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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
FROM THE  
PRESIDENTIAL EXPRESS

BATTLE CREEK AMTRAK STATION

1:58 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon.

It is great to be in Battle Creek, and thank all of you for coming out. We love Michigan, we are glad to be back home.

Betty and I started this train trip from Flint to Niles across the heartland of Michigan where we have many, many friends over a long, long period of time, so we have just had a wonderful reception and this one in Battle Creek is tremendous. And let me say that this train trip through the heartland of Michigan is the beginning of a victory in Kansas City that will end up with a victory on November 2.

You know, I am an old Michigander -- and I mean literally old. I played football so long ago back at Ann Arbor that it was back when the ball was round. (Laughter)

But I have been honored and pleased to have on this trip with me two of the University of Michigan's outstanding coaches, two friends of mine whose teams I have admired and cheered for on television and otherwise, and I am so pleased to have with me Bo Shembechler, the great football coach at the University of Michigan.

Then, we also have with us that fine, fine coach of the University of Michigan basketball team, Johnny Orr. Thank you, Johnny.

You know, the Ford candidacy has got the kind of momentum that the University of Michigan football team had last year and the kind of momentum that the Michigan basketball team had. We are going to keep going, but with all apologies we are going to win the final one November 2, too.

But let me say a word or two why Betty and I are here, why we want your vote. I think I have done a good job the last 21 months. Refresh your memory, if you will.

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In August of 1974, this country was in a very difficult situation. For reasons we all know, the American people had lost their confidence in the White House. There had been scandals in very high places. We all know that we were suffering at that time from inflation of 12 percent a year and we know that we were on the brink of the worst economic times in the last 40 years, a serious recession.

We also know that in August of 1974, our allies abroad were uncertain as to whether the American people and the American Government would meet its responsibilities on a worldwide basis, and our adversaries abroad were likewise uncertain as to their relationship with the United States.

When I took office on August 8 of 1974, it was not an easy job. We had a lot of things to do. We had some real tough jobs to handle and some very difficult and formidable obstacles ahead of us.

A VOICE: You blew it.

THE PRESIDENT: We blew it in the right direction, young man, and those of you who don't agree -- and if you would go out and look for a job, you would get one.

Now let me say what we have done. We have taken inflation from 12 percent down to less than 3 percent, and that is a good record, by any standard. And in the last year we have added 3,300,000 more people on the payrolls and we added 710,000 more on the payrolls in the month of April, and we are going to get more and more people gainfully employed even though in April of this year we had 87,400 more people employed in the United States than any time in the history of America. That is a darn good record.

Then, as we look around the rest of the world, I can tell you from my personal experiences that the United States of America, 215 million of us, we are respected as a nation because we are a leader in the world with our allies on the one hand, and we meet the challenges of our adversaries on the other. We have got peace now, we achieved it in the last year, and we are going to keep the peace through strength in the years ahead.

Therefore, when you look at the record, I think it is a record that deserves support. I think it is a record that I can come to you and say, "Jerry Ford has done a good job, you ought to keep him on for the next four years."

So Betty and I are delighted to be in Battle Creek. We are most appreciative of your coming out on this Saturday afternoon. We thank you for what you have done in the past and we urge you to go to the polls on Tuesday. We urge you to get your friends to go and vote for a record that I think will justify your support and will give America the kind of leadership that it deserves for the next four years.

Thank you very kindly.

END (AT 2:05 P.M. EDT)