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Office of the Vice President
(Charleston, West Virginia)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT GOP RECEPTION
CHARLESTON HOUSE
CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA

(AT 2:10 P.M. EDT)

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to thank Governor Arch Moore for his generous remarks. He and I served together as Governors over quite a period of time, and I came to know his ability and his dedication to the great State of West Virginia. I am honored to be here and to be here with him. And I hope you notice my tie.

(Applause.)

To Tom Potter and to Ancilla and His Honor the Mayor, I would just like to say thank you, and to all of you who came here I would like to express my appreciation to you for the opportunity to visit you.

It is a great pleasure and an honor to be here representing the President of the United States and to support the programs which this dedicated American is developing for the benefit of the future of this great Nation of ours.

We are in a tough period, and we have a strong, dedicated leader who is totally devoted to the basic principles on which this Nation was founded and who feels deeply that we have got to get back to those fundamental principles if this country is going to have in its next 200 years the kind of success and play the kind of role in the defense of freedom in the world which it did the first 200 years. So this is the kind of man we have.

(Applause.)

I look down here and see the name of this great band that is playing over here. I was enjoying that. The Invincibles. I would just like to say that is my idea of the President and that is my idea of the United States: The Invincibles.

(Applause.)

So that we have as a leader a man who is trying to understand for this country and for our role in the world where we are, what we are up against, and what we have to do about it.

Let's face it, ladies and gentlemen, it is pretty complicated. I would just like to take a minute. I know you are all standing so I don't want to take too much of your time. I apologize for taking my coat off. I thought I would set a pattern, but no one seems to have

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followed me. I should put it back on again. Seeing as I have it off, I will leave it off.

(Laughter.)

Let me just say, if I can briefly make a few remarks, there are certain basic underlying facts we have to accept that are in the world. One is accelerating change. We don't live in the slower pace we used to. The life of the world is changing. The thinking of the country is changing as well.

Secondly, we are becoming more and more interdependent, between nations and within our Nation; Federal, State, local; public, private. This makes life more complicated.

Thirdly, let's face it, there is a fundamental ideological division that exists in the world between those of us who believe that the individual is the spiritual human being and we believe in the basic concept of the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God; and those who believe that individuals are just cogs in a machine to serve the State, to be so disciplined and dominated that they lose all personality and all qualities as an individual.

This is the basic ideological difference that exists in the world. It is a fundamental reality, and the Communist world has this belief and the free world has the other belief. So we can't neglect that fact as an existing fact. So we have that.

Then when we take what are the implications of these factors to our life, I can give briefly two or three illustrations. What happened in the field of energy is a perfect illustration of the world's interdependence and of the speed of change.

We became a net importer of energy in this country in the sixties, and then the oil producing countries outside started to ease up the price. The United States didn't do anything about it. Then came the struggle in the war in the Middle East between the Arabs and Israelis. Okay, that has been going on for about 2,000 years.

But there is a new factor there and that is U.S. support of Israel as a free state, a state that was created by the United Nations, and the Soviets moving in with the radical Arab groups. So this confrontation took on a broader meaning.

And then came the oil boycott, and then the 500 percent increase in oil prices. The same thing happened in food. Populations are growing in other parts of the world faster than they can feed their own people. Therefore, they are looking to buy food.

This country happens to have, as we do in so many areas, a unique capacity of free individuals to produce. That is how we grew. We grew by producing; not by taking from somebody else, but by taking it on ourselves. That is our great strength.

Then the Soviets got hit with a crop failure and they stepped into our market. We saw prices double, in Federal prices and food prices.

So these two factors from abroad hit this country just before the President took office, and we found inflation, total disruption in many areas, then recession, and then unemployment. This is the situation that we have got.

Now, it isn't only from abroad. We have got some problems at home we have to face realistically. They relate to the Federal Government. We have seen a tremendous growth in the Federal Government from a budget of \$100 billion 15 years ago now to the President trying to hold a 1977 Federal budget below \$400 billion. It is unbelievable.

We have got a \$60 billion to \$70 billion deficit now. The present programs that the Federal Government has placed are growing at a rate, without any new ones, of \$50 billion a year. People are paying more taxes and getting more services, but a lot of the services they don't want; and a lot of regulation they don't want. I don't have to explain that.

(Applause.)

I don't have to explain to West Virginians when the Federal Government back in the twenties regulated gas prices that they dealt a death blow -- not a death blow -- but a very serious blow to the coal industry, because they put price of gas way below the cost of reproduction of gas or the production of gas today.

So now we have got ourselves really in a very serious situation. So the President is trying to face these situations from abroad and from at home realistically. They affect the individual citizen, they affect the whole free enterprise system, and they affect the States' rights and the abilities of States to carry out their responsibility. So that this is the background.

Now just to give very simply what his objectives are: control inflation. He feels, and I agree with him, inflation is the most insidious tax that can be imposed on any people, because your savings are destroyed, your earnings are destroyed, and this he is out to stop.

He has had the courage to veto bill after bill for increased spending because it added to the deficit and the deficit adds to inflation. These are popular things, and that man has got the courage to do the things that he thinks are right, regardless of the short term political profit. That is the kind of man I admire and that is the kind of man America has today.

(Applause.)

His second goal is energy independence of America. Let's face it, the basic resource we have in this country for energy in the fossil fuels is coal, and you have got it and we need it.

(Applause.)

He came up with a plan in his State of the Union message, and I have got to say that whether it is difficult, and I know that in this great Republican audience here that there must be a lot of discerning Democrats. I come from a State where we were with a minority party by a million registered voters, so I had a lot of Democratic friends.

(Laughter.)

But I would like to say the Democratic Party has a two-to-one control of Congress. Now maybe it is a little difficult for them because they have so many of their own to get organized. They do reflect a broad spectrum of thought and inaction.

(Laughter.)

But the fact of the matter is, whatever the cause, they have not as yet passed any program to take the steps to make it possible for this country to achieve energy self-sufficiency. And every day that goes by we become more dependent on imported oil, more vulnerable to a blackmail or a boycott, which would really destroy many parts of this country's economy, and we could have chaos. So we have this vulnerability.

They have increased the price 10 percent now. We are spending now close to \$30 billion a year to bring in oil. Why shouldn't we be spending that \$30 billion to employ Americans and produce energy at home?

(Applause.)

Failing to come up with the plan he has presented, the U.S. now is trying a new approach which is energy independence authority which would help take those risk areas where private capital cannot invest and get production in energy sources in this country, one of which is gas.

There is no reason why a lot of wonderful coal that is mined here that happens to have a little sulfur in it could not be made into gas here and then put into the gas lines and sold in those areas of the country where it is needed.

But that takes capital. It is about a billion dollars a plant for gasification of coal. Therefore, he is proposing that this temporary corporation be set up to finance those risk items to produce energy which industry can't carry, but do it with industry, so that it would be industry doing it but that the government would be helping them get off dead center on these issues.

This goes right across the board in this field. I think it is going to do the trick, and you can go into a whole series of areas. But you are all standing and I don't want to get into the details.

Believe me, this is a terrific plan. There are

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two analogies I could give. This country wanted railroads in the old days. What did the government do? It gave land to the railroads and the railroads then built and sold land for towns along the railroads and with that money they built the railroads.

So when this country wants to do something, government and private industry can get together. We did the same thing in rubber reserves during the war. We couldn't get the natural rubber so we came up with plants for synthetic rubber financed by the government and sold to private enterprise.

This combination is what he is thinking of here, and I think it is a very, very significant program.

Now the next thing he wants to do, he wants to cut taxes and hold down the growth of government spending. He wants to hold those down.

(Applause.)

Let people decide how they want to spend their own money and put it into the productivity of America, and let's keep on growing and let's have jobs for everybody instead of welfare. That is what this Nation wants: jobs, not welfare.

(Applause.)

He wants to simplify the administration of the programs for aid. We have got now, you won't believe it, Arch understands it because he and I were in it -- he is in it now; I got out of it.

(Laughter.)

There are 1,006 categorical grant programs in aid to State and local governments. It sounds beautiful. It sounds wonderful. But when you get in it, you find in order to get the money to enrich and improve your program, maybe too enriched and too improved already, then you have to live within the government regulations; then they change the regulations; you have to employ more lawyers to read what they are changing so you don't violate the laws. It is the most complicated thing.

We had 63 programs in primary-secondary education in the New York State. We had to file 22 State plans which we worked out so it would satisfy the Federal Government. I know nobody read them. We paid no attention to them. When all was finished, we got 5 percent of our cost out of those 63 programs.

It is just not worth it. There is too much bureaucracy, too much red tape, and we have got to get rid of both. This is what he is after. He wants to simplify this stuff, help those who need help. But let's not do it in a way that takes those who need help and puts them in a position where they become wards and they have a whole lot of people telling them what to do and how to live. They have lost their freedom. We want them to be a help

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to those. But let's not help those who don't need help. That is one of the problems.

(Applause.)

I mentioned earlier that I was at a board meeting of the State University before I left, and one of the members of the board on the Board of the State University said, "You wouldn't believe it." He was a banker from up-state. He said, "My son just came home from graduate school at NYU and said, "Dad, I just got on welfare."

(Laughter.)

He is a banker's son. This banker was horrified and the boy was crestfallen. He said, "Dad, everybody is doing it." That didn't impress his father. So the father said, "What do you mean?"

"Well," he said, "we are all getting food stamps. Everybody is doing it."

I want to tell you we haven't got the money. Those who are working haven't got the money to see that a banker's son gets food stamps. We need that like a hole in the head.

(Applause.)

I am not against bankers. Don't misunderstand me.

(Laughter.)

I have a brother who is a banker. They don't need food stamps. So these are simple things the President is trying to get ahold of, to get things back down to the last era.

Of course, this whole business of regulation is so complicated that if you are in business, regardless of what the business is, you can't tell if you invest \$100 or \$100,000 whether they are going to change the rules of the game on you and therefore you may not be able to earn a thing on it; therefore, why invest it; therefore, you don't invest it; and therefore you don't invest and we don't get production and we don't get jobs or growth of the economy.

So we have to simplify the regulations so you know where you are and get rid of the red tape. These are the things he is after.

Just one other thing, and that is he wants to get the strength and vitality of local government back where the local elected officials can be responsible to their constituents.

(Applause.)

It is now any program that is run by a city or a county or a Governor, he is dependent on money from the

Federal Government, regulations on local money, State money, so that an administrator or the elected official cannot be responsible to their constituents.

By the time you get through, nobody knows who is responsible. Nobody knows who to go to to complain who can do something about it.

I understand this. I worked at local government. I was in government for 15 years. Now I am down there in Washington as a staff assistant to the President.

(Laughter.)

It is true. I have got to tell you the truth. I worked for President Eisenhower as Chairman of his Committee on Government Organization. There were three of us in this committee. One day he said, "Look, will you look up and see what the Vice President could do?" This was Eisenhower. This was Nixon as Vice President.

So we looked into it. It was about three months. We studied the Constitution, the laws. We came back and said, "Look, Mr. President, the only constitutional authority is presiding over the Senate."

It is a great honor because that is a great body. I am very honored to be in that position myself. "But," we said, "beyond that there is nothing he can do without creating a competing political center in the Administration."

I made this recommendation once. So when I went down there I knew perfectly well what I was up against. I am just here as a staff assistant to the President. I do what he asks me and try to do a good job.

I want to tell you he is doing a great job for this country. I have great faith in the future of this country.

(Applause.)

Let me just say in conclusion what I said when I was sworn in on the Senate after about four months trying to get, you know, confirmed.

(Laughter.)

Let me just repeat what I said and then I was confirmed, which is, there is nothing wrong with America that Americans can't right. And I think that is the key to the whole thing.

Let's just get to work. Let's tighten our belts a little bit. Let's be willing to do the things that are necessary, and let's face the hard realities as they are and stop living in a dream world.

Thank you very much.

(Applause.)