

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 11, 1975

Office of the Vice President
(Austin, Texas)

REMARKS OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
AT THE
WHITE HOUSE PUBLIC FORUM ON DOMESTIC POLICY
TIFFANY BALLROOM, AUSTIN HILTON INN
(Austin, Texas)

AT 9:05 A.M. CST

Thank you very much, Jim Cannon, who is Assistant to the President as you know and Director of the Domestic Council and who is responsible for the organization of these programs.

I would also like to express again to Ed Foreman my appreciation for the work that he has done on organizing and I think it is an interesting fact that he not only was a Congressman from Texas, but he also was a Congressman from New Mexico. He is the only man in history who has been a Congressman from two different States. So I just give that special little bit of background. I don't know which of you claim him, but anyhow, you are all represented here. (Laughter)

Governor, I want to thank you very much, sir, for your presence here which adds tremendously to the importance and significance of this meeting. We are very grateful to you, and we appreciate the generous words and we look forward to the benefits that will be derived from today's discussion and the opportunity of getting reactions and advice and counsel from this wonderful gathering here and your presence lends great prestige to the occasion.

I would like to congratulate His Honor, the Mayor. We know where he came from and we know now where he is and he has a unique record having been elected to the council while still in school and now at the age of 30 being Mayor. But that is to me symbolic of Texas. You get going fast and you go places and you have got the tremendous spirit that this country has always had that made it what it is today and you preserved it.

I am just delighted that we are having this meeting here in Austin which is a dynamic, intellectual center as well as a very dynamic, economic, cultural and social center.

So, Mr. Mayor, I thank you, sir, and appreciate your presence.

Now let me introduce some of those who are here from Washington. On my right is Secretary of the Interior, Tom Kleppe, who has just taken over. He is an experienced person in government, both in the Executive and Legislative Branch. The Department of the Interior of course as you all know has tremendous responsibilities for some of the major issues affecting us in this country today.

Dave Mathews is also a new Member of the Cabinet, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare and I think the youngest Member of the Cabinet, former President of a university, the University of Alabama. You will hear from him later. We are very grateful for his presence.

MORE

A man who is a distinguished lawyer in his own right and a very successful leader in his community, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Bill Coleman, who is Secretary of Transportation, who is sitting right here on my left and a very good friend.

Paul MacAvoy, who is a member of the President's Council on Economic Advisers, is one of those economists who has a very practical understanding of the realities of the world in which we live as well as excellent intellectual and academic background. We are very honored to have him -- Paul is right here -- with us today. I am grateful for his presence.

Bill Mizell, who is the Administrator of the Economic Development Administration of the Department of Commerce, is here and he has a varied background all of which is outstanding, both in professional athletics where he excelled and then as a Member of Congress.

We are now very grateful for his presence here today and I know he will make an important contribution.

Let me say a few words before we get started and then we will go right to the program. As Jim already mentioned no democracy can function effectively unless there is communication between the people and their governments, their governments at all levels. The closer you are to the people, at least we always felt in my home State that the government closest to the people was the best government. Washington is quite far away from a lot of the parts of the country and, therefore, it was the President's feeling that we ought to get out, have these meetings, these hearings where we could get the benefit of the reactions and thinking from people around different parts of the country.

So this meeting today, this gathering today not only is representative of Texas, but we have in this great audience and we will have among the speakers people from Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. We want to welcome all of you. We want to thank you for your presence here and say we are deeply grateful.

As has been mentioned -- I guess Jim didn't mention it, as a matter of fact, but I will mention it. This area of the country is probably the fastest growing area of the country. You have an extraordinary combination of industrial growth, agricultural strength and energy resources. That has got to be quite a combination when you add it to the dynamism of the people who live in the area. So we are thrilled and pleased to be here.

The President asked the Domestic Council to undertake this review of domestic programs and policies in order to try and reshape his plans and thinking and his recommendations to the Congress in relation to the rapidly changing times in which we live.

That is why as I say we appreciate so much your coming. He called for this review because of the State of our economy, because of the unemployment that exists in the country, because of the high costs of living which is brought on by inflation and the tremendously cruel impact of inflation on

the people of the country and because of the rapid growth of Federal expenditures and the size of the Federal deficit, budget deficit.

These are the basic concerns. The President is concerned whether our social programs are truly meeting human needs and the social objectives for which they were designed. He is concerned about the proliferation of Federal regulations in all areas of activities and whether they are encouraging a healthy, self-reliant citizenry, or increasingly dominating the daily lives of individual citizens and shackling the dynamism of the free enterprise system.

President Ford is concerned that we are more dependent today on foreign supplies for energy than at any time since the Arab embargo. In other words, that we have lost ground on achieving energy independence instead of gaining ground.

He is determined that we must proceed to achieve greater energy production here at home, if we are to meet our urgent energy needs and protect our national security. He is concerned about our environment and how we can enhance the quality of life for all Americans; and assure a healthful tomorrow for our children and the generations to come.

Because of these concerns which are shared by most Americans the President has asked me and the Domestic Council to undertake these hearings around the country.

The President recognizes that the decisions that affect the destiny of every American cannot be confined to the limited perspective of Washington. For Washington has no monopoly on wisdom or on ideas.

The President wants to tap the common sense, the wisdom and the practical experience and the imagination of the American people in all parts of the country. This forum today is the third of six that are being held throughout the country in an eight-week period.

The major areas that will be discussed during the meeting today are, as Jim mentioned, economic development and job opportunities, resource development and the environment, social policy and the quality of life.

Before calling upon the witnesses I would like to comment briefly on the need to review Federal policy in these particular areas. A healthy, growing economy is required if our Nation is to prosper and if all Americans are to have the opportunity to achieve an improved standard of living on a basis of equality. We have been going through a difficult period of readjustment, a period of strain and difficulty for all. There are those who believe that the destiny of our people can best be determined by a paternalistic Federal Government. There are already 1,007, what are known as categorical grant programs. These are programs of Federal aid to State and local governments which require a matching by the local communities -- you cannot reduce the amount of money you spend on the programs. You must enrich and improve those programs and then you have to operate within the legislative restrictions and the administrative restrictions.

As a former Governor for a number of years in one of the other 50 States I was very concerned about this. Now I am on the other end in Washington. But I would just like to

mention briefly the question of revenue sharing because this is a program in which I was interested in and worked very hard with the Congress and the President in the passage of this program. This program is up for renewal right now.

I think the time has come to return many of the responsibilities now being assumed by the Federal Government back to State and local levels. However, they must have the financial resources in order to carry out their responsibilities. But the Federal Government, with the Federal income tax, has the fastest growing source of revenue. It is for this reason that revenue sharing legislation now pending before the Congress be acted upon expeditiously. State and local governments must plan their budgets for next year and cannot operate with an on-again, off-again source of revenue.

The revenue sharing funds have been of major importance to this five-State region. Since the inception of revenue sharing four years ago the State of Texas has received over \$1 billion \$270 million and the City of Austin has received \$15,700,000.

There are many problems facing State and local governments which can best be solved at those levels. The concept of revenue sharing is a step in the direction of restoring one of our Nation's basic principles, that government closest to the people is the best government and revenue sharing comes back to local governments -- it is money collected from the States, goes back -- without the restrictions and without the limitations and leaves the discretion in the hands of the local elected officials as to how that money can best be spent to reflect the best interests of the people in the community.

This is as distinct from these 1,007 categorical grants.

I just wanted to mention that because it is a matter of deep concern in considering the questions we will be discussing.

Let me just say a few words about the causes of our present situation that we find ourselves in as a Nation. I think on the home front one could say during the past 15 years if one is honest and willing to accept self-criticism that we as a Nation -- and that goes for those of us who have been in public life and the public as well in demanding -- but we have overpromised, we have overspent and we have overloaded the governmental system at all three levels with the result that we have under-delivered on the programs, on the promises we have made. We have created expectations which could not be fulfilled with the people. Then because we didn't fulfill them they have become disillusioned and I am afraid in many cases they have become cynical about government.

This is a tragic situation for a democracy because the government in a democracy is there simply to serve the people. That is on the home front, the situation; is the essence of it.

As far as in the world scene, I think there are three basic problems we face. This is true in the United States and outside.

First, is the accelerating rate of change that is taking place in the world; second, is the growing interdependence

among nations and inside of our own country between States, Federal Government local government, between public and private. All of us find ourselves dependent; that our lives are no longer in our own hands one might say, but are dependent on the others both at home and abroad.

Then, finally, the third basic fundamental question is that we live in a world of fundamentally divided ideologies. There are those of us in this country like ourselves who believe that human beings are spiritual beings. They believe in the worth and dignity of each individual. We believe in the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God.

You find in other parts of the world those who believe that human beings are merely cogs in a machine to be so disciplined and dominated by the state that they lose all capacity for independent thought and this is a factor in the present world scene that we have to realistically take into account.

To illustrate how this has impacted our country, if you take the area of energy, we were exporters up to the 1960's, middle 1960's. Then we became net importers. Then the other producing nations joined together. Then when the Arab-Israeli dispute flared up into war the Arab countries put on or the OPEC countries put on a boycott. We experienced for the first time the kind of shortage, particularly in the East Coast, but nationwide, the kind of shortages in energy which was never expected.

Not only did that happen, but within two years the price of oil had gone up 500 percent. This is a totally new situation where by political action they cut across the lines of the free flow of free markets in the economic field. At the same time we are experiencing the same situation only in a different form in food. The population of the world is growing much more rapidly than production of food.

Then with crop failures a couple of years ago, we saw the Soviet move into our markets and this country is the only major exporter of food left thanks to the ingenuity and creativity of the individual farmers and their families.

So we are in a situation where we are very fortunate, but where the world is looking to us, but the impact of both of these actions was to create tremendous inflation, out of inflation grew dislocation in the world as a whole, then recession and then unemployment.

So that is the international aspect of it. On the positive side, and I happen to be an optimist and always have been, we are blessed in this country, uniquely blessed in the world. We have all of the strength of the greatest free people in the world. We have unlimited natural resources and we have a free enterprise system that is the most productive system in the world.

Therefore, we have the capability and we have the duty to achieve energy independence. It is basic to economic growth in an industrial society. It is basic to our national security so we can't be blackmailed or boycotted and it is basic to our way of life.

So I think that without energy we can't have economic

growth, we can't have jobs, we can't have a continuation of the unique opportunities we have enjoyed. Yet, we are so fortunate that we have the resources in this country, if we have the drive and the imagination, to tap them.

We can and we must meet the needs to revitalize our economic strength and restore economic growth to provide jobs and to do it at the same time as we protect our environment. Only in this way can we meet the needs of our people at home and our responsibilities abroad in the world.

Obviously, it is a tough period. But I am optimistic about the future because I have faith in America. I have faith in the American people because I believe that we are the greatest free people in the world and that free enterprise is the most productive system in the world and that the world has ever devised.

We need to renew our faith in ourselves, in our system and in our country.

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, we go to the program and this morning we will hear from an impressive list of witnesses. There will be brief statements in order to set the stage for discussion, by members of the Cabinet and then there will be witnesses coming before us.

After the presentation there will be discussion and we will welcome comments from those who are in the audience here. There are microphones there. If you come to the microphone at the end of the presentations we can have general discussion.

So, first, I would like to introduce the Secretary of the Interior, Tom Kleppe. He will begin the discussion on resource development and the environment.

END

(AT 9: 25 A.M. CST)