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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
PRESIDENT FORD COMMITTEE BREAKFAST
THE FAIRMONT HOTEL

8:03 A.M. CST

Thank you very, very much, John. Boy, you are in good form early this morning. (Laughter)

Let me say very quickly but very sincerely, we had a wonderful day yesterday and the fact that John Tower was with me and spoke up as he did this morning was very, very helpful, and I just couldn't have a better spokesman, a better leader in the State of Texas than John Tower. I thank you very much.

I couldn't get a finer group of people here in Dallas than this group here, and we thank you very much on behalf of all the efforts, all the tremendous things you have done in organization and phone banks and the many other chores that have to be done. I thank you, and I think we might surprise some people.

I had some experience doing exactly what you have all done on a number of political campaigns. I was a young, enthusiastic volunteer for Wendell Wilkie back in 1940, (Laughter) and spent most of that summer trying to see that he had his opportunity in the Presidential race.

So, I know precisely what you are doing and how you are trying to do it, and I know that it makes a difference. So, every phone call you make, every effort you make otherwise, that one doesn't appear to have an impact, but when they are accumulative, then there is no question whatsoever that in this kind of race, particularly, and even in the runover in November, what you do every day, what you do a part of the day does make a difference.

So, I thank you, and it is a very significant factor in this contest where I think we are coming from behind, but as I said a moment ago, we might surprise some people who are a little overconfident, I suspect.

Let me tell you a couple of things that you might say when you call individuals and they ask the question, which is very legitimate in their political arena in which we operate, "Why should I be for President Ford?" Let me tell you what I would say and what Betty has said in New Hampshire, Florida and elsewhere, and what our children say when they are asked that question and they are repeatedly interrogated concerning it.

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Number one, we inherited at the time I became President the most uncertain and most potentially devastating economic situation in the history of the country in the last 40 years. Inflation was 12 percent or more. We have cut it back to 6 percent or less.

Unemployment was about to soar and employment was about to plummet. And through sound, constructive, economic plans and programs that put the focus on the private sector rather than loading up the Federal payroll we now have everything reversed with all things that are supposed to go up, going up.

And at the same time everything that is supposed to be going down is going down. The rate of inflation is in the right direction, downward. The unemployment figures are also down, and one statistic that I found very convincing in talking to people is that a year ago just about now our unemployment was 8.9 percent, and in that span of time from last March or April, we have regained 2 million, 600 thousand jobs.

And today, or in the month of March, we achieved a total employment of 86 million, 700 thousand Americans, the highest number of Americans who have ever worked in our work force in this country.

We have an all time record, so we are doing very, very well. And we are on the way to making it not only increasingly prosperous, but I think on a more permanent basis.

One other question you will be asked: Well, what is the President doing about getting the Government out of my business or out of my hair? Whatever they might say.

In the first place, every department of the Federal Government has been told that they must go through every one of their regulations, they must analyze every one of their forms, and they have specific instructions from the White House to reduce the forms that they require the American people to fill out by 10 percent by July 1st.

And we have outside task forces going into every department so that it's not self-analysis, it's a group of fresh individuals who are looking at their regulations to make sure, to make certain that all of these obsolete, obsolete regulations can be junked, and there are many of them.

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One final question that I am sure is raised, how does the United States stand around the world? Number one, the United States is unsurpassed in military capability. And when you put together our unsurpassed capability militarily with our tremendous U. S. industrial capacity that is superior to any nation, and when you put together with that our unbelievably superior agricultural productivity and our scientific and technological superiority, then you have a package that without question of a doubt makes the United States number one compared to any other nation in the history of the world, period.

And then there is one final ingredient that I think makes a difference to all of us. In the United States of America, we have a great devotion to spiritual religious, deep seeded convictions about what we can do and who we believe in and what our feelings are toward something greater than we, greater than anything, and that spiritual religious conviction gives us the inspiration to keep going to make this freedom, security and this liberty positive and certain and to make America what we want as our dream, the America that our forefathers gave us but improved and added to and just made better by all of us.

Thank you very much.

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(AT 8:12 A.M. CST)