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(Walnut Creek, California)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT
WALNUT CREEK TOWN SQUARE

3:25 P.M. PDT

State Senator John Nejedly, Mayor Schroeder, Mayor Wesson, Mayor Harmon, Mayor LaPointe, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

My staff is going to give me the devil for taking my coat off, but when it is so nice in sunny California, I just can't resist it. (Laughter)

This campaign started in the snowy State and wonderful State of New Hampshire. We got off to a great start there in February, and we are going to end it with a great day June 8 in the State of California.

It is so great to be here in Walnut Creek, surrounded by some of the most beautiful land that I have ever had the chance to see, and I must say in addition some of the most beautiful people I have ever seen. Your open space program was a great cooperative effort by the people of Walnut Creek. It showed the vitality, the initiative that we see right here in your superb business districts. You have shown the dedication to civic achievements, problem solving and a can-do spirit, and I salute you for it. Congratulations.

My message to you today can be summed up in a very few words. As much as I believe in a strong and prosperous automobile industry, I come here to say there is absolutely no reason whatsoever for you to trade in a reliable Ford for a flashier model. (Laughter)

Let me tell you why I am asking you, my fellow Americans, for your support, because I have done a good job under the most difficult and the most trying circumstances, and I want your vote on June 8. I want your help because we have maintained the peace, we have moved America on the road to prosperity, and restored confidence and trust in the Presidency itself.

I want a mandate from California so that we can say to the American people that the decision has been made and we can move arm in arm toward victory in November of 1976.

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Peace, prosperity and trust are my record of performance since I had the honor of becoming your President. Consider for a moment where we were in the first months of my Presidency. Inflation had soared to an annual rate of over 12 percent, far too many Americans were being laid off and could not find new jobs.

Just about a year ago we hit the bottom of our worst recession in 40 years. Many were urging that the President push the panic button. In Congress, many were calling for huge emergency Federal subsidies for more and bigger Government programs and higher deficit Government spending.

We didn't panic. We kept our cool. We never lost sight of a belief that I have had all of my political life; A Government big enough to give us everything we want is a Government big enough to take from us everything we have.

We resisted big Government spending programs that would have inevitably caused larger deficits and even more destructive inflation. We did not go along with the discredited techniques of old politics: tax and tax, spend and spend, elect and elect.

Instead, we pursued a calm, constructive, conservative point of view to insure America's economic health, not just for an election year, but for the long pull.

I had faith in you, 215 million Americans from the East to the West, from the North to the South. I had faith that the American system of private enterprise would once again gain its strength that has made us the envy of the world.

Today, we meet not in the gloom of a recession or depression, but in the full surge of an economic recovery.

We have added almost 3,300,000 jobs since the bottom of the recession 12 months ago, and 700,000 more jobs in the last month.

But, it will not satisfy me until every American who wants a job can find a job.

Inflation has been cut by more than half and we will keep the pressure on so that it won't threaten our economic stability in the future.

I vetoed 49 bills in the last 21 plus months. Forty-two of those vetoes have been sustained by the responsible Members of the Congress, saving the American taxpayers -- that is you -- \$13 billion. That is a good record.

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Now, let me add a little postscript. If that Congress keeps on sending down some of these budget-busting, inflationary proposals in the future, I will use that veto again and again and again, for the American benefit of all of you.

You know, it is about time that you get an opportunity to spend your money the way you want to spend it instead of letting the Congress spend it for you. I am deeply determined that your tax dollars work as hard for you as each and every one of you have worked for them. I want the Government to spend less and to tax less.

Last year, we reduced Federal income taxes. This year, I proposed that beginning July 1 of this year that we have another \$10 billion tax reduction -- 75 percent of it to go to the individual taxpayer so that you can spend your money the way you want it, and 25 percent to go to industry so they can expand, so they can modernize and provide more jobs for people all over this country.

As far as individual income tax reductions are concerned, I want the personal income tax exemption increased from \$750 per person to \$1,000 per person. Middle income taxpayers in this country deserve a fair shake, and they haven't gotten it in the last 10 years.

Let me make it absolutely certain and positive, I will fight this Congress every step of the way to get the kind of tax relief that the American people deserve. But, as we strengthen America's economic security, we must, of course, increase America's national security.

Today, America is at peace. There are no American boys fighting anywhere on the face of the earth, and I intend to keep it that way. We have the best trained, the best equipped, the best led fighting force in the world today, and they are all volunteers. The Ford Administration ended the draft and we have an all-volunteer military force that can handle any problem, any mission. It is unsurpassed in its capabilities to defend our national interest, to deter aggression, and to keep the peace, and we should be proud of their job.

But, frankly, we have a problem. In the last 10 years, from 1964 to 1974, Congress cut \$50 billion from budgets sent to Capitol Hill by various Presidents. Last year, the Congress cut \$7 billion out of my defense appropriation bill. We aren't going to stand for it because the United States needs the kind of a program that protects our way of life, our precious freedom and the future of our children and our grandchildren, and I promise you I will fight for the kind of a program that we need, that we can have, that is essential for freedom for all of us in the future as well as in the present.

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With a mandate from all of you here in Walnut Creek and the surrounding communities, let me say I will finish the most important job--the greatest and most important, as I see it -- the restoration of confidence and trust in the White House itself. As your President, I promise no more than I can deliver and I promise I will deliver everything that I promise.

I need your support to insure peace, returning prosperity and trust, the good, secure, fulfilling future that we owe to our children. Americans historically 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 great country? As we enter the third century of our independence, I see a strong, confident America, secure in a strength that cannot be counted in megatons, a Nation rejoicing in its blessings 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 rights, where the Government serves and the people rule.

We have all shared the blessings of freedom. Now, let's roll up our sleeves and join in the work of preserving the greatest country in the history of mankind.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 3:38 P.M. PDT)