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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT A DINNER IN HONOR OF
GOVERNOR WILLIAM SCRANTON

PHILADELPHIA SHERATON HOTEL

9:35 P.M. EDT

Thank you very much, Hugh, and knowing of our long and warm friendship and our wonderful working relationship for so many years, I cannot express deeply enough my heartfelt thanks and wonderful appreciation for those kind words, and I thank you very, very much.

Bill and Mary, Dick Schweiker and Claire, Drew and Marilyn, my former colleagues in the House -- and I know there are some here -- would I be inappropriate if I asked all these former House members just to stand up because they are pretty important guys, too.

I saw Pete and Joe and John Ware and Larry Williams, and with these lights I cannot quite see them all, but let me express to them as well as to Dick and Hugh, my deep appreciation for their superb assistance and cooperation in some of the tough times we have had in recent weeks.

Let me add, if I might, my appreciation for the most kind communications and good thoughts and prayers from so many all over the country, as Hugh said, some 40,000 cards, telegrams, telephone calls, et cetera on behalf of Betty.

She is doing great, and what you all have done has been material in making her get well much quicker. Thank you very, very much.

As some of you might have seen in the last few days, either through the newspapers or television, the White House has a new addition. My daughter Susan and Dave Kennerly, our new White House photographer, got together a few days ago and surprised Betty and me with an eight-month-old golden retriever.

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This puppy has really taken over the White House. In fact, you may have seen some of us laughing up here during dinner. As I reached in my pocket to get a match to light my pipe, look what I pulled out of the pocket -- some dog biscuits. (Laughter)

Let me tell you the story about Susan and Dave and how they bought this dog. I first should preface that the Fords had had two previous golden retrievers. One lived 13 years and unfortunately died, and then another one died a year ago in August after nine years, so we are fairly partial, I would say, to golden retrievers.

Well, Dave and Susan called up a very highly recommended individual who had contacts with the people who raise golden retrievers all over the country. Dave, as I understand it, who is communicating with the individual up in Minneapolis, who happened to have a golden retriever about this age, Dave asked the individual if they had a dog and was it available, and the owner said they had this eight-month-old golden retriever, but the proprietor or the owner was a little cautious or very possessive about these dogs, and he asked in a very nice way who the dog's owner would be.

And they said, Dave and Susan, that they had to keep it a secret. Well, the kennel owner said they don't sell dogs that way. He would have to know who the dog's owner would be, and he wanted to know would the dog have a good home.

So, Dave and Susan very specifically assured the dog owner that it would have a good home. They explained that the parents were friendly and middle aged and they had four children. The kennel owner said, "That sounds fine. What kind of a house do they live in?"

Susan and Dave said, "Well, it is a big white house with a fence around it." The kennel owner said, "This is a big dog. Will it have enough to eat? Does the father have a steady job?" On that question, they were stuck a bit. (Laughter)

Needless to say, they got the dog and in the appropriate spirit for the City of Philadelphia, we have named her Liberty. One of those inquisitive reporters we have in Washington asked Susan who is going to take care of Liberty. Who is going to feed her and groom her and take her out each night or every morning, and Susan did not hesitate one minute. She said, "Of course, it will be Dad." So, I have this feeling. This is one Liberty that is going to cost me some of mine. (Laughter)

But in a very broader sense, that is the true nature of liberty. It comes with both privileges and obligations. Freedom, we all know, is seldom free.

And it is a pleasure for me to be in Philadelphia again -- the second time in less than a month -- and for such a great purpose here tonight.

And I must say, having been in many political rallies in 25 or 26 years, the spirit, the participation, the look in your eye, and the feeling in the air, gives me great hope for the things that we believe are good for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the great United States. And I thank you very much.

I think we all recognize that the strength of the Republican party in this State is a tribute to Dick Frame, Tom McCabe, who has always been here and doing things when the going was the toughest -- and I can tell you some stories about that -- back in 1965, Sally Stauffer, and all of you who are here because you have conviction and dedication.

I am here because I want to thank so many of you for what you have done, and quite frankly, I am here to call upon you for a very great effort in the weeks ahead, because, in my judgment, so very much hangs in the balance, dependent on what you do.

You have done it tonight, but the other things you can do between now and November 5.

I am, however, here because I wish to express my deep personal appreciation for an old and dear friend of mine, Bill Scranton. I think I have known Bill longer than I have known almost anybody here in this room tonight.

He and I were in law school together, and that is a long time ago. He does not show it as much as I. But we all know that a political party is not just a set of principles. It is also a group of people. And it will be judged, as we know, by the kind and the quality of the people that seek the recognition in the ballot box.

I can assure you that is why Bill Scranton is such an asset to our party. He brings out nothing but the best in public service, and you in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania recognized that. And Bill and Mary, we from outside the State are just as grateful for what you have done as all of you in the State of Pennsylvania. I thank you and congratulate you.

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As I was sitting here, I looked around at the head table and there were three people on the podium or at the head table that I had the privilege of serving with in the House of Representatives -- Bill Scranton, Hugh Scott, and Dick Schweiker.

Let me first speak about Hugh, if I might. He was a more senior Member of the House of Representatives when I came to Washington in January of 1949. He was friendly, courteous, helpful, and then you sent him to the United States Senate.

We had many opportunities to work together during the early days of his Senate service, and then he and I became the Minority Leaders in the Senate and in the House.

I can say without any hesitation or qualification that I had nothing but the finest opportunities to work with Hugh, to do things on the plus side, to work together in total unison, and to fight for those things that are important to your State and to our country, and to peace throughout the world.

And this working relationship, Hugh--then, when we were together in the Congress, and now--I cherish and I am deeply grateful, and thank you very, very much.

Then back in 1960 you all sent, from his particular Congressional district, Dick Schweiker, and then subsequently you sent him to the United States Senate. I remember when Dick and Bill Scranton came to the House. I thought I was a pretty senior person and knew a lot and so forth. I did know one thing. I could tell that in Bill Scranton and Dick Schweiker the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania had sent two first-class Members of the House.

When I ran for the Minority Leadership in 1965 and won by the landslide margin of 73 to 67, those two fellows were very, very helpful in my behalf.

So I express to Dick my appreciation and I wish him the very best because in the limited time that I served as the presiding officer, as a first instant Vice President, I noticed that Dick Schweiker did a great job for you in Pennsylvania, for the country, and Dick, I know you will when all of these good people, with thousands of others in Pennsylvania, send you back for another six years.

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If I might, I would like to make one observation. In the eight or nine years that I was the Minority Leader, I traveled an awful lot. You have no idea how many airports I have slept in and aircraft I have dozed in because I wanted to help the party and good candidates the length and the breadth of the country.

Most years during that period of time I traveled some 200,000 miles each year. And during the period of this experience, I met many outstanding candidates for public office -- Governors, et cetera. And I learned a bit about judging who was good and who was bad, and you sort of develop a capability of saying, "Gee, that fellow has got it, and this fellow does not have it."

I have known Drew Lewis over the last four or five years, and let me say to each and every one of you in this State: If you elect Drew Lewis to be your next Governor -- and I think you will -- you will elect one of the finest Governors I have had an opportunity to see.

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When I was privileged to come to the great City of Philadelphia in September, I pledged then that with the help of the American people, we would win the battle against inflation. Yesterday, before the Joint Session of the House and Senate, in trying to speak to the American people, I outlined what I think was a fair and equitable plan to win this battle, and I asked the Congress and the American people to join me in this struggle.

It has been a great experience that in the last 24 hours the American people have responded tremendously. And the response of the Congress basically has been good. We have had some who have been critical, but I think they, in their own heart, know, as Hugh Scott said, they either buy this total plan or concept or design, or they have to come up with something else because America cannot afford to lose this struggle.

As I said yesterday, I fully understand the reaction to some extent or the criticism that a portion of the voters of this country might rise up in righteous wrath and turn them out of office if they would not face up to the tough decisions.

I tried to express yesterday, and I reiterate it tonight, I have an infinitely greater faith in the American people than those that want us to play politics with the economy, and the strength of the political fabric of our country.

The American people want us to do what is right, not what is politically expedient. Some of you may have heard or watched -- I had a press conference today, and one of my friends in the press made some comment or asked a question, well, wasn't this tax proposal that I suggested unfair, and inequitable.

I am not sure this is the best audience for me to make the argument, but let me just take one or two examples, and I think you will agree with me when you see the facts. For a family with a gross income of wages of \$20,000 per year, the 5 percent surtax that I think is essential to provide the revenue that we can do other things that will indicate compassion for those that are less fortunate, for that family of four and gross income of \$20,000 a year, under this proposal they will pay \$42 more a year in Federal income taxes, which is about 12 cents a day.

This new tax will affect some 28 percent of the total Federal personal income taxpayer in this country. And I happen to think that those 28 percent good Americans, dedicated to the preservation of those things that are so essential for our children and our grandchildren, they won't fall back and criticize, they will step up and do what is right, and the politicians ought to do the same thing.

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In the remarks I made about a month ago here in Philadelphia, saluting the convening of the First Continental Congress about 200 years ago, I cited -- it was interesting. Some of the parallels that Congress, that Congress and the 93rd Congress today face.

One of the basic issues at that time, two centuries ago in this great city, was inflation. By taking tough positions then, inflation fighters of 1774 whipped that problem, just as the inflation fighters and energy savers in 1974 will whip this one.

As I tried to express and reiterated today, this is not something, Hugh or Dick or Drew or Bill Scranton or my former colleagues in the House can do alone. The 1500, or whatever the number here is tonight, can be massively helpful. And the millions of people throughout this country can do exactly the same.

And if the mail I received or the communications that we have gotten are indicative of the feeling of the American people, they want to participate. They want to do something, and they will because they know there is a challenge here at home and a challenge throughout the world to win this battle, and we will.

I don't have to portray to this group -- you are very sophisticated and knowledgeable -- but the problem is if we don't, we lessen our economic security here in America, we weaken our capability to govern ourselves, we threaten our domestic stability and we lose our leadership throughout the world. We don't want that.

What I ask you to do tonight is to help us in every Congressional district in every State, support those candidates that want to charge ahead, to whip, to whip inflation and to save energy. You can do it. You can send to the Congress those individuals whose records justifies it.

And I am confident that those here tonight warrant and justify your support, but let me take a minute, if I might, to talk about a particular subject that is related to inflation. The facts show that our energy problem is a major difficulty in the battle against inflation. We know that the cost of energy has gone up very substantially, primarily because of the fact that we import some six million barrels of oil from outside the Continental limits every 24 hours, and the cost of that oil has gone up unbelievably.

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If we are to get ahold, if we are to grasp successfully the problems of energy, we have to do something affirmatively to find other sources. We have to develop and produce those resources at home whether it is oil or coal or geothermal or solar or any one of the other alternatives, nuclear included, that will be a substitute.

So, we cannot be held up by others who come from lands across the oceans. There are some 17 -- or were, I should say, some 17 bills before the Congress that would have helped significantly in this battle to provide alternative means of energy or to expedite the utilization of energy, the energy that we had.

Thus far, two out of those 17 have been approved by the Congress. One more is probably going to come to my desk in the next several days, but that leaves some 14 major proposals that the Congress must act upon if we are to get the kinds of energy sources and supplies that are needed to give us alternative opportunities to those that we relied on for so long, if we are to use those resources at home in a proper, effective way.

Let me say here in Pennsylvania you have had a great experience. I talked to Hugh and Dick on the way up from Washington today. One of those bills is a proposal to provide reasonable environmental safeguards while permitting vitally needed increases in coal production through surface mining in Pennsylvania and other States.

If I might point out, each ton of unmined Pennsylvania coal makes it necessary for us to import four barrels of expensive foreign oil. You know better than I that Pennsylvania has a totally adequate and effective State law governing surface mining, which has achieved a reasonable balance between productivity and environmental concerns.

What we need at the Federal level is a piece of legislation comparable to that which you have in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and I hope the Congress will see the wisdom of putting the final touches on such legislation.

But in addition, we need some changes in what is called the Clean Air Act, to remove unrealistic deadlines and to permit the use of available domestic coal supplies. I think this can be done, the record is clear, without endangering the health of any of our citizens.

The Administration, for example, has proposed 13 amendments to the existing Clean Air Act. Unfortunately, neither the House nor Senate has held any meaningful hearings in this regard.

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I can assure you that if the Congress were to pass this legislation, it would help materially in us meeting the challenge of domestic energy and would help us immeasurably in cutting down one million barrels per day of foreign oil imports.

Let me make one observation concerning the elections in 1974, and I happen to think that we should concentrate on '74, not on '76, because we cannot afford in this country to have the wrong kind of a Congress for the next two years.

Some of our friendly adversaries on the other side of the aisle early this year were tremendously optimistic about the possibility that they were going to pick up a net gain of 50 House seats and maybe four or five U.S. Senate seats, and they were anticipating that they would have what they designated as a veto-proof Congress.

I said then, and I reiterate now, I do not think the American people want a veto-proof Congress. One of the basic important, crucial aspects of our society is that our Government works on a system of checks and balances -- Executive, Legislative, Judicial. Fortunately, we are blessed with a two-party system in America that permits us to have two strong major political parties, and the fact that one checks the other and the pendulum swings back and forth has given us probably more liberty, more benefits than any other political system in the history of the United States, and if you ended up with a veto-proof Congress, that balance will be gone.

So, the American people, as I have traveled and listened, are saying, "We want to retain a balance," and so some of our good friends on the other side of the aisle, recognizing that the American people do not want a dictatorial political system, are backing off.

But it does depend on November 5 on what you do. In order to preclude a veto-proof Congress and to elect an inflation-proof Congress, you have to elect or re-elect Dick Schweiker and the Republican nominees for the House of Representatives on November 5, and I urge you to do so.

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Let me simply close by thanking you again and saying a special kind word about a dear and close old friend of mine, Bill Scranton. I have known Bill, I indicated earlier, probably as long as anybody I have known in this room, and I have gotten to know his lovely wife, Mary.

I saw Bill as a law student, as a Member of the House, as a Governor, and when the Office of the Presidency was precipitated so quickly and I needed help, I asked Bill Scranton to come down and help me.

He was a major factor in this difficult transition process from August 9 and for the month or two after that. He epitomizes the highest qualities of character and service in Government, and so I am especially honored, Bill, to join with the many, many people here tonight to join them in honoring you and to of course honor Mary.

You represent what many of us appreciate as the very, very best. We wish you the finest, and before you say "no", sometime I am going to call on you to come down and help us some more.

Bill, from a Michigander to a great citizen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, it is a privilege for me to give you this Distinguished Republican Award, to William W. Scranton, citizen and patriot extraordinary, by me, President of the United States.

Thank you, Bill.

END (AT 10:08 P.M. EDT)