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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AND MRS. FORD
AT
NEWINGTON PLAZA

2:58 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you all very, very much for the opportunity to come to this wonderful shopping center and say hello to so many, shake hands with so many. I can simply say on behalf of Betty and myself that we have had a tremendously wonderful time here in New Hampshire, not only on the trip when I was here before but on this occasion, and I would now like to introduce to you the better half of our family, my wife Betty.

MRS. FORD: Thank you very much. I am delighted to be here again, too, and I am so thrilled to see all of you here in this beautiful shopping center and it is a real pleasure to be back here in New Hampshire, and I hope that we will all be hearing from you on Tuesday the 24th.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me take just a minute or two, if I could, to tell you what has happened in the last 18 months. Eighteen months ago we were faced as a Nation with a very difficult period of time. We were faced with very high inflation of 12 percent or more; we were on the brink of a very serious economic recession.

We had some problems worldwide. Our allies and adversaries were not sure what the United States was going to do, how we were going to handle our affairs.

But I think in the last 18 months the American people have had a restoration in better faith in their Government and I think the credit is primarily due to 215 million Americans and their faith has made the job that I try to do for them a great deal easier, and I thank all of you in New Hampshire, and particularly those here, for that faith which has made it so much easier for me to try and do a better job for all of us.

Now let me take a minute to tell you where we are. Things are a lot better in America, but they are not as good as they are going to be.

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Unemployment is going down; employment is going up. Real wages are increasing. The rate of inflation has been cut in half, and we got some excellent news this morning which shows that the cost of living rate of increase has declined and we are making real headway against some very tough and difficult circumstances.

As we look at home I think the bitterness that existed some two years ago or more has actually been dissipated and all Americans, whether they are Democrat or Republican or Independent, are pulling together basically to make this the kind of a country that we all want.

As I walked in and shook hands with many, many people I saw some older people and some younger people. We owe a great deal to the older people in this country. They took this Nation through the most difficult times economically in the Thirties and they met the challenge of World War II as well as World War I, and our country is better off because of their sacrifices and their capability to do a first class job.

Then I saw some younger people who are the beneficiaries and they have a great responsibility in America -- the responsibility to carry on and do for their children what their parents and grandparents did for them.

But I have a lot of faith in young people. They are better educated, I think they have more opportunities to see the country and to see the world, and the net result is America's young people are going to carry the torch for freedom as well if not better than any previous generations.

Now we have got some big decisions to make, not only in New Hampshire but elsewhere throughout the country. Then, of course, the big final decision on November 2.

I am here and Betty is with me because we want your help on next Tuesday. We can do a better job for you if you can help us and we pledge to you the same honest, frank, candid efforts that we made in the past, which I think is the way our country ought to operate -- frankness and candor and forthrightness between a President and the American people and between them and him.

I thank you for your consideration. I thank you very much for your prayers, and I hope and trust that we can continue to do a job for you which I think is in the best interests of this country.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 3:03 P.M. EST)