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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS
IN A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT
AND
NORRIS COTTON
FORMER SENATOR FROM THE
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
AT THE
NORTHEAST BUSINESS GROUP
AND
SMALL BUSINESS SERVICE BUREAU

MANCHESTER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

8:30 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: I wanted to call and to express my great appreciation for the small business people throughout the Northern area -- Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts -- for their superb effort in membership, as well as philosophically, for the things that I think are pretty fundamental in our American society.

I am delighted, David,* that you are participating in this with your great knowledge, expertise, information, concerning what goes on here in Washington.

Of course, Norris Cotton and Senator Aiken are two of my very favorite people. They served with me for all of the time, really, that I have served in the Congress of the United States, and I know of their total dedication when they were in the House, as well as in the Senate, for what was good in making small business as a force and a factor in the economy of the United States.

I have had an opportunity to look, of course, at the total economy. And we hear, ordinarily, about what big corporations do here or there, but it is my judgment that the strength of America really comes from the small business people who provide services, provide production, provide research and development.

That is what makes America strong. And I congratulate the 1,200 small businessmen in the Northern area of our country for their substantial contribution, substantively, but more importantly, in a philosophical way, in making America the kind of a country we have today.

MORE

*Television Commentator David Brinkley

If I might just add a point of this situation, America has had the problem of being tested at home and challenged abroad. The strength of America is its vision, its dedication, and I have the utmost faith in the small groups, in what is necessary and essential to make America the kind of country that we all believe in.

I respect, of course, the manufacturing and production geniuses of our country. They are wonderful. But the chips that I think are important ought to be put and the guy or the gal -- I guess we have to do that now, don't we (Laughter) -- who, through their little store, their little factory, their little service organization, produce for what people want, what people can get from our kind of society.

David, I just think you are wonderful to be up here with all of these fine people from Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and give them the good old pitch for a better America, a country that went through not only the crisis of the last week, the crisis of the last month, but we took some lickings but we came back strong because the character of America is the foundation of our success.

God bless every one of you. May I add this one thing. Senator Aiken and Senator Cotton epitomize the strength that I have been talking about, and I thank both of them for their great contribution to a wonderful country, who can go from adversity to success because 213 million Americans believe in this country and believe in a better world for everybody.

David, thank you very much.

Norris, how are you?

MORE

SENATOR COTTON: Fine, Mr. President. It is nice to hear your voice. You are most kind to speak so well of Senator Aiken, who deserves it, and Norris Cotton, who deserves part of it. (Laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I know you both, and what I said about both of you I believe -- and don't give me any hard time, Norris.

SENATOR COTTON: No, I won't. I won't, indeed.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you have any stories that you know about me?

SENATOR COTTON: I couldn't tell the stories tonight because -- I had five of them and I was only allowed to tell one because you were going to call up here. (Laughter)

But, Mr. President, I am happy to inform you that you are in. David Brinkley was asked to predict and he predicted your re-election, didn't he? He pulled out a couple of other boners, too. But -- (Laughter) that was real endorsement.

But seriously, I think that I would gamble that four-fifths of the people here tonight are pretty proud of you for what you have just done in the last week. I want to tell you that.

You heard the applause and that is better than my voice. I will give up the phone, now.

THE PRESIDENT: Norris, let me just say this: the execution of the order, or orders, that was easy, because I knew that we have great Marines, great airmen, great seamen, great soldiers, who would carry out those orders and do what was right for America, and do it successfully.

We have to support them. They are fine young people, well-led, well-equipped and they proved what we have all said -- that we are strong, we are tolerant, we are cautious, but firm. This is what America has to be as we move into the days ahead.

We should thank them. That is the important thing.

David, I hope you enjoy it up there. They are great people and I thank you for the opportunity of just saying a word or two.

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MR. BRINKLEY: Thank you, Mr. President.
Some of those in the room look forward to seeing you
in March.

THE PRESIDENT: I will be up there. Thank
you very much.

END

(AT 8:39 P.M. EDT)