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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

5:15 P.M. EDT

Jim Rhodes, my friends in the Congress, Barbara Nicklaus, Woody Hayes, all of you:

It is great to be in Columbus -- and let me tell you why I am here.

In the last 21 months, I have worked at trying to restore the economy, trying to achieve and maintain the peace and to restore confidence and trust in the White House itself. In 21 months, I have done a good job. I want your help on June 8.

Jim Rhodes has had a great program to provide jobs in the State of Ohio. We want to help him. And let me tell you what we are doing to help that job program.

I recently signed a highway bill -- Bill Harsher from your State was one of the architects of it -- that is \$17 billion 500 million over a two-year period. That will provide jobs in the State of Ohio as it will in all other 49 States.

But, let's talk about where we were a year ago. We were in the depths of a recession, the worst in 40 years. But, what we did was not lose our cool. We decided that we had to be affirmative and get jobs in the private sector, not on the public payroll. And the net result is that in the last 12 months we have increased the number of employees, people on jobs, by 3,300,000, last month an increase of 710,000, and let me tell you the figures for the last month showed that 87,400,000 Americans are working today, an all-time high, and we are going to do better and better and better.

I am not going to go around quoting statistics as to what I want the unemployment figure to be. Here is the only way I judge it: I want an economy in this country so that everybody who wants a job can get a job. That is the criteria.

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Now, let's talk about inflation. When I became President 21 months ago, the rate of inflation was 12 percent or higher. In the last 21 months, we have reduced the rate of inflation by 75 percent. For the first four months of this year, 1976, the rate of inflation on an annual basis is 3 percent or less. Any time you can cut inflation by 75 percent, we must be doing something right, and I think we have.

Now, let's talk about our national security. In my Administration, we achieved the peace, we have the peace and we are going to keep it there. And let me point out just what the facts are.

There is not a single American boy fighting and dying overseas under the Ford Administration, and we are going to keep it there.

One other thing: I believe your memories are sufficiently fresh to think about the problems we had back in the summer of 1974. It was tragic. And since that time, because I have been open, candid, forthright, I have never promised more than I can deliver and I have delivered everything I promised.

But we have been forthright, frank and honest, and this is the only way I know to play the ball game. And we are going to continue that for the next four years with your help, and I appreciate it very, very much.

Thank you.

END (AT 5:19 P.M. EDT)