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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
AEI RECEPTION
MADISON HOTEL

7:58 P.M. EDT

Herman, Paul and Bill Baroody, and all of the AEI people and their guests:

It is really nice to be here.

Last night and today, well, they were much better than some Tuesday nights and Wednesdays we have experienced. (Laughter) I never try to sing the Victors, either, because it is a great song. Fortunately, it was written for Michigan. But it was a night that Betty and I enjoyed probably as much as any night we have had the opportunity to be in Washington.

If I could just make a personal comment, when the returns came in from the two counties that I represented for 16 years, then the last 10, there was a redistricting, to some extent, but the two that I represented for 16 years, I got 85 percent of the votes. That is not bad.

You know, you always expect a few stragglers. (Laughter)

But, anyhow, it is nice to be here. I remember very vividly in February of 1974, when I had the honor of participating as Vice President in the 20-year anniversary of Bill Baroody. In reminiscing about that on the way over and thinking of the many years that Bill and all of you in AEI have been helpful to me as a single Congressman, as a Republican leader and, subsequently, as Vice President and President, I can't say strongly enough how grateful I am for the contribution of all of you who contribute to AEI and in a meaningful way contribute to Government, whether it is in the Executive or the Legislative Branch.

You should be very proud of the organization and you should be saying to all of us who are the beneficiaries, we are going to keep it up, because I can say as a beneficiary it was very, very helpful.

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I look around the room and I see many people from the academic world who I have known through AEI over the years. It is a tremendous collection of talent and the views that have been given to me in one way or another have been extremely helpful, and they are today.

We do use, and for good reason, the recommendations, whether they are in housing, whether they are in a multitude of other programs, the concise and very well laid out alternatives and proposals that come from AEI.

I am just very grateful that this kind of talent is available to us who have the honor and privilege of serving in Government. And let me assure you that we hope you have many, many more years of good service with AEI, Bill, and that AEI continues over the years in making its meaningful contribution to not only the Legislative Branch but to the Executive Branch.

Both of us need a lot of help and this is the kind of talent that we like to have. (Laughter)

And I, in closing, could make one observation: I have met, as I said, with this group in 1974 and it was nice to see so many old friends. I met with your Board of Directors last year, as I recall, and it is nice to have an opportunity to say a few words here tonight. It would be awfully nice to have a similar opportunity for each of the next four years. (Laughter)

END (AT 8:02 P.M. EDT)