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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
OKLAHOMA STATE GOP RECEPTION

THE LINCOLN PLAZA INN

8:05 P.M. CDT

Dewey, Henry, John Jarman, Bill McLean, ladies and gentlemen:

If I should stop right now and walk off this platform to speak to a very cute, attractive little girl, I hope you will understand. (Laughter) We have been having a little affair going down here. (Laughter)

Let me say, at the outset, how deeply grateful I am for the warm welcome and the kind words of Henry Bellmon, Dewey Bartlett, and let me add with emphasis how great it is to have John Jarman not only vote with us, but be with us.

Obviously, both Betty and I are totally delighted to be here in Oklahoma, and let me also thank you for the very fine welcome you gave to Vice President Rockefeller here last week.

Nelson tells me that when he went to the football game last Saturday, he was met with nothing but unremitting kindness, hospitality and friendship with just one exception -- the guy who gave him Oregon and three points. (Laughter)

If we should play Oklahoma, I will have to get more than that. (Laughter)

What a better time to be in Oklahoma than State Fair Week and the beginning of the football season. It is obviously a great experience of Betty and mine to be with you, to meet so many enthusiastic and ardent Republicans, planning and working for next year's election.

May I especially thank Bill McLean for his participation, and those that he has brought here on this occasion. Bill, I am very grateful, and I can get those strokes on the golf course, I can't wait to play with you. (Laughter)

But, thank you very, very much

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As you have heard me say on many occasions when I was here last fall and elsewhere, the Oklahoma Republican Party has in Dewey Bartlett and Henry Bellmon two of the most outstanding, finest members of the United States Senate that I know. I am not going to embellish what you know better than I, but it certainly is encouraging for me, whether its on fiscal matters or defense matters or anything else that is relevant to the national progress of this Nation, I can always count on Dewey and on Henry and I thank you for that help.

I would be negligent if I didn't add a word about John Jarman. He and I have been friends in the House of Representatives for many, many years. His lovely wife, Marilyn and my wife, Betty, have been close and personal friends. We are so pleased to see them on our side and I thank John on this occasion for his many votes when he was Minority Leader and now, when I am in the present office, for his strong support. John, we darn well better get somebody really good to succeed you.

Let me say with complete and total emphasis that, as I travel around the States, whether it is in Maine, Rhode Island or New York, or the State of Washington or Oregon, I find there is a great sense of renewal and anticipation, State after State, on behalf of the philosophy that we espouse and that we believe in that we are willing to work for.

And the revival of this optimism is based in my judgment on very, very sound political realities. Whether it is on the East Coast, the West Coast, the Northern border or the Gulf of Mexico, I find that the American people will want economic stability and that stability which is the very foundation of our democracy can only come from Federal, fiscal responsibility.

As Republicans, we believe in sound management of the taxpayers' money, yours and mine and that which was contributed by some 200 million other Americans.

Today this Nation is seeing the unhappy, the sad results of an obsolete, outdated political philosophy which holds that if you just spend enough Federal money, you can solve every problem in our society.

The fact of the matter is precisely this, the American people know that Federal dollars are their dollars. They want some old-fashioned thrift in the way in which their money is spent, like they manage their home or their business or their church and one of these days -- listen very, very carefully -- one of these days the big spenders in the Congress are going to find this out.

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And I respectfully suggest that it be November 2, 1976. The way to reduce Federal overspending, and its dangerous offspring inflation, is to elect a Congress with a little common sense, a little common sense about dollars and cents, and until that happens the only way Republicans, outnumbered better than two to one in the Congress, can head-off massive spending and effect a balance in how we spend our money is with the veto.

I have used it before, 37 times to be exact. And I will use it again, and again, and again.

And may I say with complete sincerity, that a veto is not negative, as Dewey and Henry and John will tell you. A veto is a constitutionally given authority in our great document upon which our Nation was founded. It was constitutionally given to a President in order that he could veto something and thereby give the Congress a little more time to reconsider bad legislation. (Laughter)

I agree. (Laughter)

But the veto is not negative, its an affirmative way to get better legislation and that is why we are going to use it more and more.

But in all honesty, there is a better and more certain way, a surer way to restore fiscal sanity to the Congress and I say with emphasis, elect more Republicans.

If my soundings around the country -- and I have traveled in a good many States and I speak up with pride about it -- most Americans want what we in the Republican Party want. And let me enumerate them, five in number, a free enterprise system unfettered by obsolete regulations, unfettered by obsolete regulations stifling private initiative rather than stimulating it. Number two, fiscal restraint and fiscal responsibility in the way their tax money is spent, yours and everybody elses. Number three, a strong national defense which is the best assurance of peace. Number four, local control by local people over local problems. And last, but not least, more freedom for individuals and greater say in their own personal affairs.

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These are the guideposts which have pointed the way for this Nation for 200 years and directed the efforts of our party for over 100 years. These are the principles Republicans believe in and most Americans support.

As you here in Oklahoma are well aware, on the eve of a major political campaign to elect a President, a Congress, Governors, mayors and State and local officials all across our 50 States, the air will soon be filled with speeches of candidates, the rumble of bandwagons and the questions of pollsters, but the pollsters are not the only ones who will be asking questions.

As we prepare for this campaign, I have a couple of questions I would like to ask you my own self, and I would like your response.

Do you want your President to accept without a fight budget-busting bills from the Congress which could touch off a new round of inflation?

Do you want your President to open the United States Treasury to every city that hasn't or won't responsibly manage its fiscal affairs.

Do you want your President to roll over and play dead while the Congress passes more and more legislation to strangle free enterprise and the Federal bureaucracy passes out more and more forms to fill out? (Laughter)

Do you want your President to go along with those who would transfer local and State responsibility to the massive Federal bureaucracy?

Do you want your President to accept legislation that will continue America's dependence on unreliable foreign oil? Not in Oklahoma, I am sure. (Laughter)

Do you want your President to accept deep slashes in a defense program? I say this with very sincere and deep conviction myself -- it would make America number two in a world where only number one really counts.

Do you want your President to permit America's defense intelligence system to be crippled and leave this Nation naked to the mercy of potential enemies?

I think your answers are obvious, and I think those are the answers that the American people, by and large-- Republicans, Independents, discerning Democrats, the Republican Party--are in tune with -- your needs, your hopes and your aspirations.

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We believe, as you do, in the principles which made this Nation great, and believe me, I think I see in this great audience a heck of a lot of people that are going to go out and fight hard, give time, efforts, talents and everything else, especially enthusiasm, to carry this message to the American people.

If we do, I am optimistic as to the results in the Presidency, the Congress, the Governorships, the State Legislatures, and the local offices on November 2, and America will be better off for it.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 8:20 P.M. CDT)