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THE WHITE HOUSE
REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
GOP FUND-RAISING LUNCHEON

HOLIDAY INN

2:17 P.M. EDT

Bill Cohen, Dave Emery, Mrs. Bickmore, ladies and gentlemen:

It is a very, very great privilege and a very high honor to have the opportunity of participating in this wonderful function today, not only because of the great crowds you have, but the enthusiasm that I detect.

There is a special dividend about traveling to various parts of the country that I haven't been to too frequently or too recently in that you see some old and very dear friends, people that you worked with, people that you have known, individuals with whom you have a very fine relationship, or did, over a period of time.

Let me say at this point it is nice to see Bob Hale, who was a real stalwart oldtimer when I came to the Congress in January of 1949, and who was very kind and friendly and most helpful. Bob, it is good to see you.

Then there is Stan Tupper, who was extremely helpful at a time when I decided to make a challenge for the Republican leadership in the House of Representatives against some considerable odds. Stan was extremely helpful.

Stan, I thank you for embarking me on this present course. None of us expected it, but you were a very important part in it, and I thank you very much.

I have had the opportunity over a period of time and various incidents and capacities to know two of your fine Governors -- Governor Cross and Governor Reed, and I thank them for the relationship that I had with them and I thank them for their contributions to Maine, as well as to the country.

Very few of you know that I came to Maine for some considerable period of time before some of you were born and had a very wonderful experience here in your great State. It is a pleasure to see an old friend of mine, and his lovely wife. Thank you very much for coming, Gardner and Susan.

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Let me express very deeply and very appreciatively the overly generous remarks that Bill Cowen made. I just hope and trust that in the months and years ahead that I can fully justify the kind and very greatly appreciated remarks that he made; in the course of serving some 25 years in the House of Representatives, you get to those that come and those that will go rather rapidly and those that will stay because they have merit in the job they do on behalf of the country, but equally important, the job they will do on behalf of the people they represent.

Some people who come to the House, they are like Greyhound buses, they come and go very quickly. But Bill Cowen, I could tell the minute he walked in, was a person who had great capability and he has done everything, not only up to the expectations, but beyond the expectations that I would have anticipated and, Bill, I thank you very, very much.

And although I was not in the House of Representatives when Dave came and was sworn in, I have had the privilege and the opportunity to get to know him and based on this bank of knowledge that you acquire, if you have been in the House, particularly in the leadership, you can detect quality and it is my judgment, Dave, you have a new, young Congressman with great quality, keep him there.

The thing that I like about both of them, they are team players. They work together. I have talked to Bill and Dave about a matter that took great concern, and properly so, as far as the State of Maine is concerned. That is the so-called 200 mile limit. Now Bill was one of the initiators and Dave has carried along with Bill to protect your coast and the waters that are adjacent to it.

I believe in the concept of the 200 mile limit. In the Executive Branch we have a little different problem. We are in the process and have been for some months of negotiating on a worldwide basis a 200 mile limit with a number of other very important relationships between countries, land and water, in the Law of the Sea Conference. The United States is pushing hard, has been, is and will particularly, for a 200 mile limit.

And I just want you to know that people like Bill and Dave are leading the fight in this extremely important area in the Congress while we in the Executive Branch are pushing equally strongly in the world forum the accomplishments and the achievements of this limit as well as the other relationships that are so vital for all of us in the world in which we live. And I thank you, Bill and Dave, for the work you are doing in this regard.

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I think it is perfectly obvious that I have looked forward to coming to Maine for a long, long time. I like your people, I love the country, and I am just delighted to see what I see here today.

I am especially pleased to see so many young people in the audience. I think that typifies the spirit and the actuality of the Republican Party in Maine. I don't want you to cross off us oldtimers, but we need the young people in our political party because they are going to be the strength, not only in the next election, but they are going to embrace and make actual the things that we believe in, the principles that we espouse and those that we are dedicated to.

I think the best illustration of the youth in your party is the fact that you have two young Congressmen, a young State chairman, a young Executive Director, a State Senate majority, that I am told is 15 years younger on the average than their Democratic counterparts.

The point is quite clear: Here in Maine we can all say with great pride, Republicans have their eyes firmly fixed on the future instead of their feet frozen in the past.

Seventy-five years ago, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Thomas Brackett Read came to this great City of Portland and said -- and here I quote -- "Here's to the State of Maine, the land of the bluest skies, the greenest earth, the richest air, the strongest and, what is better, the sturdiest men, the fairest and, what is best of all, the truest women under the sun." (Laughter)

I come to Portland today to second that motion.
(Laughter)

I don't think there is a better place than Portland and no better way than a good old-fashioned clam bake to celebrate the last weekend of summer. I obviously appreciate your invitation and thank you for the extremely warm welcome.

You know, it is easy to see that Maine Republicans are enthusiastic, along with a lot of other people in the Great State of Maine. It appears to me that this enthusiasm, which I think is vital and necessary, not only for the Republican Party, but for Maine, and the country, is contagious and I congratulate you for it.

I have seen this kind of enthusiasm as I have been privileged to travel around the United States. This enthusiasm is infectious, and every place I go I like what I see as far as the Republican Party is concerned and what I see among our fellow Americans generally. If we can keep this kind of enthusiasm going for the next 14 months, I predict that 1976 will be a year of victory for the Republican Party in Maine, as well as the United States as a whole, and you can lead the pack.

Because Maine has been traditionally a bellweather State as far as national politics is concerned, the Republican Party here has not only a great opportunity but, in my judgment, a great responsibility-- to field the best candidates, to raise the required funds, to develop winning issues and to convince the voters that their interests and the interests of the Republican Party are identical.

If you would achieve these objectives here in Maine, the Pinetree State, I predict that the old saying, "As Maine goes, so goes the Nation," will once again take its rightful place in the language of politics as the accurate barometer of America's election contest.

Now what makes the 1976 election so vitally important? For one thing it will provide the Republican Party with an opportunity to again demonstrate that it has the strength to survive setbacks, the resolution to arouse this Nation to its greatness and the will to win elections.

With your help in this bellweather State, we can and we will do it in 1976.

Even more important, the 1976 election will enable the people of this great country to send to Washington more Republican Congressmen like Bill Cohen and Dave Emery, who I think typify the dedicated, hard-working, intelligent legislators we need in Washington. They are a part of a relatively small minority. They are outnumbered better than two to one and that is a hard job.

I like to think that despite the fact we are outnumbered quantitatively, we have the quality and we need not only the quality we have but we have to add to the quantity.

Now you can't do much to change that in Maine, except in case Bill might like to be a candidate for another office. (Laughter) But let me add a thought parenthetically, if I might. Bill and Dave don't always vote the way I would necessarily like them to. There is something I believe ingrained in people in Maine of some independence. (Laughter) And I respect it. But their primary responsibility is to represent the people that they have the honor to represent in the State of Maine. And even though I think it is of maximum importance that we have a national energy program, I understand, I respect their somewhat differing view as to how we should implement it as far as Maine and New England is concerned.

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They recognize, as I do, that we have an energy problem and it is getting more and more like an energy crisis. And if we don't get a settlement in the Middle East -- hopefully we will -- we could have an energy crisis of severe magnitude as we did in 1973.

I recognize, of course, that New England does rely more heavily on imported fuel than any other region of the country and that your regional economy feels the effects of energy disruptions more rapidly and even more severely than any other.

You know as well as Bill and Dave, better than our neighbors in other areas of the country the importance, the absolute necessity of achieving energy independence for America. We cannot tolerate being vulnerable to outside national interest over which we have no influence. Energy must be developed internally, energy must be developed from our own natural resources so that America is invulnerable to foreign sources.

And you also know that energy is absolutely essential, not just for running the machines of industry, but for fueling the whole economy of this region as well as the Nation. I think all of you fully recognize that a healthy economy means more jobs for more people, one of the principal concerns of me, as well as Bill and Dave and the Congress.

You know the danger of being at the mercy of some force beyond our control. And in this case, in energy, it is the Middle East, the OPEC nations.

I think you understand first hand the inconvenience, the uncertainty, even the suffering that that kind of a situation can create, where somebody can turn a spigot off in the Middle East and we could be in dire trouble. And you also know the system -- if I might change the subject -- that the system of checks and balances which this Nation's founders wrote into the Constitution 200 years ago wasn't designed as a roadblock to progress.

When I said a year ago that I wanted a good marriage with the Congress, I meant it and I still believe it. But a good marriage requires the best efforts of both partners to make it work. It requires compromise, it requires moderation in meeting the problems and the challenges in a marriage or in the relationship between the White House and Capitol Hill.

I must say that so far I have seen little compromise and less moderation in the policies and the legislative proposals of the Democratic Congress that was sworn in in January of this year.

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What we as a Nation need -- and I say this with the deepest sincerity and the strongest conviction that I have -- what we need is more of the politics of cooperation, not the politics of confrontation. What we need is to carve out solutions so that our problems can be solved. We shouldn't confront just to get political issues: for partisan purposes.

It is my judgment that the American people want action not debate, not delay. They want a responsive government committed to responsible progress. That is exactly what we in the Republican Party are prepared to offer the American people. Perhaps more than at any time in our Nation's history, our Party's principals and its objectives match the hopes and the aspirations of the American people. Our Republican commitment to fiscal responsibility in Government, to a vigorous free enterprise system, to a strong national defense, one second to none, to local control over local matters, and to personal freedom for the individual. These are commitments shared by the vast majority of the American people, and I am sure down Easterners.

Let's open, as I see it, the party's door to all Americans who happen to believe as we do the principals that I just set forth, rather than opening that door just a crack for a very limited few. Let's work together for a common victory rather than working against each other for a sure defeat.

The victory we seek as Republicans is not just a Republican victory. It is one we can share easily and properly with all the people of Maine and with all Americans. It can be a victory of action over apathy, decisiveness over delay, confidence over confusion. It can be a victory of responsive, responsible government that sees the people's needs but does not order people's lives.

This is the kind of victory that we can work for, we are working for, the kind of a victory that will make the next four years the best four years for peace, tranquility, domestic progress and a renewal of the hopes and the aspirations of all that came before us and for the betterment of all that follow.

Thank you very much.

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(AT 2:41 P.M. EDT)