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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE  
PFC RECEPTION

EXECUTIVE INN

11:20 A.M. CST

First, let me thank your wonderful, wonderful Governor, Doc Bowen, for all the courtesies and support. It is just a great privilege and pleasure to come to the great State of Indiana, to have his support and, Doc, I can't thank you enough.

It is wonderful to come back to Evansville and to see Russ Lloyd here and to have had a very warm reception that we received over at the Civic Center. I enjoyed it. The questions were good -- I hope the answers were okay.

But I am principally here to thank all of the volunteers who are here in this part of the great State of Indiana for the tremendous support that you are giving me. I know that under the leadership that we have here in the State -- where is Don? There he is. Thanks, Don, for your leadership, but all of the people who are here and that we have met up in Indianapolis are, you know -- they just make me feel as though we are going to win, and we are.

Let me give you a few selling points that you might use occasionally in talking to some of those that have not made up their minds yet. Some of you man phones -- some of you call from your own residences, some of you talk to your neighbors, some of you talk to others. I think that if we look back over the last 20 months you will find that we have made very substantial headway in meeting the challenges domestically and meeting the problems that we have had internationally.

Let's take a quick look at where we were in August of 1974. First, we were faced with inflation at a rate of anywhere from 12 to 14 percent. Because of sound, constructive, responsible policies, we have reduced that inflation rate so that for the first four months of 1976 the rate of inflation is under 3 percent, and that is progress.

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Shortly after I became President we were faced with the worst economic problems this country has been faced with in 40 years. Because we have the right policies we have taken the unemployment from almost 9 percent down to 7.5 percent. The trend is in the right direction and we are going to keep it going down, down, down.

The best selling points you have is that in the last 10 to 12 months we have increased employment by 2,600,000, so that at the present time we have 86,600,000 Americans gainfully employed, the most ever in the history of the United States.

Now we didn't have this success because we loaded up the Federal payroll. We made this progress because we gave the free enterprise system an opportunity to work, and that is where the jobs are.

Now let's turn for a minute to the situation that we face around the world. In the 20 months that I have been President, we have strengthened and solidified our alliance in Western Europe. Our relation with NATO, with Britain, with West Germany, with France, with Italy, with all of the NATO countries is better today than it ever has been, and Western Europe is strong and we are a part of it.

If you turn to the Middle East, because of the fact that both Arabs on the one hand and the Israelis on the other trust us, we have been able to make steady and I think constructive progress toward a permanent, a fair peace in the Middle East, which is an area in the world which has been the most volatile area, most controversial area in the history of mankind.

Because the United States, because this Administration is trusted by all parties, we are able to make headway in the future as we have in the past.

So, whether you are talking about Western Europe or the Middle East or if you are talking about the Pacific, the United States and Japan have the closest possible working relationship, and we have friends and allies that believe in us in the Pacific.

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Now let's turn to our adversaries. We have slowly but constructively worked on our relations with the People's Republic of China, 800 million strong. We are on course with the People's Republic of China and the meetings that I had there were constructive and were progressive.

Now our dealings with the Soviet Union -- we have made headway in resolving some of the problems. We solved the problems of West Berlin. We have, for the first time in a negotiated agreement in the handling of nuclear problems, gotten an agreement where we can have on site inspection in the Soviet Union, and that's progress.

That is a breakthrough that a number of Presidents before me have tried and we are the first to accomplish it. It is an indication that they know that we mean business and that it is in our mutual interest to achieve something of that kind.

So what I say to you is simply that in 20 months we have made headway at home, we have made great progress abroad, and this Administration in the next four years will continue to give us the kind of prosperity that we want and the kind of peace that we need.

Thank you very, very much.

END

(AT 11:29 P.M. CST)