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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
GOP FUND-RAISING LUNCHEON

THE SEATTLE CENTER

12:45 P.M. PDT

Governor Dan Evans, Senator Bob Packwood, Congressman Joel Pritchard, Chairman Ross Davis, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It is wonderful to be here. I can't express sufficiently my deep appreciation to Governor Evans. I do want to congratulate all of you for being here, in participation in a wonderful political activity.

Let me say that this kind of a meeting inspires me, as I am sure it does your great Governor -- and I will add parenthetically I find a similar enthusiasm and an equal participation all over the country.

The American people are eager and anxious for what we have to develop, a party with a program, with candidates, with enthusiasm, and I thank you for being here on this occasion.

You know I had heard before arrival that you had had some rather disagreeable weather for the last three weeks. (Laughter) Of course, it is not typical of Seattle, so I had a story I was going to tell that took somewhat advantage of this unique break in the weather that you have had for the past month or so.

We brought from Washington some good weather, so I am just going to let the story go and say how nice it is to be here on a sunny day in Seattle.

Governor Evans indicated to you how long our friendship has existed, going back to the dark and dismal days in 1965 when we took a shellacking -- or a good many did -- and our party certainly did on a national basis.

Through the efforts of people like Dan Evans and many others, we started a slow rebuilding process. It was the contribution of a young Governor from the great State of Washington that was a significant input into the deliberations of what we call the Republican Coordinating Committee.

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(OVER)

It had Members of Congress, it had former candidates, Republican presidents, it had a number of Governors, it had State legislators, but I could tell then, as his record has proven, that you had a man in your highest State office who could do the job, could make your State grow and prosper, and I thank Dan Evans for that friendship and I thank all of you for keeping him in that office -- 11 years now, I understand.

I think it is wonderful, and I thank Dan for his help and assistance during this past year, which has been a very trying one. You are lucky, keeping him. You have a real fine person in your Governor.

I don't want anything to be misinterpreted -- we have had our eye on Dan, also. (Laughter)

Let me just add another comment about your only Republican Member of the Congress of the United States. Joel Pritchard came, and I had the privilege of knowing him for one year before I became Vice President. But in the span of some 25 years, while I was a Member of the House of Representatives, I saw a great many Members come and go.

The ones that stayed you could almost detect had a competence and a quality that would permit them to serve for an extended period of time. Others, you had the reaction almost instantaneously that he or she wouldn't make it.

In Joel Pritchard, you have the kind of a Congressman who immediately caught the eye of the people who have some capabilities of judging, people who have seen Members of the House come and go like Greyhound buses, and Joel has done a fine job and you have a good investment in him.

I hope and trust that Joel will continue his fine service representing this State.

I am not going to say anything about Bob Packwood because we are going to Oregon later this afternoon, and I don't think you have many votes up here. (Laughter) But anyhow, I was in Maine and Rhode Island this past weekend, and one thing I know was that in both cases, they had young, vigorous, active Republican State chairmen, and it is going to make a difference in those two States, and those are tough States for us.

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Let me congratulate Ross Davis, who has an equal enthusiasm and drive. I know that Ross will work wonders for your party, and I congratulate you on his leadership.

From the many times that I have been privileged to visit the State of Washington, I know that Washingtonians as a whole are some of the most independent-minded people in our great country.

I appreciate that, and I am grateful that we have this solid group of independent thinkers and workers and doers.

I also believe that the Republican Party has a lot to say and a lot to give to the independent-minded voter in America today.

I suggest that we reach out and welcome in the independent-minded voter in Washington and elsewhere. It should be a great marriage, but we ought to make the initial overture and gesture. I believe that they will respond.

It seems to me that the independent voter is deeply concerned more with the future of his country than with the fortunes of one political party or another. That independent thinker is concerned with economic progress, energy independence, national defense, the pursuit of justice, the protection of society in America.

He wants a good education, good housing, good health care and good food for his family and at prices that he can afford.

These are very basic concerns that affect all of our lives regardless of our political persuasion. These are the elements that help determine the quality of our private lives, far more determining the issues for political debate.

Improving the quality of life in America is the great challenge that we face as we enter our third century of independence just ten months from today.

In our first 100 years, our most urgent goal was to establish firmly and very securely a system of Government and an order of society that would safeguard our liberties and allow progress to flourish in our new land

Our freedoms and our form of Government were the marvels for the world and the promise of America that gave hope to millions of oppressed people all around the world.

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America's second century was a century of independence devoted to increasing our material wealth, making the most of the industrial revolution, expanding westward to Washington and to California, and Oregon. Our civilization advanced during the period at an incredible pace with a host of inventions and discoveries that made our lives more pleasurable and our work much more profitable. America's past, like its present, is a mixture of successes and setbacks, of good and bad.

The future in this sense will be no different. And yet the future must be different. We must reclaim our independence from those huge institutions of society which have come so close to snuffing out the fire of personal initiative and individual achievement. We must re-dedicate ourselves to those very great principles of freedom and equality which first gave life and purpose to this Nation. We must demonstrate that far from being in a state of decline, America and its people are prepared for adventures and achievements far exceeding any we have seen in the past.

We must agree that a successful blend of personal initiative, private enterprise, and public service will come closer to solving our problems in realizing our potential than will total reliance on massive, muscle-bound bureaucracy of Government.

Too many Americans have relied too much for too long on the Government in Washington to meet their demands grant their wishes and solve their problems. I think it is time we look elsewhere, more to Washington State, for example, and less to Washington, D.C.

We should look in the offices and shops, the factories, the firms, the laboratories, the homes, the schools and the churches of America. This is where the real strength and the real promise and the potential of America resides. This is where to find the creative genius, the knack for problem-solving, the pioneering spirit and the Yankee ingenuity for which this country is so well-known on a global basis.

I am convinced that if we shoulder more of life's responsibilities ourselves and take a more personal stake in life and success of this Nation, we can truly make a fresh start in America, even as we celebrate our 200th Anniversary.

In our third century we should seek to enhance the individual freedom of each of our citizens and strive to make America's civilization the wonder of the world. And we should gauge the progress of our civilization not just by our standards of living but by the quality of our lives.

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I know that the people in the leadership of the Republican Party like Dan Evans and Bob Packwood and Joel Pritchard and many others, that the Republican Party is prepared to help guide that kind of progress. Perhaps more than at any other time in the history of our Nation our party's principles and its objectives match the hopes and aspirations of the American people.

Our Republican commitments to fiscal responsibility, to a vigorous free enterprise system, to a strong national defense, to local control over local concerns, and a personal freedom for the individual -- these are commitments shared by the vast majority of our fellow Americans and your Washingtonian friends in this great State.

We believe, as Abraham Lincoln said, that "government should only do for the people what they cannot do as well for themselves."

We believe that the American people have grown weary of government's overblown promises and overbearing controls.

We believe the American people are ready to do great things for themselves and for their country. We are prepared to govern but not dominate the American people. That is our pledge for the coming campaign and for the years ahead. We can help to make these great years great ones for America. So much so that we and our children, and their children, may say with new meaning, and with fresh enthusiasm, the words of Daniel Webster, "Thank God I am an American."

Thank you very much.

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(AT 1:02 P.M. PDT)