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Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Grand Rapids, Michigan)

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO BE DELIVERED AT
SAGINAW TOWNSHIP BICENTENNIAL PARK
SAGINAW, MICHIGAN

It is great to be here in Saginaw Township today with so many of my fellow Michiganders who are proud of their birthright, and who are celebrating what is good and great about America. Saginaw Township is a young and vibrant community with a real sense of purpose. In the planning and organization of your bicentennial celebration, you have brought people together in a combined effort. You have established new links between families and neighborhoods. You have given your Township what so many communities are searching for, and that is a feeling of identity and common purpose.

And that is exactly what I have been doing as well--since I took office as President. When I was sworn in, I said our long national nightmare was over. And it is. We dispelled the climate of darkness and despair that hung over this troubled nation, and we let the sun shine in. As I did not seek this office, neither did I shirk it.

I said we would promise only what we could deliver, and deliver everything that we promised, and we have. I said I would be candid and forthright with the American people, and I have been. I said that a policy of firmness and common sense would bring us out of our economic recession, and it has. When I took office, inflation was running as high as 12 percent.

Unemployment was climbing. The prophets of doom and disaster said we were on the verge of collapse and only massive Federal programs and spending would save us.

I didn't panic.

I fought the attempts of the majority in the Congress to spend more and more and create bigger and bigger deficits, that would have led to even higher prices and more lay-offs.

Instead, I vetoed 49 bills that the Congress sent me, and 42 of those vetoes were sustained, saving American taxpayers some 13 billion dollars. That is an average of almost 200 dollars for every American household.

And if it proves necessary, I will hold this nation on its course to full economic recovery by using my veto power again and again and again.

I want to make very sure that your tax dollars work as hard for you as you did for them.

(MORE)

As a result of my policies, we have reduced the annual rate of inflation by more than one half. We have increased national employment by 3.3 million jobs since the low of last year. Today there are more American men and women gainfully employed in the United States than ever before in history. What's more, you have my promise that I'm going to keep the pressure on until every American who wants a job has a job -- a rewarding permanent job with a real future instead of a dead-end, temporary make-work job created by the Government. My Administration is determined to stop the extension of Government intervention, interference and control in our daily lives. As a Congressman, as Vice President and now as your President, I have never lost sight of one basic fact: A Government big enough to give us everything we want is a Government big enough to take from us everything we have. I have followed a course that has led us to rising prosperity, renewed trust and a lasting peace.

Throughout 27 years of public service in the Congress and the White House, my total commitment was, is and always will be to a policy of peace through strength. Because we are militarily powerful, because our national defenses are strong enough to meet any challenge, America is at peace. I want to maintain that peace, advance the prospects for peace among all nations, and make certain that legacy of peace continues for our children and grandchildren. And so, I seek a mandate -- to finish the very important job I have begun -- and to complete the restoration of faith and trust in the Presidency. My Administration has been as honest, as open and as candid as I can make it, and so is my campaign for the high office I hold.

I'm proud of my country. I'm proud to be an American. I want to lead our country away from a wasteful preoccupation with what's wrong with America and get on with the job of making things right in America.

You have shown here today that love of country and belief in our ideals not only exist but thrive in our United States. In the future, I see an America where that spirit fills us with renewed confidence to face the challenges before us.....

An America dedicated to the simple but enduring values that give a nation and its people integrity...

An America where life is valued for its content as well as its comforts..

And where government serves, but the people rule.

If you share that vision of America, I urge you to go to the polls and vote next Tuesday.

Join with me in making this Bicentennial, not only a year of celebration, but of determination as well. When once again we show the world that our American dream is best achieved when we are wide awake.

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