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Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO BE DELIVERED AT  
THE CUYAHOGA GOP DINNER

CLEVELAND, OHIO

First, I want to tell you how grateful I am that you've made this evening so delightfully informal. The word "Supper" has such a nice relaxed ring to it. People sometimes seem to get uptight at dinners--seldom at suppers. In fact, I still feel for the Master of Ceremonies at an Indianapolis dinner I attended last year.

At the conclusion of the program, so that we could keep to our schedule, the M.C. had to ask members of the audience to stay in their seats until the Presidential party had left. But his actual words didn't quite come out that way. What he said was, "Ladies and Gentlemen, this concludes our program but would you please remain in your seats--while the President is removed from the hall!"

I am delighted to be here in Cleveland and in the great Buckeye State once again. As always, you've given me a very warm welcome, and I can see that I am among friends here tonight.

Even though the Republican Party of Ohio and Cuyahoga County is sponsoring this great Independence Festival Supper, I understand it isn't really supposed to be a political event.

So I'm not going to remind the so-called political experts-- the ones who were saying not long ago that Republicans were an endangered species--that there are at least 1,300 Republicans here tonight--alive, well and enthusiastic. And I'm not going to take this particular opportunity to urge the people of Cleveland to re-elect Mayor Ralph Perk, who in his first year as Mayor reduced crime in this city by 26 percent and who has restored financial stability to the city's government. And--tonight--I'm not going to endorse the re-election of other outstanding Republican Mayors like Jack Hunter of Youngstown, John Ballard of Akron, Stanley Cmick of Canton, and Tom Moody of Columbus.

And far be it from me to say this evening what a great job Jim Rhodes is doing as Governor of this great state, or compliment him on his outstanding program to bring new jobs to Ohio through increased housing construction, new industry, improved transportation systems and urban renovation. And I'm not even going to mention Bob Taft, one of the most effective and most respected members of the United States Senate, and a man who knows how to get things done, whether it's a new National Park for Ohio or reformation of the regulatory agencies of the Federal Government.

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And I am not going to speak any words of praise tonight for the magnificent representation the people of Ohio are receiving in Washington from Members of Congress like J. William Stanton, who is here tonight, and the fourteen other outstanding Republican Congressmen from Ohio.

Under the circumstances, it would not be appropriate to say on this occasion that the Republican Party stands for the same things most Americans believe in--personal freedom, local control over local concerns, a strong national defense, fiscal responsibility, free enterprise and responsive government. And I am not going to predict tonight that this mutual understanding and this growing public support will give the Republican Party great victories in 1976, here in Ohio and all across the country.

No, sir. If you want to hear a political speech, you are in the wrong place tonight. There is nobody here but a lot of good Americans celebrating their independence. A century ago in 1876, as America was observing its first hundred years of independence, a son of Ohio--Rutherford B. Hayes--was the Republican candidate for President of the United States.

Hayes won that 1876 election, but the campaign was marred by bitter partisanship, with even the outcome of the election cast in doubt by political charges and countercharges.

President Hayes, realizing that this kind of excessive partisanship could produce a stalemate in government as well as discord in the nation, said in his Inaugural Address: "He serves his party best who serves the country best."

Tonight, as we enter our 200th year of independence, we in this country have more than enough challenges to consume our great energies and ambitions without getting bogged down in political stalemate and discord. We must be about the business of serving our country by getting things done, making the hard decisions in both domestic and foreign policy, moving this country forward. The concept of "independence" must permeate the development and implementation of our policies here at home, just as "interdependence" is the foundation of our policies abroad.

As a first step, I believe it is time for us to declare our independence from governmental bureaucracies grown too large, too powerful, too costly, too remote and yet too deeply involved in our day-to-day lives. Even though there are many things government must do for people, there are many more things that people would rather do for themselves.

With the depression of the 1930's began the policy of creating a new layer of federal bureaucracy for every problem in America and then spending millions--and then billions--of dollars in the hope that money alone would solve the problem.

But the depression policies of the 1930's--on which democratic-controlled congresses have based their programs ever since--cannot solve the problems of the 1970's. If those policies were effective in their day, they are old and tired and ineffective now.

The greatest mistake this country can make is to turn its back on its own native genius, its creativity, its industry and its compassion, and look solely to the Federal Government for solutions or salvation. What we need in this country is not a new deal but a fresh start. What we need is not more federal control, but the adventure of personal achievement and the rebirth of the self-confident pioneering spirit that made America the great nation it is today.

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The government will do its part, of course. Declaring our independence from too much government does not mean sounding a retreat from the legitimate responsibilities which government must and ought to assume. Quite the contrary, tightened spending means more funds will be available for essential programs.

If we can put government to work doing what we want it to do, we can keep it from doing what it has no business doing. My aim is to declare America's independence from inflation spawned by decades of government overspending.

And, as part of the bargain, we can declare our independence from higher and higher taxes, and spend a little more of the money we earn the way we want to spend it -- and maybe even save a little for a change.

If we can stimulate private enterprise without addicting it to continuous government intervention, if we can establish guidelines for business without over-regulation, if we can unleash the great power of American free enterprise and get the great American labor force back to work at full strength in a sound and free economy . . . then we can declare our independence from recession and high unemployment here in the United States. We can declare America's independence from the fear and the alarming growth of crime. We can declare America's independence from foreign oil and energy sources.

I am confident that, together, we can bring forth rich new harvests from this land of opportunity. We can invite all Americans -- whatever their race or sex or station in life -- to sit at the table of America's bounty and partake more fully of its abundance.

I truly see America's future as bright with hope and promise. I see a nation that works. I see people taking pride in their work and in their lives.

I see a national government that responds to people's needs but does not order people's lives. Don't forget that a government big enough to give us everything we want is a government big enough to take away everything we have.

I see a re-emergence of the old values -- values like simple honesty and common decency -- as new national resources with which to build a nobler, safer, more successful society.

There is no reason in the world we can't live the kind of life we want: A life of optimism and faith, a life of close kinship with our neighbors, a life with room for joy, a life of peace within ourselves and with those about us.

I believe in America. I believe in the American people. And I believe that, as we start our third century of independence, we can take renewed confidence in our future -- a future that calls us to new achievement and glory and greatness.

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