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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
GOP RECEPTION

HOLIDAY INN RIVERMONT

1:36 P.M. CDT

Thank you very, very much, Howard.

I also want to thank Jim Quillen and your Governor, Winfield Dunn, who have accompanied me today as we have traveled from Johnson City to here in Memphis. I appreciate their full support, I appreciate their endorsement, and I likewise am deeply grateful for your participation, your support.

I am here to ask it. I am here to urge you to support my candidacy because I think we have got a good record -- it is a record that I think is one that, if we are able to continue it for the next four years, will give us the kind of peace that we want and have today, the kind of prosperity that the American people can have if we do the right thing, and the kind of trust and confidence in the White House which I think is essential.

Now, let me take just a minute or two. As Howard said, I became President under somewhat difficult circumstances. It wasn't easy, but I can assure you that we started out with a reputation of integrity, a reputation of some 25-plus years as a person who called them as he saw them, who talked straight, did his job and was successful.

We have tried to pursue exactly the same kind of a policy since I have become President. The door is open for those who want to talk to us. We tell the story as we see it. We promise only that which we can deliver and we deliver everything we promise and that is a pretty good record.

When I became President, because the country had gone through a very traumatic experience, many of our allies were uncertain. Our adversaries weren't quite sure and there could have been a temptation for them to exploit a situation which was very difficult, but by the kind of programs that we have carried out, solidifying our allies and making certain that they know that we are going to stand with those countries in Western Europe, that we are going to continue to make progress in the Middle East, that when we talk to the Japanese, whether it is when I visited Japan or when the Emperor visited here, that Japan knows that they can depend upon us.

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As you look around the world you know today that America is respected. America is looked upon as the leader of the free world. Our allies trust us and our adversaries are respectful of our strength and our capabilities.

If you look here at home, think back to August, 1974 -- the rate of inflation was 12 percent or more per year, the highest in 40 years. What is it today? For the first three months of 1976, it is less than 3 percent per year. In other words, if you compare 1974 with the first three months of 1976, we have cut the rate of inflation by 75 percent. That is a pretty good record, by any standards.

Then, refresh your memory, if you would, back to May or April of 1975. We were in the depths of a serious recession. Many people in political life, a number of people -- leaders of organized labor -- were predicting a depression comparable to the 1930s. They were the prophets of doom and gloom. They said we had to do dramatic, drastic things, that we had to push the panic button.

We had a lot of pressures, believe me. A lot of people were banging on the door of the Oval Office wanting us to spend a lot more money, wanting us to undertake this quick fix program. We didn't succumb to that. We said the right thing we are going to do. I knew it would work. We weren't going to succumb to expediency. We didn't.

And where are we today? We have got 3,300,000 more people working today than a year ago. We have 87,400,000 people gainfully employed in America -- the most gainfully employed in the history of the United States.

I guess you can summarize it, because of the policies that I initiated, the policies that I implemented, the policies that have been successful that have come out of this Administration, the Oval Office, everything that is supposed to be going up is going up and everything that is supposed to be going down is going down. That is not a bad record, either.

So, I am delighted to see you all and I am delighted to see so many good Republicans. I have been in Memphis when there were considerably fewer than this and, as Dan Kuykendall would verify, I have been here a good many years ago on a number of occasions to try and help build a Republican Party. I think it is the party that has the right philosophy and I think I have done a good job as the head of the Republican Party for the last 21 months.

Therefore, I very strongly urge, I strongly would appreciate your support on May 25.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 1:44 P.M. CDT)