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JANUARY 8, 1976

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE
PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

THE FAMILY THEATER

2:52 P.M. EST

It is my understanding that you have all been appropriately sworn in by the Vice President, that he spoke to you all for a few minutes and then you have had the benefit of several of my old friends in the Congress, Barber Conable and Al Ullman.

I want to thank you very, very much -- and I know you come from a very diverse group in our society -- for agreeing to serve in this advisory capacity which I consider to be extremely important, and I know that your aid and assistance will be invaluable to Fred Dent, who has left the Department of Commerce and taken on a very, very essential job as far as our country is concerned, under the Trade Act of 1974.

That Act, as you have been told or know, calls upon a group such as the one that you are a part of giving a wide range of information, advice, counsel to our negotiating team and our objectives in the process under the law, and I am certain that Fred Dent, Clayton Yeutter and Bill Walker will be helped immensely by the input that will come from all of you.

I can assure you that we intend to carry out the letter and the intent of the Act. The law is quite specific in many, many instances. It is important in our relations in the Executive Branch to work with the Congress in legislation of this kind.

I personally feel very strongly concerning the multilateral trade negotiations under the legislation. The activities in Geneva will be significant. I have always supported, in the days that I was in the Congress, efforts at trying to reduce and in some cases eliminate trade barriers.

It is even more important as I look at it today because our globe is becoming a number of interdependent nations and we can't live alone under protectionism in the United States.

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It is my feeling that if we do our job well, the American people, regardless of whether they are in business or labor or agriculture or otherwise, will support what all of you are trying to do in working with Fred and his advisers in Geneva.

At the economic summit that I attended in October in Rambouillet, the leaders from the other countries that were there and I agreed that to resort at this time to new trade barriers would weaken our prospects in this country and in those countries for sustained economic recovery.

The American farmers, the American workers, the American businessmen have demonstrated a capacity to successfully compete throughout the world, and the trade negotiations are a way of implementing it so that we can benefit more from our capacity as workers, businessmen, farmers.

It is our approach to the multilateral trade negotiations to commit to improving the world trading system in a way that will enhance and further the interests of all Americans. I have not mentioned consumers, but the efforts that will be made on our behalf for consumers supplementing that of businessmen, workers and farmers will be extremely important.

Because I believe that these negotiations offer the best prospect for an improved world trading system, I am determined to resist, within our own country and worldwide, trade restrictions. While recession, unemployment and inflation have intensified protectionist pressures in many, many areas in this country, as well as in other countries, I think it is extremely important that for the betterment of all that we resist those pressures.

As I told the American Farm Bureau Federation Convention in St. Louis on Monday, American agricultural exports are essential to a striving American economy. Our exports of manufactured goods, now 68 percent of all U.S. exports, are another dynamic factor which contributes very significantly to domestic jobs, those jobs here in the United States.

As a Michigander, I am especially proud of the strength and competitiveness under some difficult circumstances of the American auto industry compared to others. I don't believe that we can sit idly by in any industry in any segment of our society and let these pressures pick us off one by one. We can stand together, expand our trade, improve the opportunities at home for all parts of our society and become, as we move ahead, an even greater leader in the world economic picture.

I thank you for your help and assistance, and I wish you well in the information and the guidance and the stimulation that you can give Fred Dent and his associates.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 3:00 P.M. EST)