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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
AMARILLO AIR TERMINAL

7:02 P.M. CST

Senator Tower, Mayor Drummond, my former colleague in the Congress, Bob Bryce, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

It's great to be back in Amarillo. And the truth is, I have been here before, and I like the people and this tremendous crowd here tonight on a Saturday evening when I am sure you might have been doing some other things. It just is great, and I thank you all from the very bottom of my heart. It is wonderful. Thank you very, very much.

As I indicated, I have been to Amarillo on several occasions, and every time I come back, I see a greater spirit, a more wonderful drive, and I love those kinds of people.

I like to see progress, and you in Amarillo have the right spirit, you have the right objectives, you are agricultural oriented, you do the best. You have got some oil and gas, you are doing well. You have got some retail, wholesale centers, and you are doing darn well there.

Amarillo doesn't do badly in anything, and I am proud of you, and so should you be.

You know what it all comes back to, it's the right kind of spirit. If you think you can do something, and if you work at it, you can accomplish it.

And now let me relate that to what we have tried to do in the last 20 months since I have been President. Let your mind go back to August of 1974, we were in trouble. We had inflation at 12 percent or more, we were about to fall into the worst economic condition, the worst recession we have had in 40 years. We had our allies abroad concerned about whether the United States would stand tall and strong. We had some adversaries who might have been tempted to take advantage of a new President.

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First, we decided that we weren't going to panic, we weren't going to let the Congress smother us with some quick-fix legislation in order to get a superficial answer to our economic problems.

We decided that the best way to get jobs for Americans to lick the inflationary problems was not to add thousands and thousands and thousands of people to the Federal payroll, but rather to try and find a way to provide an incentive for the private sector, where five out of six jobs are available anyhow.

So what has happened in 20 months, I think we can be darned proud of the progress we have made. Inflation has been cut from 12 percent to about 6 percent, and it is going down.

A year ago unemployment was a terrible problem; 8.9 percent unemployment in the last 12 months, we have taken employment up 2 million, 600 thousand more jobs. Last month we added 375,000 more jobs in the American economy. Unemployment is going down, and employment is going up because we decided to stick with the free enterprise system instead of having the Government try to satisfy the problem.

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But you know we also had a little pressure from Congress. Congress wants to spend money like you just haul it out of those wells. I don't know what your well situation is here, but in Michigan, I tell you, we have lots of them, and the Congress wanted to spend money like it was water. Believe me, that is not the way to balance the Federal budget. It is not the way to reduce your taxes.

So, what we decided to do was veto all the big budget busting bills that Congress sent down. We vetoed 47 of them and 39 of them have been sustained. The best news is that we saved you \$13 billion by those vetoes that Congress sustained, and \$13 billion in savings is worth the effort.

I thank you for supporting us in that attempt we have done. I might say to the Congress if they send down some more bills that bust the budget like that, we will veto them again and again and again, period.

Now, let's talk about where our country -- and I speak of it as our country because 215 million Americans have a great stake not only in the peace we have, but in the peace that we want to keep, not only in the liberty we have and the freedom we cherish at this time, but the freedom and liberty that we want for these young people that I see in the audience here tonight.

The United States today -- and I say this with firmness and very direct talking to you in the way that I think you understand -- the United States of America is unsurpassed in military capability and we are going to keep it that way.

If we take a broad look at this country with an unsurpassed military capability, with the tremendous industrial base and capacity that we have, with the agricultural production that is by any standards the greatest in the history of the world, when we look at our scientific and technological progress, our superiority in these areas, and when you add that important ingredient of morale and spiritual and religious dedication, the United States of America is number one, and we are going to keep it there.

As I look around this wonderful crowd, it is an inspiration to be here. I just know that all of you represent the finest in all of our society out of 215 million Americans. You are strong, you are dedicated, you believe in our system of Government, you believe in our economic system. You don't want a handout from the Federal Government, you want your Government to create the environment and the atmosphere that makes us great in the future like it has been in the past.

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One of the basic truths that I think we all have to understand--and this audience I know feels as I do--that basic truth is a Government big enough to give us everything we want is a Government big enough to take from us everything we have.

So, we want our Government to create the atmosphere that gives all of you in Amarillo, and all of your fellow Americans all over the country, the opportunity and yet the responsibility to make America a better and better country.

But, in the meantime, we should stand tall and strong and say we are proud to be Americans and we are proud of America.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 7:12 P.M. CST)