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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
PRESIDENT FORD COMMITTEE RECEPTION

THE RAMADA INN

6:12 P.M. CDT

Roman, Carl Curtis, all of you:

First, I want to thank the people of Nebraska, Omaha, and especially all of you for the extremely warm welcome and the wonderful hospitality that has been shown. I am proud to be a native Nebraskan.

I do want to thank you also for the kind of support and assistance that all of you have given. Without this kind of aid, cooperation, we couldn't be in the ball game, and in the situation where we are today, where from all the reports I get our chances are very good.

Let me, if I might, take just a minute to give you the message as I see it, which I think epitomizes the last 21 months and which is the foundation from which in my judgment we have built for another good four years. If you would refresh your memories just a little back to August of 1974, and then see what has transpired in the last 21 months, I think a person can say that there has been a record of peace, prosperity and trust established.

You know in 1974 this country was going through great trauma as far as the economy was concerned. Inflation was over 12 percent. We have cut it, for the first three months of this year, down to under 3 percent, and the news we got yesterday about the Wholesale Price Index was one we could have anticipated.

You cannot always in this situation get every one of them as good as they have been the last five months, but the prospects overall, the trend as far as inflation is concerned, is good and it is going to stay on the decline. But, if you look at the problems concerning the economy jobwise, we got some excellent news today. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Department of Labor, announced that in the month of April we had 700,000 more people on payrolls in this country, up to a total of 87,400,000, by far the most employed in the history of the United States.

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So, I think a person can talk to his neighbor, to his partner, to his business associates, to anybody, and say that in the 21 months we have taken this country through a tough, tough time by the right policies, by keeping our cool, beating the Congress over its head with 40 vetoes that have been sustained, where we have saved over \$13 billion.

It was not easy, believe me. We had a lot of advice from all sources saying that, "Do what the Congress wants you to do, spend a lot more money, do this and do that." It was not right, we did not do it, and I think we are now in the process where we can say with pride that we are on the right track and we are going in the right direction.

To summarize it, everything that is supposed to be going up is going up and everything that is supposed to be going down is going down. (Laughter)

I think you know the record that we can also speak with great pride about. It is the first time that a President of the United States can seek election or re-election in the last 20 years where that President can say this country is at peace and when we can say we are meeting our manpower needs without the draft.

We are spending all of the money that is needed and necessary for good military programs: the Air Force, the Army, the Navy and Marines. We have this peace, we are going to keep it by being strong, diligent, alert, well-prepared, well-led.

Then, if we turn to the last point, if you will refresh your memories, 21 months ago this country had gone through a very, very serious loss of confidence. It was not an easy job, but I think by openness and candor and responsibility, frankness, integrity, we have helped to restore public confidence in the White House and in the Executive Branch.

So, if we have an opportunity to do this job for another four years, I can promise you that the progress we have made will be increased tremendously in the four years. So, I hope and trust that you and all of your friends and neighbors will give us a chance to do so.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 6:17 P.M. CDT)