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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
WILSON PARK

4:57 P.M. CDT

Congressman John Buchanan, Congressman Bill Dickinson, Congressman Jack Edwards:

I am deeply indebted to all three of you for those wonderful words of confidence, those words of endorsement, and may I say that it was a great privilege and honor for me to serve with you in the Congress of the United States. I had your support then, and I am honored to have you support an endorsement in this campaign for the Presidency of the United States.

Mayor Vann, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

At the outset, let me express my deepest gratitude and appreciation, as well as compliments, to the fine Stanford University Choir and the wonderful bands who have participated on this occasion. It is great to be in Birmingham, as John Buchanan said, "The All American City," and I congratulate you for it.

I understand that you had quite a race yesterday at Talladega, the Winston 500. The car I came in this afternoon might not have been fast enough to beat Buddy Baker, but we have got another race on our hands tomorrow, and that is a race I would sure like to win with your help. Winning seems to be quite a habit in Alabama, and the record of the great Alabama football team speaks for itself. My congratulations to my good friends Bear Bryant and the Crimson Tide, and to "Sug" Jerden and the Auburn War Eagles.

You know that sounds like the competition between my alma mater, Michigan University of Michigan, and Michigan State University. What pleases me so much here this afternoon is that I see so many young people, young Americans, who are already stepping in to take over the reins of Government, of industry and professions. I am proud to say that my own White House staff with me here today averages under 35 years of age.

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I have more pride in each and every one of them than I can express, and I think they represent all the young people here today, and they give me tremendous help and assistance as all of you can give to this great country in the months and years ahead.

I deeply believe in America's young people above all else. In 200 years we have forged from a struggling group of colonies to the greatest nation in the history of the world. Our progress in every field has been unprecedented and much of that progress has always been due to the strength and to the character of young Americans.

A lot of detractors are saying we are becoming a second-rate nation. When I look out over this crowd, you are number one. Because of that, I can say without any hesitation, qualification, I am proud to be an American and proud of America.

Over the last two years America has been challenged as rarely before. We faced the worst economic recession in 40 years. We beat it. We faced many, many challenges to peace in the world. We are still at peace, and we are going to stay at peace by being strong and affirmative and constructive with our allies throughout the world. We faced a crisis of confidence in Government, and that confidence and that integrity in the White House has been restored.

The challenges of the future will be even greater. Today's generation of Americans must face those challenges as our parents and as our grandparents met theirs -- with courage, with sacrifice, with determination, but always with love of our country and our God.

God bless all of you. All of you here today and all the other Americans throughout Alabama and all over America, it is my great honor to be your President. With your faith and your support we will fill the future with hope, with great achievement and the progress that will keep America number one for generations to come.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 5:04 P.M. CDT)