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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT THE
SOUTH DAKOTA REPUBLICAN STATE CENTRAL COMMITTEE RALLY
SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA

It is good to be back in South Dakota. I especially enjoy it here because of Mount Rushmore. There are four faces sculpted on that great national monument. One is a Federalist. One is a Democrat. And two are historical pillars of the Republican party. This is the kind of political breakdown that I like in South Dakota. Don't you agree?

I am most pleased to be on the same platform with some truly fine people who fit the tradition of Abraham Lincoln and Teddy Roosevelt -- people like Jim Abdnor, Leo Thorsness, John Olson, and Larry Pressler.

Leo Thorsness mentioned to me earlier that the hunting season opened here in South Dakota last Saturday -- and, by coincidence, you might have seen in the newspapers and on TV, the White House has a new addition. My daughter, Susan, and our White House photographer, Dave Kennerly, got together and surprised me with an eight-month old Golden Retriever. And I'd like to tell you the story of how Susan and Dave bought this dog.

They called up a very highly recommended kennel and said they wanted to get a Golden Retriever. The owner of the kennel said fine. Who will the owner be? And they said, it's a surprise -- they would like to keep it a secret. Well, the kennel owner said he did not sell dogs that way. He would have to know the dog was going to a good home.

So Susan and Dave assured him that it would be. They explained that the parents are friendly middle-aged, and live in a big white house with a fence around it.

The kennel owner said, "Good. Do they own or rent?" Susan and Dave thought a moment, and said, "Well, you might say it's public housing."

The kennel owner said, "Okay. Now this is a big dog who is going to eat a lot. Does the father have a steady job?" Well--there they were stuck for an answer.

Needless to say, they got the dog and, very appropriate to the spirit of the Bicentennial, we have named her Liberty. A reporter asked my daughter Susan who is going to take care of Liberty? Who is going to feed her and groom her and take her out in the morning and at night? And Susan did not hesitate a minute. She said, "Daddy!"

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So I have a feeling this is one Liberty that is going to cost me some of mine.

I had the opportunity to confer with Jim Abdnor as we flew over here on Air Force One -- and I can assure you that South Dakota is fortunate to have him in Congress. He is a fighter -- for the farmers and for the taxpayers. He stands for high principles and energetic efforts on behalf of South Dakotans. I am glad to be in his corner. I know he is in mine. I urge you to send him back to Washington.

One thing we know about Leo Thorsness. He is not only a fighter -- he is a strong man with a strong background to serve the people of this great State. And I know this, too: I can count on him to keep an eye on the way your money will be spent in Washington -- to be a full-time fighter against inflation on a year-in and year-out basis instead of once every six years -- at election time.

There is another South Dakotan we need in Congress -- Larry Pressler, your candidate for the House from the First District. The election of Leo and Larry will bring up to full strength this State's Republican contingent in the Congress.

At the State level, John Olson will make you an outstanding governor. His experience as Executive Director of the South Dakota Rural Electrification Administration and earlier as State Highway Director has provided him with a knowledge and know-how that makes him uniquely qualified to lead this State for the next four years. I urge you to elect him.

Now let me get into why I am here today. I am here today for two reasons: First, the American people have a right to see their President out defending what he believes in. They have a right to see him explaining to the people of South Dakota in South Dakota what happens in Washington, D. C. I can assure you it is refreshing to see the Nation out of some other window than the one in Washington.

The second reason that I am here is connected with the first reason. I am proud to defend my programs and to meet the people of America. But I need some help. I need the help of inflation-cutters like Jim Abdnor. I need the help of tough-minded men like Leo Thorsness who will help bring a bipartisan tone to America's foreign policy. And so I am here to ask you -- and all the people of South Dakota -- to help our candidates this year.

What kind of help do we need in Washington?

I am working night and day, I promise you, on the problems of high prices, of unemployment, and of assuring adequate energy supplies. That is why I addressed the Congress just over a week ago and submitted a detailed 31-point program which represents combinations of the best thinking that America has to offer.

I need assistance to get these programs through the Congress. Every day that we wait is just one more day that we have allowed inflation to creep ahead.

There is so much to do. I have assured the farmers of this and every State that they will have all the fuel and fertilizer they need to hopefully harvest the most bountiful farm crops we have ever enjoyed.

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I would like to reassure you on another point. I am vigorously opposed to any additional federal tax on gasoline. We want to keep this country rolling--not parked on a dead-end street.

We all know that productivity is the key to getting a strangle hold on inflation. If all aspects of our economy functioned with the efficiency and almost miraculous output of the American farmer, I am convinced that inflation would be a problem of much smaller proportions.

Rural America has blazed the way to a higher standard of living for the United States, if not the entire world. And yet, this green revolution has not spread its benefits evenly across the vast farmlands of America. There must be another green revolution for the men and women who draw their livelihood from the soil--a green revolution that promises them an adequate return and a fair profit on their time, land, investment, and labor.

I promise you that the problems and concerns of the people of South Dakota will not be buried under the concrete of big city interests.

These are some of the things I have been proposing and these are some of the reasons I am here to enlist the people of South Dakota in the WIN program. Isn't it time to Whip Inflation Now? The people of the plains have always been strong. Their efforts helped pull America out of a depression, helped defend it in war, helped to keep the peace that we have now attained after so many years of conflict. That is why we are going to win again.

This is not any easy time for America. But then great challenges have never been easy. There have been many who have expressed concern over some of the programs which I submitted in my economic address to the Congress. I have especially heard complaints about the five percent tax surcharge that I have proposed on upper income levels and on corporate incomes.

I have heard complaints that I should not ask for a rise in taxes during a campaign. All I can say is that these are unusual times. It is no time for business as usual. It is time to face up to a serious problem that is threatening the future of every American. And when there is a serious problem we do not turn to political expediency, we turn to serious answers. I do not like higher taxes. But I like higher inflation and unemployment even less.

Let me say this about that surcharge. Just remember, we are suffering a national inflation rate of nearly twelve percent. I have recommended as part of my anti-inflation package a five percent tax--a tax at less than half the rate of our inflation. Now, isn't it better to have a one time tax--to last only one year--instead of a twelve percent inflation rate which may last for years to come?

Doesn't it make more sense to make this comparatively small and temporary sacrifice now to avert a bigger long-term crisis in the future? I think so--and I think the American people have enough good sense to believe that it is time to face ahead instead of turning back.

Which brings up another point of concern to me: The possibility of one party government in the United States. It violates every tenet of our history and restricts the growth of truly progressive government in the country. There must be balance. There must be perspective. There must be cooperation and sharing.

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That is another reason I came to South Dakota--to help preserve 200 years of American tradition, to help maintain intact our system of checks and balances and to help make sure we have a strong two party system in America.

Let me conclude today by just reminding Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike: Congressional elections are what America is all about. It is the time to account for the stewardship of those who serve the people. There is no gun so mighty nor force so powerful as the quiet symbolic voice spoken in the privacy of the voting booth. It is the opportunity, and indeed the responsibility, of every citizen to balance the ledger sheets of good government. That is what these elections are all about.

I know we will get the job done. We will lick inflation. We will strengthen the great two party system in the United States. And we will continue to build the international peace which will come from bipartisan cooperation in the highest councils of our government.

That is why I am here today. I am glad I came. Thank you.

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