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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP RALLY

GRAND BALLROOM
MARRIOTT HOTEL

11:53 A.M. CDT

My good friend Al Quie, Bill Frenzel, Tom Hagedorn and Mrs. Ring, and all of you great Republicans:

It is a great privilege and pleasure for me to be here. You know, it brings back a good memory I have going back to 1932, my first visit to Minnesota. (Laughter) I came up here with the University of Michigan football team, and played against some of those great football players you turn out up here.

I was a sophomore, and it was five below zero, and that stadium was very cold. I wasn't good enough to play very much, so I sat on the bench most of the time. I won't tell you the score, but two years later you made up for it and beat the devil out of us. (Laughter)

I think you know every visit I have ever made to Minnesota has been memorable, and it is without exception.

As I was getting off the plane at the Twin Cities International Airport last night an amazing thing happened to me. Somebody asked me how to get to the State Capital in St. Paul.

What made it so amazing, it was Governor Anderson. (Laughter)

Obviously, I am pleased to be with such a tremendous gathering of Republicans here in the great State of Minnesota, and I understand from Chuck and the others that you have earned your way here in a tremendous effort in raising money for the party in your local communities.

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I know, from my long practical experience in trying to get re-elected to the Congress, the heart and the soul of the Republican Party depends upon what all of you do in your local communities.

So, I thank you. I just hope you don't have to give two-thirds of that money to the DFL as well.
(Laughter)

Even more importantly, your individual achievements and accomplishments must give you a great deal of satisfaction because you know what you have done will have an impact on the party locally, statewide and nationally.

It has been my experience that there is a rising tide of enthusiasm and a great deal of optimism as far as the party's election prospects in November of 1976.

Frankly, as I travel around the country, I like what I see, and I am glad to see this same spirit here in Minnesota today. You have a great chairman in Chuck Slocum.

I talked to Chuck, as he indicated, after he was selected, and it is wonderful to meet him here today. He is a young man with energy, talent, plenty of talent to spare, and no time to waste.

I know he will do as fine a job, and as good a job as Bob Brown did before him.

If I could take off what I think about these three gentlemen in the back here, (Laughter) I am only going to tell you the good things I know about them. (Laughter)

Of course, Al Quie has been one of my long-time and dearest friends in the Congress, and he is a great Member of the House of Representatives. Bill Frenzel, a fine, fine, upstanding, effective Member of the House of Representatives, who has done -- and I am sure will do -- a great job. And, of course, Tom, a newcomer, but I have had some experience in seeing newcomers.

Some come and some go, but I can feel in Tom that he is the kind of person that is going to stay there a long time and do a good job.

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I see among the group today a number of your Republican State Legislators from around the State, and I had the privilege of meeting many of them just before I came in here.

They are the foundation of the Republican Party. The only problem you have is, you need more, and we need more in the State Legislature after the next election. Let's be sure that happens.

Grassroots Republicans have traditionally been the great strength of the Republican Party. I do not care whether it is in Michigan, Minnesota, Iowa or elsewhere. We, as candidates, cannot get elected without the help and assistance of people like yourselves at the grassroots level.

And I am convinced as I see this group here, as I saw a great group in Iowa last night, that the Republican Party is on the upbeat, the upswing, and I just thank you for being among those who started when our fortunes were low and our prospects were bleak. You had enough dedication to principle, enough dedication to what is good for the country to start when things looked bad and are willing to work as hard as you have and be successful as evidenced by being here.

People in Minnesota, from my experience, are known for your pioneering spirit, your taste for a real challenge and your ability to excel in a wide range of endeavors.

After talking with a number of your Members of Congress over a period of time, I know that you here in Minnesota are known as somewhat independent minded, and I am convinced that this year and next the Republican Party can appeal to the independent minded voter here in Minnesota and across the country.

I am convinced -- I am very strongly convinced -- that the independent voter is ready for a fresh start, and that is exactly what we are prepared to offer them. The independent voter wants a sound and prosperous national economy without recession, without inflation, and so do we as Republicans.

The independent voter wants jobs for those who can work and sensible help for those who want. The independent voter wants his country to achieve energy independence, and so do we.

This wonderful independent voter wants a good education, good housing, good health care and good food for his family at the prices he can afford, and so do we as Republicans.

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The independent voter wants the scales of justice to balance the right of the criminal defendant with the right of a law-abiding society, and so do we.

Our crime program is aimed at domestic tranquility with deep concern for the victim of crime, and the independent voter wants that as well.

This independent voter -- and more and more of them are appearing in every State of the Union -- wants an America at peace with itself and throughout the world. But the independent voter knows that peace is too easily broken, and he knows that the surest guarantee of peace is a strong and ready national defense, and so do we.

The independent voter wants relief from higher and higher taxes, from more and more Government programs intruding into his business and into his private life, from bigger and bigger Federal budget deficits, and so do we.

And this above all, if I might, the independent voter wants America on the move again, moving in new directions with a vision of what can be, and so do we.

As we look toward the future, none of us can be certain and positive what is in store for us. But if we approach the future with faith in ourselves, in each other and in our country, we need not fear the future's mysteries nor miss its opportunities.

We, as Republicans, and millions, millions of more throughout the country as independents can help create a future bright with promise by our decision on election day, November 1976.

I have come here to this great meeting -- and it is a great meeting -- to ask your help in getting the message of common sense Government and hope for the future for the people of Minnesota, in one way or another all of you have distinguished yourselves as enthusiastic supporters of the Republican Party. Otherwise, you would not be here today, but now I am asking each and every one of you, all good Republicans, to go that extra mile for the party, indeed, if it is necessary, that extra thousand miles for the party.

We have the principles, we have the programs and the people to do it.

And what's more, we have the year to do it -- 1976. Let's make that a year to remember, to be remembered by all Republicans.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 12:05 P.M. CDT)