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THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BE DELIVERED
AT THE UNITED REPUBLICAN FUND DINNER
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Thank you, Dan Terra, for that fine introduction. It's a great pleasure to be here in Chicago again where exciting things are always happening. For instance, Dan was telling me there's a kangaroo that's running loose on the North Side. Dan said the way that kangaroo has been dodging tacklers, there's a big controversy over what to do with him when they catch him. The Chicago police want to put him in the zoo -- and the Chicago Bears want to put him in the backfield! And, of course, the Democrats want to register him -- at least once!

Chicago is getting to be a habit with me -- and I love the place. I was here in June for a Congressional Boosters fund raiser and again in July at a dinner for State Senate incumbents and candidates. And Betty was here in September for a luncheon honoring Republican women candidates. Incidentally, Betty is a Chicago native, as you may know. She sends you her love. She is doing fine and told me she hopes to be back here again soon to see all her old friends.

You know, it really is true what they say about this big dynamic city of yours. It looks tough on the outside but, at heart, it's a real softy -- a warm, friendly place. That's why I'm always glad to come back -- and that's why I'm so proud of the fine slate of candidates our Republican Party is running for office here in Cook County. Chicago is one of the biggest and best cities in the country. It deserves the best leadership. And that is what your blue-ribbon GOP slate offers.

I also want to thank the distinguished speakers who preceded me on the platform this evening: Bill Croft, who has done a great job as Dinner Chairman and MC; Pete Bensinger, who will make a great County Sheriff; Harry Page, who is running hard and well for State Treasurer, and who is just the right man for the job; Chuck Percy, one of the most intelligent, articulate men in the United States Senate, and a good friend; George Burditt, who will make a great colleague for Chuck -- a Senator who will vote against big spending and against inflation -- the kind of man we need in the United States Senate; and, of course, Dan Terra, President of the United Republican Fund of Illinois. Dan, I just want to say thank you for a job well done.

Since this campaign began I have been to almost every part of the country. Everywhere I found the same thing. People are concerned about the quality of government. People are worried about where we're heading as a Nation, and what is being done about the problems we face.

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And people are fed up with corruption in government, whether it is graft at the local level or abuse of power at the top.

It is up to those of us in political life to give the kind of leadership, the kind of example that Americans can believe in. And that is what the Illinois GOP has done, here in Cook County and throughout the State.

Now I realize that there are some political prophets who think that the game is up--that people are going to stampede blindly into the Democratic column.

But I don't believe that. That is why I am here tonight.

I have been in public life for 26 years now. I have seen a lot of elections and I have heard a lot of wise predictions. They were almost always wrong. It was the one thing you could count on.

The only rule of thumb that I know--and it is one that has never failed me--was taught me by one of my dearest, oldest friends. He was a great Congressman, a great Senator and a great orator. I will never forget him.

He came from Illinois and his name was Ev Dirksen.

I remember one afternoon--when we were talking together in his Capitol office.

The Vietnam War was going full blast. Inflation was a problem. The Democrats had swamped us in 1964, and a lot of people were saying that the GOP was finished.

Frankly, I was feeling a little down, a little discouraged, and I told Ev so.

He paused for a moment, looked at me and said, "Jerry, don't let it get you down. You just keep in there doing your best for the people and the people will do their best for you."

That is exactly what I did, and I found out that Ev Dirksen was right. It worked.

It worked for me in the Congress and I believe it will work in the White House.

But to do my best for the people and for America, I am going to need the help of good men and women in the Congress--men and women who will help me fight government spending and whip inflation.

What we need--what we must have if we are to see America through this difficult economic period--is not a veto-proof Congress but an inflation-proof Congress.

I think all of us have learned in life that problems--the really big problems--don't spring up overnight. And they don't get solved overnight either.

Inflation is like that. It has been building up for years, like a disease

in the body of the economy. Curing it will take time. But it can be done.

How did it happen? How did inflation get out of control?

There is no single, simple answer. But one big reason is government spending. Hand-in-hand, they have grown together. Each unbalanced budget -- each wasteful spending bill rammed through the Congress -- has added to your cost of living and fed inflation.

Who is to blame? There are many villains. But the biggest burden of guilt lies on the shoulders of the biggest spenders. And the fact is that one political party has run the Congress -- and held open the nation's pursestrings -- for 38 of the last 42 years, and for the past straight 20 years.

That party is the Democratic Party, and we cannot allow it to drive the budget deeper into the red and the rate of inflation higher into the blue.

That is why each of you is more important than ever this year, when so much hangs in the balance.

Your enthusiasm, your support, your volunteer work and, most of all, your vote, are the keys to whipping inflation and preserving a healthy two-party system in America.

Here in Illinois you are lucky. You have 12 great Republican Congressmen running for re-election: Bob Michel, Ed Derwinski, John Anderson, Paul Findley, Bob McClory, John Erlenborn, Tom Railsback, Phil Crane, Bob Hanrahan, Ed Madigan, Sam Young and George O'Brien.

Each of these great friends and former colleagues is a real champ -- a hard-hitting inflation fighter. And so are the other 11 Republican House candidates.

We need them in Washington. They need your support.

But you don't just fight inflation in Washington. The battlefield is the whole country -- every state, every county and every city. So I hope you will all get behind your Republican state legislature candidates. Only they can give you the kind of responsible, economical state government you want.

That is the whole purpose of our party -- from Lincoln's day to the present. To be just, to be fair, to be responsible. To stand up for what is right and to give America the kind of good government it needs and deserves.

The Republican Party has stood that test. It ended the longest, bloodiest war in America's history; it has begun the long, hard process of returning power from the Federal Government back to the people and their locally elected leaders; and, it is leading the battle against inflation and government spending -- a battle America must win.

If we pull together, we can do it. As Ev Dirksen said, "If we do the best we can for the people, they will do their best for us."

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