

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARCH 11, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY  
(Rockford, Illinois)

---

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE  
ROCKFORD TOOL AND DIE ASSOCIATION

CLOCK TOWER INN

7:32 P.M. CST

Thank you very much, Don Metz, members and guests of the Rockford Tool and Die and precision -- what, machinery (Laughter) -- that was close anyhow.

It is real nice to be here and I apologize for interrupting your meal. I know you not only are enjoying that, but you are about to have afterwards somebody else in the political arena. (Laughter)

We thought we would stop by just to make friends and make this a bipartisan affair, but it is delightful to have a chance to be in Rockford and to be with Chuck Percy and John Anderson and Governor Ogilvie who has been such a big help to me in Illinois, and particularly in this area.

I come from an area over in Michigan that has a great deal of similarity to what you all do and produce here in Rockford. We have a few tool and die plants and precision machinery facilities in Grand Rapids.

But I think the main thing that I would like to leave with you tonight is that even though the Nation as a whole has gone through a very traumatic experience for the last 12 to 15 months, I am absolutely convinced that this country -- because of its people, because of its structure of Government, because of the policies that we have tried to pursue -- has met a challenge and is on the way up.

I know that you had very serious unemployment in the Rockford area, probably as bad if not worse than any other place in Illinois and certainly comparable to some of the areas hit hardest throughout the United States.

MORE

But I have faith in all of you just like I had faith the last year or more for the American people who I felt could meet the challenge of the worst economic conditions we have had for 30 years. They didn't panic, they kept their cool, they responded to common sense and realism and the net result is we have gone through this traumatic experience and we are now on the road to a healthy recovery and a far, far more stable and permanent prosperity.

I know that all of you are like others throughout this country who have responded just as well and I can only say to you that in the months ahead despite what we have gone through I am an optimist about America, I am fed up with those who have downgraded this great country, who have undercut the country with skepticism and cynicism.

We are great people. We have a great Government. We have a great future. I thank you for what you have done and the feelings and the attitude and the optimism that you have. That is what our forefathers had and that is why we are great, and you can do as well as they and I am sure you will.

As you look back a few years from now you can say 1975 made us strong, we stood tall and strong, and America then will be the America we all want.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 7:37 P.M. CST)