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OCTOBER 16, 1974

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY  
(Kansas City, Missouri)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
GOP CANDIDATES BREAKFAST

MUEHLEBACH HOTEL

9:36 A.M. CDT

Thank you very, very much, Tom, Governor Bond, your associates of State government, public officials, wonderful people from Missouri and elsewhere. It is a great privilege and pleasure to be here for this occasion.

I had a great meeting last night with some 13,000 or 14,000 Future Farmers of America. I looked outside this morning and the weather is super. I have met some grand people here today, and I ate breakfast I didn't have to make myself. (Laughter)

Let me just summarize by saying everything is up-to-date in Kansas City.

I might tell one story about the White House of the last few weeks. We have a new addition -- you might have seen it on television or on the media. My daughter Susan and our new White House photographer, David Kennerly, got together and surprised me with a beautiful 8-month-old Golden Retriever.

The Fords have had two over the last 20-some years. The last one died a year ago in August.

Let me tell you the story of how Susan and David acquired this beautiful new dog for the White House. They called up a very highly recommended kennel and said that they wanted to buy a Golden Retriever puppy. The owner said that was fine, but who would the owner be.

They said it is a surprise, they wanted to keep it secret. Well, the owner said he didn't sell dogs that way. He would have to know whether the dog was going to have a good home.

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So Susan and Dave said to him, said to the kennel owner, that the parents were friendly, they were middle-aged, and they lived in a big white house with a fence around it. (Laughter)

The kennel owner said that was good, do they own or rent? (Laughter)

Well, Dave and Susan were a little perplexed with that question, and they thought for a moment and said, "Well, I guess you might call it public housing." (Laughter)

The kennel owner said, well, that was all right -- the way they explained it. They said the dog was healthy, and it was going to eat a lot. Does the father have a steady job? (Laughter)

Well, they were stuck for an answer with that one.

Well, we got the dog and in the true Bicentennial spirit, we named the dog Liberty. And one of the inquisitive reporters asked Susan, "Who is going to take care of Liberty? Who is going to feed her? Who is going to groom her? Who is going to take her out at night and bring her in in the morning?"

Of course Susan, in a typical 17-year-old daughter fashion, said, "Daddy."

Well, I have a little feeling that this Liberty is going to restrict just a bit of mine, but with a great dog like that, we are very fortunate.

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Let me make about four points this morning. I can recall very vividly quite a few years ago when I first started campaigning for Republican candidates coming to the great State of Missouri and at that time, if my memory is accurate, there wasn't a single Statewide public office held by a Republican.

There was just one Republican Member of the House, Tom Curtis. A few years later, I had the privilege of coming back to campaign on behalf of our candidates. At that time, we had two Republican Members of the House of Representatives -- Tom Curtis and that venerable Doc Hall.

And at that time, you had just elected a fine, outstanding Attorney General, Jack Danvers. And then, in 1972, I came back and you had a superb ticket headed by Kit Bond. And on that occasion, you elected Kit, his running mate, Bill Phelps, and you also elected Gene Taylor to replace Doc Hall.

It just seems to me that what the Republican Party has presented to the State of Missouri at the State level is a ticket that believes in reform and who does something about it -- a ticket that gives honesty and integrity and vision to the State of Missouri.

And I can tell you it is a privilege and pleasure for me to be here in the company of this group of State office holders represented at the top by Kit Bond. I congratulate you in this State for what you have done.

But the problem we face in 1974, particularly as I see it from Washington, is how we can strengthen the Congress, strengthen the Congress in the United States Senate and the House of Representatives.

Now, you have in Gene Taylor, of the Seventh District, a strong, strong Member of the House; a small businessman who knows not only his own business but the needs and requirements of the people of that Congressional District. And during the time that I was the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives early in the present Congress, Gene Taylor was a big help to me in fighting the problems that we face: inflation, inadequate defense programs -- the problems that come up every day to make sure that our Government at the Federal level is run properly.

Gene Taylor, in my humble opinion, meets all the criteria for a great Member of the House of Representatives and I hope the people in the Seventh District sends him back to Washington with a resounding margin.

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But at the national level in the two big areas of how we keep our economy strong and how we maintain the peace, I need a stronger Congress. Let's take the first issue: The issue of how to put a lid on inflation on the one hand and keep our economy strong on the other.

This is a very difficult line to draw. It requires leadership in the White House; it requires cooperation in the Congress; it requires the total cooperation of Governors and local officials throughout all 50 States.

Let me speak for a moment, if I might, about Kit Bond. When I arrived yesterday at the airport, Kit handed me his response to the telegram that I sent every Governor the day before asking for their help, their cooperation. And here is the letter that Kit sent me. It indicates that he and the people of Missouri have cooperated. And he indicates that he and his administration will continue that cooperation.

It means we have to save energy by driving less -- the enforcement of the 55 mile speed limit, the conservation in your State government and its affairs -- by driving less you save money and you save lives -- and as I recall the letter, Kit, a 31 percent reduction in lives saved on the highways of Missouri.

I congratulate you and the people of Missouri for this great achievement.

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But what I am saying is that if we got from every Governor of every State the cooperation we have gotten from Kit and his associates, we would be well ahead of the program and the schedules that I have outlined.

But a moment ago I said we had to have the help and assistance of the Congress and this brings us to my comments concerning an old and dear friend of mine, Tom Curtis. We served together in the House of Representatives for about two years.

Tom Curtis is one of the most expert individuals I have ever known in the Congress on the problems of taxation. He served on the Committee on Ways and Means with skill and dedication, total integrity, also served for a number of years on the Joint Economic Committee -- the House and Senate, the experts that are drawn from both the House and the Senate to take a look not just at taxation but the total economic problems.

And from that experience, he can contribute significantly to not only Missouri but to the country as a whole when he is elected on November 5.

But I can speak from very personal relations with Tom Curtis. We were friends. Our families were good friends. I watched him day after day after day on the floor of the House, and he was the kind of a Congressman and he is the kind of a Senator that I would want to vote for if I lived in the State of Missouri.

I often say that one of the things our big spenders don't understand and don't realize is that as they try to allegedly help some beneficiaries and promise them this and promise them that--I think Tom would agree with me a hundred percent in this very simple statement--some of the big spenders don't understand that a government big enough to give us everything we want, is a government big enough to take from us everything we have.

And in the economic message that I sent to the Congress a week ago Tuesday, I asked the Congress to set a spending limit of \$300 billion which is \$5.4 billion less than the proposed expenditures submitted to the Congress last January.

We can meet that target and it would be a lot more attainable if we had some of those "show me" Congressmen from Missouri like Gene Taylor and Tom Curtis.

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They would ask those tough questions. What is the money for? What are you going to do with it? Why can't you trim it? Why can't we cut back in a reasonable, responsible way in this tough struggle that we have to get away from double-digit inflation to give our country the leadership throughout the world in trying to set an example for other nations to tighten our belts and bolster the free world as it meets in many ways the challenges of those who have a different philosophical view, a different ideology.

Well, the other question I would like to speak about this morning was brought home to me very vividly last night and again this morning. One of our major objectives, in this case it is Democratic and Republican, is the maintenance of peace throughout the world -- peace through negotiations, not through confrontation.

Last night, as I was having a cup of coffee working with some of my staff, I was sitting in a room in the Muehleback Hotel, and I looked up and there were two pictures of Harry Truman. One of those pictures showed Harry Truman, a great Democratic President, signing in May of 1947 the Greek-Turkish Aid Program. And history has a strange way of repeating itself. The cooperation between a great Democratic President from the State of Missouri and the cooperation of a great United States Senator from my home State, the State of Michigan, Arthur Vandenberg, brought together the United States in a program aimed at saving the Mediterranean -- helping Greece and Turkey and laying the foundations for NATO, an alliance with our friends in Europe that has maintained the peace in that continent for better than a quarter of a century.

And right now, a Republican President is having some trouble with a Democratic Congress in almost the same way. I want to say here and now that the Democrat leadership in both the House and the Senate agree with me, but unfortunately, a majority of the Congress do not understand that some of the efforts that are being made are hurting Greece, precluding the possibility of a legitimate settlement of the problem of Cyprus and undermining NATO which has given us peace in Western Europe for better than a quarter of a century.

And what we need in the Congress right now is Members who understand that the United States, if it has flexibility, if it has leadership, if it has unity between the Executive and the Congress, can continue to give the guiding hand for the maintenance of peace not only in Western Europe, but in the Mediterranean and in other parts of the world.

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And I know that I can count on people like Tom Curtis when he is there to help and assist in this great struggle for peace, not only on a temporary basis, but on a permanent basis.

And one final comment: I have been reading the polls lately. If you read them, I guess in my position -- and some others who feel so strongly about our party -- they are a little discouraging. Well, the polls have been wrong in the past. But let me point out if the polls are right -- and I don't assume they are -- you can have what some of the most partisan members of the opposition say, a veto-proof Congress.

Now, what does that mean? It means that you will have a concentration of power in one of the three branches of the Federal Government. In effect, you will have a legislative dictatorship. One of the biggest strengths of America for the last 200 years has been balance -- checks and balances.

Our forefathers put together in that Constitution a system predicated on a strong President in the White House, a strong Congress in the Legislative Branch, a strong judicial system in the Supreme Court, one checking on the other, and that finely-tuned balance has given us the great blessings that we have had for almost 200 years.

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Now if you have a veto-proof Congress, you in effect have one branch of the Government dictating to at least one of the others.

Americans don't like dictatorships. They like a system of checks and balances. And so in order to maintain that balance, I think we have got to go out and make a massive effort aimed at a Congress that will cooperate to beat inflation, to strengthen our economy, a Congress that will give us the tools to maintain the peace and not handicap and hamstring us with restrictions that interfere with our capability to do the job, a Congress that will be cooperative, not a Congress that will be subservient, not a Congress that will be a dictator, but a Congress that is a part of the team with some give and take.

And so I say to you, the odds are tough, but I think those odds were pretty tough last Saturday when Missouri played Nebraska. (Laughter)

And those tough ballplayers from Missouri did a job, and if you do your job, if you enlist in this great struggle for the kind of representation Tom Curtis can give you, the kind of representation other candidates on the ticket can give you, you can win just as they did.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 9:54 A.M. CDT)