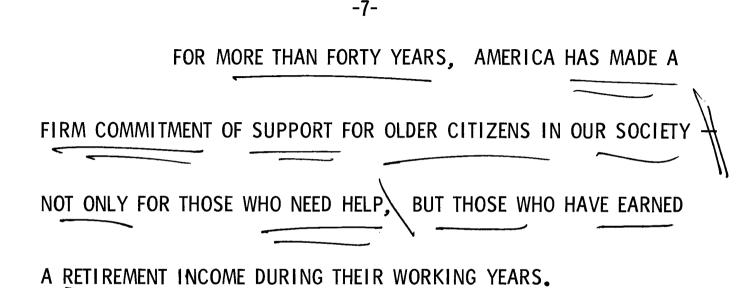


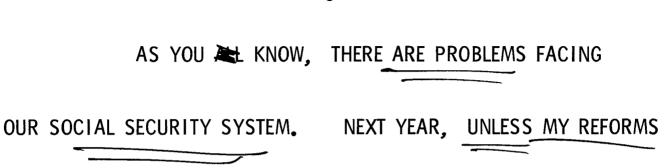


JOB UNDER TOUGH CIRCUMSTANCES.





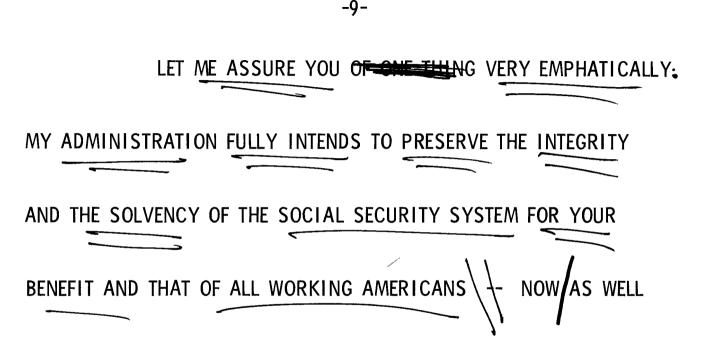




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ARE ADOPTED, THE SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND WILL RUN A DEFICIT

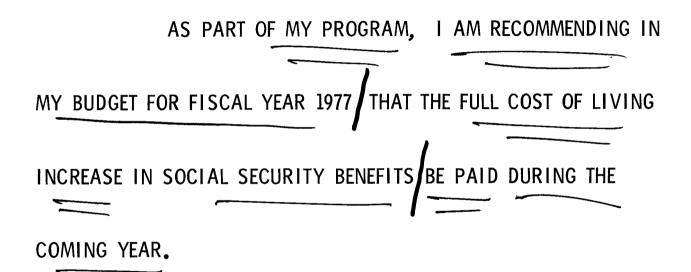
OF THREE AND A HALF BILLION DOLLARS.

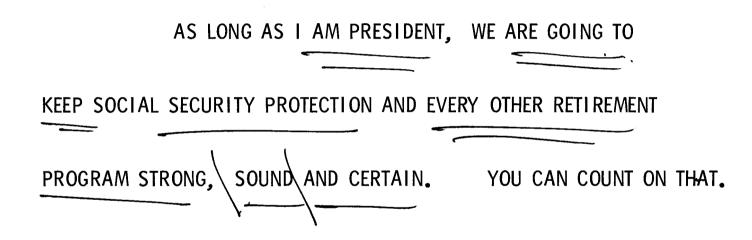


AS IN THE FUTURE.



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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





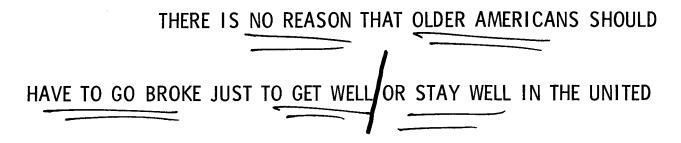
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ILLNESS IS ONE THING YOU WILL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT

AGAIN.





STATES OF AMERICA.

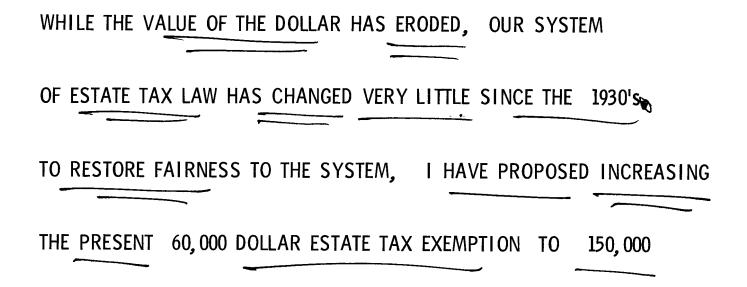


I AM ASKING CONGRESS TO AUTHORIZE TWO OTHER

PROGRAMS THAT WILL BE OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO OLDER AMERICANS.

ONE WILL EASE THE BURDEN OF ESTATE TAXES.

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DOLLARS.

17

A SECOND PROPOSAL OF MINE IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE

TO MARRIED COUPLES. AT PRESENT, TRANSFERS OF ASSETS BETWEEN

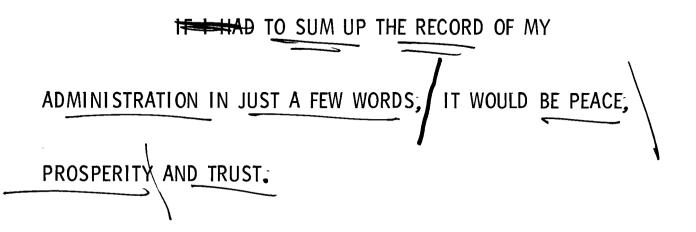
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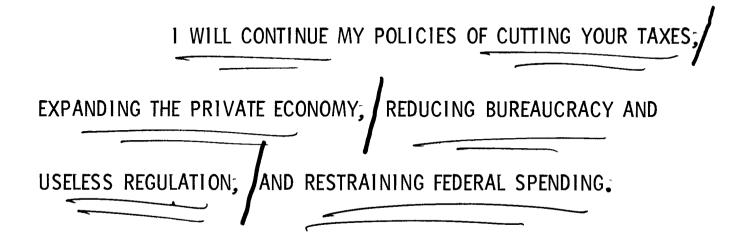
19

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.





5 22

MY POLICIES HAVE BROUGHT US FROM THE DEPTHS OF RECESSION

TO A SUSTAINED RECOVERY, AND WILL ENSURE THAT RUNAWAY

REWARDS OF HONEST WORK AND LIFETIME SAVINGS.



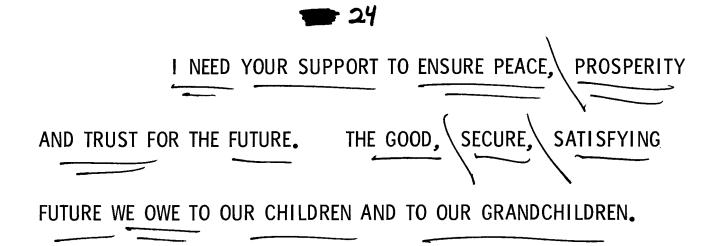
FINALLY, I WANT TO FINISH MY MOST IMPORTANT JOB --

RESTORATION OF TRUST IN THE PRESIDENCY

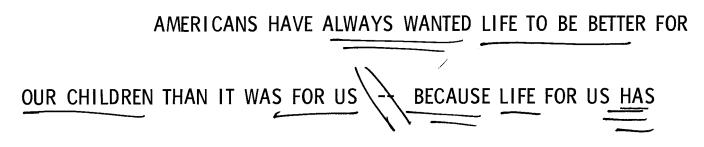
AS YOUR PRESIDENT, I WILL PROMISE NO MORE THAN

I CAN DELIVER \- AND I WILL DELIVER EVERYTHING THAT I PROMISE.





e 25



BEEN BETTER THAN IT WAS FOR OUR PARENTS.

WHAT DO I SEE AHEAD FOR THIS GREAT COUNTRY





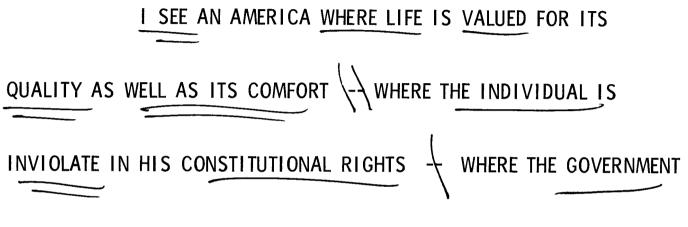


A STRENGTH THAT CANNOT ALONE BE COUNTED IN MEGATONS -- AND

Hersings

A NATION REJOICING IN RIGHES THAT CANNOT BE ERODED BY INFLATION

OR TAXATION.



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