

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FEBRUARY 19, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Keene, New Hampshire)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
HARPER'S ACRES RETIREMENT HOME

9:25 P.M. EST

Thank you very, very much. First, I want to express, on behalf of Betty and myself, our appreciation for the opportunity to come to Harper's Acres and to meet all of you and have an opportunity of saying hello and to enjoy your friendship and hospitality.

As I was walking around and meeting all of you, I could not help but think to myself what a great contribution each and every one of you have made to make this country what it is today, and all of you and many, many millions like you all over the country have done the same.

You lived through some very difficult times during your lifetime. You lived through the depression, you lived through World War II, you lived through the changes that have come technologically during your lifetime, from the horse and buggy to a trip to the moon. You have lived through the great progress that has been made in the area of controlling some of the diseases that 20 years ago we thought were incurable.

Science has done wonderful things for America and does wonderful things for people all over the world. As I travel and see many people like you, all young people should be forever grateful that during your lifetimes you have met the challenges, whether it was problems in peacetime or struggles during wartime.

I, for one, am grateful and I think all young people, when they read the pages of history, will reflect -- will likewise be grateful that you contributed so much and made this a better place for them to live.

I know they respect you. I know that they feel strongly about you personally and what each and every one of you have done for their country.

As a result of what you have done, all of us owe you a great debt of gratitude which means that whether it is through Social Security or railroad retirement or Government retirement or any one of the other many private programs, we have to make sure and make positive all of you can enjoy the opportunity of being here with each other without worrying about the finances, without worrying about the cost of medical care.

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We are going to keep the Social Security Trust Fund strong so that Americans in your age group don't have to worry at your age about the tremendous problems of catastrophic illness, and every one of us in this room has known families or known people who have had that misfortune.

America owes it to you to make sure that you don't have the anxiety or the cost. Let me make one final pledge to all of you. You have done much for America and as a result I am proud to be, you are proud to be an American, and you are proud of America.

Our obligation is to repay the debt to you and to make sure that America is good, is strong and a better place to live for your children, your grandchildren and your great grandchildren. That is our pledge to you.

Thank you very much.

END

(AT 9:28 P.M. EST)