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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AND
QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

McCARRAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

11:37 A.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning.

It is great to be in Las Vegas. I have been here a good many times, not only in Las Vegas but in Reno, and had a nice trip up to Elko a few years ago.

It is a day for good news for us. We just got the results from the meeting in New York where they came out 119 for Ford and 18 for my opponent, and I think 15 uncommitted, which takes us up very close to 700 in the delegate count. We are very optimistic.

Of course, the six primaries that are being held tomorrow, including the one in Nevada, are very important. We are here in Nevada to see some old friends and to do all that we can to stimulate a good vote on my behalf tomorrow.

We think we have a fighting chance. We have great leadership in Bob List and the former mayor of Las Vegas, Oran Gregson, and we have a number of other people that are strongly supporting my candidacy.

We are here for the purpose of setting forth the message that I think most Americans support, that the Ford Administration has restored confidence in the White House, the Ford Administration has turned the economy around from a recession of a year ago to a situation where we have added 3,300,000 more jobs in the last 12 months, 710,000 in the last month.

The record, also, on inflation is a good one. When I took office 21 months ago the rate of inflation was over 12 percent. For the first four months of 1976 it is 3 percent or less. And when we look at where the United States stands in the world, we have achieved the peace, we are maintaining it and, because of our military capability and our diplomatic skill, we intend to keep it for the next four years.

I would be glad to answer any questions.

QUESTION: Mr. President, is there anything you can do to keep the IRS off the backs of all the Nevadans? It seems like about one out of sixteen are being audited today.

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THE PRESIDENT: I think the IRS ought to treat all citizens, those in Nevada as well as those in all 49 other States, very equitably, very fairly. Certainly the presumption ought to be that the taxpayers do pay all that they legally are required to under our Internal Revenue Code. And if there is any discrimination against the people of Nevada, I am opposed to it and I will look into it.

QUESTION: Carter says stop all bomb testing in Nevada. Mr. Reagan says he is not quite sure. What do you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is in the national interest of the United States to continue our nuclear testing. It would be irresponsible in my opinion for the United States to have a moratorium on nuclear developments and research and, therefore, I strongly disagree with Mr. Carter. And I am not uncertain as to what the United States ought to do. We ought to do it for our national security both domestically as well as internationally.

QUESTION: Regarding the New York story, the New York developments, this is a very generous move by Vice President Rockefeller to help to get those delegates for you. How do you expect to repay him for this?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't expect to repay anybody for the delegates that come to the Ford Administration. I believe those delegates believe in the programs that I have had for this country for the last 21 or 22 months. The people in New York, New York State as a whole, as well as the City, know that we have achieved the peace, we have turned the economy around and restored confidence in the White House. I think they made that move because they believe in the Ford Administration.

QUESTION: Do you consider him a candidate for the Vice Presidency?

THE PRESIDENT: The Vice President indicated to me a number of months ago, as you know, Helen, that he did not want to be considered for Vice President. The number of good Republicans who are qualified to be Vice President is a very large number.

QUESTION: Does that mean you are taking him at his word?

THE PRESIDENT: I always assume what people tell me is what they believe.

QUESTION: There is some speculation he would like to be Secretary of State in a new Ford Administration. Would you look favorably toward that?

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THE PRESIDENT: I have never discussed it with him.

It is real nice to see you and we are looking forward to a very enjoyable time here in Nevada. As I said, I have been in Nevada a good many times, covered a lot of territory, and I am optimistic about our opportunities.

QUESTION: This is a gambling State. Will you make any bets on your outcome tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think we will do very well.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 11:47 A.M. PDT)