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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT  
LIBRARY PARK

12:17 P.M. PDT

Thank you very, very much, John Dellenbach.

It is nice to be here in Medford's Library Park with Mayor Ben Fagone, my former colleague in the House of Representatives Wendell Wyatt, other distinguished guests, and it is wonderful to have an opportunity to say a few words to fellow Americans from the great State of Oregon.

I flew out here this morning to spend four days on the West Coast asking for your support. My very first stop on this trip brought me right to Library Park in the City of Medford. I am glad to be here. I know you are all glad to be here just because it is God's country.

It has been my privilege to travel in every one of our 50 States, and I found that some States have mountain ranges, some border on the ocean, some have very fertile valleys, broad fjords and sparkling rivers, and in some you can ski and in others you can swim.

But here in Oregon you have it all. You were the first State in the history of America to hold primary elections, which I mention not only because of its historic interests but because it is a way of getting into the subject I would like to speak to you about on this beautiful day here in Library Park.

I am asking my fellow Americans for their support because I have done a good job for the last 21 months under the most difficult circumstances. Because I have achieved and maintained the peace, moved America on the road to prosperity and restored confidence and trust in the Presidency, I want a mandate next Tuesday from Oregon and the American people to finish that job in the next four years.

Consider for a moment where we were in the very first days and months of my Presidency. Take yourself back to August 8 of 1974. You will recall that some well-known economists, labor and political leaders were predicting that we were heading into a deep depression, that unemployment would soon exceed 10 percent, that only massive action by the Federal Government could avert a tremendous catastrophe.

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Inflation had soared to an annual rate of over 12 percent, interest rates were going through the roof, far, far too many Americans were laid off and could not find new jobs.

Just about a year ago, we hit the bottom of the worst recession in 40 years. Many were urging me in the White House to push the panic button. In the Congress, the economic downturn set off a clamor for huge emergency Federal subsidies, for more and more bigger Government programs, and higher and higher deficit spending.

The prophets of gloom were wrong, and I knew they were wrong when they were begging me to do this or to do that. We didn't panic in the Oval Office. I never lost sight of a deep conviction and belief that I have -- I have had it all my political life -- that a Government big enough to give you everything you want is a Government big enough to take from you everything you have.

We resisted the big spending schemes that would have caused larger and larger deficits and even more destructive inflation. We rejected the old political techniques of tax and tax, spend and spend, elect and elect.

I vetoed 49 bills -- 42 of those bills have been sustained and the taxpayers of America have been saved \$13 billion. And I will say parenthetically -- not as a threat, of course -- if the Congress sends me more of those terrible budget-busting bills, I will veto them again and again and again.

In contrast to what some people were promoting, we pursued a calm, steady policy to insure America's economic health, not just for a month or just for an election year, but over the long haul we had faith that America's system of private enterprise would regain its strength.

As a result, we meet here in this lovely park on this great day not in the gloom of a recession but in the full surge of economic recovery. 87,400,000 Americans are on jobs today, and this is an all-time record, and it has gone up month-by-month-by-month for the last 12 months. We have added almost 3,300,000 more jobs to the American economy since the bottom of the recession -- 3,300,000 more jobs than last May and 700,000 more jobs in the last month. I think this is concrete, significant evidence that we are well on the way to the kind of a recovery that we want, and we will get.

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Now, the special nature of Oregon's economy, its heavy reliance on the products of its wonderful forests have caused it to suffer heavily economically, and I am pleased that Oregon's economy has been steadily improving.

I stopped on the way in from the airport and had the opportunity of going through one of your great lumber mills. I was pleased to meet some of your fellow citizens from this community to see how they take the logs and make the lumber that we use all over the United States.

You should be proud of those products. You should be proud of those people, and we are darned glad to get what you produce for us throughout the rest of the United States.

I will not be satisfied until every Oregonian and every other American who wants a job can find a job. That is what we are after. Since August 8 (9) of 1974, when I was sworn in, inflation has been cut by over half, and I intend to get it down even further.

You can look at the record -- 12 percent in August of 1974; under 3 percent in the first four months of 1976.

Now, in addition to America's economic stability and security, we are increasing America's national security. We have the best equipped, best trained, best led fighting force in the world today, and they are all volunteers. That is a good record.

To make positive our military strength remains one of the major objectives, one of the major things that we are trying to do in Washington on your behalf, we must keep America's strength unsurpassed. As a way to do that, in January of this year I proposed the two largest military budgets in the history of America.

Let me say this: Within four years, and with a solid mandate from you, we can finish the job and make America truly secure for future generations.

I deeply appreciate the wonderful opportunity to come before you today and talk about the policies that I have implemented -- returning to peace, increasing prosperity, restoring trust in the White House.

Today, America is at peace. Your sons are not being drafted, they are not dying in any battlefield anyplace in the world. My policies will maintain the peace, secure the peace through strength and perseverance and leave the legacy of peace for our children, as well as our grandchildren.

I will continue my policies of cutting your taxes, expanding the private economy, reducing bureaucracy and useless regulation and restraining Federal spending.

Federal taxes are too high. We cut Federal taxes last year, and I have recommended to the Congress another \$10 billion tax cut to begun July 1, including an increase in the personal exemption from \$750 per person to \$1,000.

My policies have brought us from the depth of a recession to a sustained recovery, and will insure that runaway inflation never again robs us of our loved ones of the rewards of honest work and lifetime savings.

I will pursue the steady course that has led us from war to peace, from recession to recovery, from cynicism to confidence, from faith to fear. (fear to faith)

Finally, I will finish the most important job -- restoration of trust in the Presidency itself. I did not seek this office, but neither will I shirk it. I need your support to insure peace, to restore prosperity, to restore the confidence that is so important for 215 million Americans.

The future really belongs to those who come after us. Americans have always wanted life to be better for our children than it was for us because life for us has been better than it was for our parents.

What do I see ahead for this wonderful country of ours? I see a strong and confident America, secure in a strength that cannot alone be counted in megatons, an America rejoicing in riches that cannot be eroded by inflation or by taxation.

I see an America where life is valued for its quality as well as for its comfort, where the individual is inviolate in his Constitutional right, where the Government serves and the people rule.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 12:30 P.M. PDT)