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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE VOLUNTEERS AT THE
PRESIDENT FORD COMMITTEE HEADQUARTERS

11:25 A.M. EST

Let me take just a minute first to thank all of you on behalf of Betty and myself and to express our appreciation as deeply as we can for what you are doing for us, and I know that we will not disappoint you. We will work at the job and we will do a first class job for you and for the country, which is really what it is all about.

One of the young ladies in here asked me what we could do to maybe convince some of those who have been undecided. We have had, as I think all of you recognize, a very difficult time economically for the last 12 or 18 months. When I became President inflation was over 12 percent. Unemployment was starting to go up. Employment was starting to go down.

We really faced a very serious crisis in America. We didn't panic. The American people responded very well. We have had the right policies.

I can't help but refer to something I read in one of the Boston newspapers this morning, which I think indicates we are on the way to a real economic recovery -- not a quick fix, not a phony, but a good, solid economic recovery, and that is what we want. We want permanent jobs for people with an opportunity to make their way up the ladder of success and this is the way to do it -- the way we are doing it.

But two outstanding people in Government made some reports yesterday -- Alan Greenspan and Dr. Arthur Burns -- and the headline says: "Greenspan and Burns Optimistic About the Pace of Recovery." I would expect them to be responsive because, after all, I think they are nonpartisan, nonpolitical, and they are both what you would call economists who have got a real objective look at things, so they look at the figures and know we are going in the right direction.

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But I couldn't help but read part of the second paragraph, and let me read it to you. We have really got a convert and here is what it says: "They were joined by U.S. Senator Hubert Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, who said at a Joint Economic Committee hearing," and I quote, "I am a little more bullish on the economy than most people I listen to," and he must have been listening to Greenspan and Burns so if they are optimistic, boy, Hubert is really optimistic.

But the facts are we should have optimism for the situation. Unemployment is going down. Employment is going up -- not exactly the way we want it right today but the trends are right. Jobs are going to be available. Unemployment is going to be reduced.

Then we got some excellent news this morning. Inflation bothers everybody. If you have got a job it bothers you. If you are unemployed it bothers you -- probably more so if you are unemployed. But we got an announcement on the Consumer Price Index this morning. It showed it was at .4 percent, which means that on the basis of that, if you annualize it all year long it is less than five percent per year.

Bear in mind that 18 months ago it was 12 percent or more so we can say we are on the right path and we are getting results and this is what the American people want.

As long as you work at the job and you are doing the right thing and you produce, that is what the American people want and that is what we are doing, and that is why we are going to win with all your wonderful help.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 11:30 A.M. EST)