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Office of the White House Press Secretary

(Indianapolis, Indiana)

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BE DELIVERED AT A PUBLIC FORUM
AT THE VANDERBURGH COUNTY AUDITORIUM
AND CONVENTION CENTER

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA
FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1976

It's a very great pleasure to be here this morning in Evansville. People with talent and energy create their own good fortune. And your city is a good example.

The people of Evansville have known hard times. But the people of Evansville have shown they have the drive and the initiative to overcome their setbacks and to build for a better future. The progress you have made over the years, through the cooperation of your local government, citizens and business community is a fine example of how Americans can solve their own problems at the local level. You are right to be proud of your accomplishments.

It is also right that the Federal Government helped you in your efforts. Because that is exactly what I feel the Government should do -- not take responsibility away from the people, but give them the freedom to use their own energies.

A little later this morning we are going to visit the walkway, and I look forward to seeing that, because the walkway was your idea -- it was your project -- and city and private funds paid for 30 percent of its cost. But the Department of Housing and Urban Development also made funds available, so you could realize that idea -- so you could be free to do what was right for you.

Just recently, we've seen another example of your local initiative, and of how the Federal Government helped you to help yourselves. With the cooperation of your city government, under the fine leadership of Mayor Russ Lloyd, with the cooperation of unions and management, you've put together a labor-management relations committee that is going to play a very important part in your community's economic future.

I am glad to announce that next month the committee will be featured at a nationwide conference in Washington sponsored by the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. At that conference, the members of the committee will have the chance to tell the Evansville story to interested groups from all over the nation.

Once again, that committee was a local idea. Once again, the Federal Government was able to help you put it into practice. The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service made manpower available to help you in your task. Lately we have heard a lot of talk about what the Federal Government can't do. But as a Congressman for 25 years, and as President for 20 months, I have come to know what the Government can do -- and what it should do.

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One thing we should do is to extend general revenue sharing. As we are all aware, the Federal government is very good at collecting taxes. And at the local level, people are very good at making decisions. So I have proposed that we extend the revenue sharing program, and channel even more of that tax money back to you, through your State and local governments. Since revenue sharing began in 1972, the city of Evansville has received almost ten million dollars in revenue sharing funds. That money helped to pay for public services. It enabled you to improve your city by repaving half the streets, and by upgrading fire-fighting equipment. Right now those revenue sharing funds are being used to protect you and your families from crime.

Revenue sharing is a matter of common sense. And on another front, my Administration has used common sense and taken a steady, stable approach to our economy. And we can see the results. Everything that's supposed to be going up is going up; and everything that is supposed to be coming down is coming down. In the first three months of 1976, we had our smallest quarterly inflation rate in almost four years. And in those three months, our national product grew at an annual rate of seven and one-half percent. That shows we're in the middle of a healthy economic recovery, and that's good news for every American. The sound and steady policies of this Administration have restored confidence to the American people. Our policies have created an economic climate that gives Americans the freedom to work, to earn, to buy and to invest the way they want to. I believe in a balanced budget. But I believe it should be balanced by cutting the growth of Government spending, not by increasing your taxes.

As a matter of fact, we cut your taxes last year, so you would have more buying power. And I have proposed an additional tax cut as of July 1st, that I hope the Congress doesn't deny to the American people. We combined those tax proposals with strong efforts to hold down government spending, and I'd say we have been pretty successful there. Since I've been President, I have used my veto to save 13 billion dollars in Federal spending. They say 13 is an unlucky number, but I'd say 13 billion is pretty lucky for you and for all American taxpayers, when it's in your pocket instead of the Governments. We are going to keep holding down the cost of living, by holding down the cost of Government. We are going to keep making sure that your tax dollars work as hard for you, as you did for them.

And one thing I promise you -- we're going to keep slicing away at Federal paperwork and red tape. My Administration has made a good start already. I have made a series of concrete, constructive proposals to reform our regulatory agencies. I have appointed your Governor, Otis Bowen, to the Federal Paperwork Commission. And I have directed all Federal agencies and Departments to reduce the burden of paperwork they put on the American public by at least ten percent by June 30th. I told them I expect prompt results -- and I mean it. I don't believe America's government should waste its people's time or money.

But neither should it be stingy with common sense. America needs a Government that protects its people's freedom, that respects their independence, and that responds to their needs.

That's the kind of Government I've been working for, for the last 20 months. And with your support on May 4th and next November, that's the kind of Government we'll have for the next four years as well.

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