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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT A
GOP LUNCHEON

REGISTRY HOTEL

12:58 P.M. CDT

Bill Frenzel, Tom Hagedorn, George Pillsbury and the distinguished leaders in the Republican Finance Organization, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It has been a wonderful about 18 hours in Minnesota. We were warmly welcomed at the airport, had a wonderful meeting this morning with the news media people and radio, television and newspaper, had a grand and wonderful reception at the American Legion Convention, then, of course, the two meetings with the party people.

I have always had a great affection and fondness for Minnesota, but the time spent here on this occasion just magnifies my feeling and my sentiments toward those from Gopherville. (Laughter)

Speaking of the Gophers, one of the great experiences I have in traveling around the country is running into old friends. It is hard to believe, but back in 1932 and 1933 and 1934 I had the opportunity at the University of Michigan of competing against Bernie Beerman's tough Minnesota football team.

One of those that I competed against in those years was Pug Lund, and I was delighted and honored to see Pug here on this occasion. Pug and I not only played against one another, but we were fortunate to play together on the Shrine East-West team, and also in the Chicago All-Stars.

So, we developed a friendship opposite one another and with one another, and Pug, it is just nice to see you, and I thank you for coming.

It was also great to see an old friend and a dear colleague of a good many years, Anchor Nelson, who is a bulwark of strength and integrity and good common sense, and we miss you, Anchor, but you have a good replacement in Tom.

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I guess you gather from what I have been saying that every visit I have ever made to Minnesota has been memorable, and this has been no exception.

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

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

It is also a pleasure to be in Minnesota, the land of 10,000 lakes, which I understand is now known as the land of 15,000 lakes. In a way, that recount could be a great lesson for the Republican Party. (Laughter)

Like those lakes, I think there are a lot more Republicans here in Minnesota than any of us realize. We just have to go out, find them and get them interested and to the polls.

There has been a tremendous parade of my associates in Washington coming to Minnesota lately. Secretary Kissinger was here last month. So was Earl Butz. I thought I better come out to Minnesota and find out for myself what was attracting everybody to this great State.

What I found is really what I have known for years -- Minnesota is one of the most beautiful States in the Union, has some of the friendliest people anywhere and it has some of the hardest working, most dedicated Republicans that I have ever met.

Of course, I have had some great associations with people from Minnesota in the House of Representatives.

Al Quie, one of my long and very dear friends. Bill Frenzel, an outstanding Member of the House of Representatives, who is respected on both sides of the House. Tom Hagedorn, who is a newcomer.

But, I am convinced, having seen Members come and go, like Greyhound buses sometimes, that Tom is going to stay for a long time, like Al and Bill.

The only problem I think you have, you have got quality -- you just need a little more quantity. (Laughter)

So, if you could sort of add to the delegation, it would not only help your State, in my judgment, but it would give some strong support to Al and Bill and Tom.

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As I travel around the country -- and I have traveled a bit on non-political meetings -- I am optimistic about the Republican prospects for next year's election. I think we are going to have the right kind of candidates, the issues, the money, the workers, and more importantly, in the final analysis, the votes to win.

But it will take a lot of hard work like many of you have contributed in the past. And if we are to capitalize on the opportunities ahead of us -- and they are vast -- I think we have to reach out to that great American majority that does the Nation's work, pays the Nation's bills, provides for the national defense and observes the Nation's laws. That is our constituency.

No matter the color of their skin, the religion they practice, the politics they vote, these solid Americans are the Republican Party's bulwark of strength. They are the people to whom we must tell our story, over and over again, this year as well as next.

And after one year as President, I am even more firmly convinced than ever that Republican principles are really what most Americans believe in, specifically as Republicans, we believe in the free enterprise system and in lifting the very heavy hand of Government from business so that the system can work much more effectively.

We believe in fiscal responsibility and in keeping Federal spending, those levels down which would not trigger further inflation. As some of you may recall, a few months ago when I took some action, I said I was going to take a firm stand against any increase in the Federal deficit. And it was a fair warning to the Congress that they had to behave and not spend more money than we could afford.

We have made a little progress, but if the Congress does not show some restraint and responsibility, there will be a lot more vetos. I think they are in the best interest of this country.

Obviously, I want to thank Al and Bill and Tom -- I cannot remember whether they voted to sustain every veto. (Laughter) I am going back and check up on them. (Laughter) But I am sure they have a pretty good batting average.

Well, as Republicans, we believe in this fiscal responsibility, and a \$60 billion deficit is a big enough deficit. But if we do not hold the lid, in all honesty and sincerity, it will be \$70 billion, \$80 billion or \$90 billion, and that just leads to further momentum and acceleration for as large a deficit in the next fiscal year. I just feel that the American people want us to handle their money in a responsible and effective way. So with the help of good people, Republicans primarily, but a good many Democrats too, I think we are approaching a period of fiscal responsibility that is so important to our Nation's future.

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Obviously, we, as Republicans, believe in a strong national defense as the best way that I know of to insure the peace and to deter war. An adequate military budget with the kind of leadership we are getting in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines is the best way to insure our security.

We believe in the control of our affairs at the State and local level, the officials who are the closest to the problems and to the people that they represent. We think this is an infinitely better approach than having things controlled in Washington by a very remote bureaucracy.

But, most importantly, as Republicans we believe in the freedom of the individual and in retaining that uniqueness of individual responsibility.

I think we are heading rapidly into a very, very important campaign. Next year's election at every level--local, State, as well as national--will be a very critical test of our ability to convince a majority of Americans that Republicans care about things that concern most people today, that we are ready to listen to them, that we are prepared to work -- and I mean work -- our very hardest, and to do our very best for them.

It is my sincere hope and my confident belief that if we are successful in getting across the message to the people over and over and over again, 1976 can be a great year for the Republican Party here in Minnesota, as well as throughout the United States.

I believe that we can make future years great years for our country. I have come here to ask for your help in that effort. I want, obviously, to thank you for what you have done and for what you are going to do. I am confident if we make this maximum effort, every one of us, we can share a great Republican victory in 1976.

Together we can make it a banner year. Let's make certain and positive that banner says "Republican."

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 12:11 P.M. CDT)