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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AND
QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

GREATER CINCINNATI AIRPORT

10:15 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good evening, everybody. It is nice to be in Cincinnati. We have had a good day, first in New Jersey and up in Cleveland. It is nice to be in Cincinnati this evening, and we are looking forward to tomorrow morning.

I do want to thank Governor Rhodes, I want to thank Bob Taft, I want to thank Gordon Scherer, I want to thank Clarence Miller, and I want to thank all the other Members of the Congressional delegation who have been helpful and supportive of my nomination.

Let me just make very clear what the message is of the Ford Administration as we come into the great State of Ohio. The message is very straightforward, very simple. The Ford Administration has been open, been candid, and very frank in trying to restore the trust and confidence in the White House.

I think we have made a lot of progress, and in the next four years we can do even better. The Ford Administration inherited a very bad economic situation. We were having 12 percent inflation. In the last 22 months we have cut it from 12 percent to 3 percent or less. That is a 75 percent reduction. That is sizeable, I think, progress in this area.

We inherited a serious economic problem, such as the recession that a year ago was blighting the whole country. In the meantime, in the last 12 months we have increased employment 3,300,000 jobs. In the last month we added 300,000 more jobs, and today, according to the last report of Friday of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, we have 87,700,000 people gainfully employed in the United States, an all-time record.

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When we look at the world scene, we find that we are at peace. No American boys are fighting overseas, and we are not going to commit any, such as in South Africa or Rhodesia. This policy of this Administration is to diplomatically keep the peace that we have achieved and keep it during this Administration by being militarily strong and diplomatically skillful.

It is a pleasure to be in Ohio, and it is nice to be in Cincinnati tonight.

I will be glad to answer any questions.

QUESTION: How do you feel about the primaries?

THE PRESIDENT: I am very encouraged. I think we will do well in Ohio. I have been here a good many times in this State. I have a great many friends. We have an outstanding organization, headed by the Governor and Kent McGough and Keith McNamara and all the other people throughout the State, and I am very encouraged.

QUESTION: Does this last-minute campaigning in Ohio indicate any concern on your part that you may be lagging or may not be doing as well as you would like?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at all because I have been in Ohio a good many times during my Presidency. I have been here recently on a number of occasions. We just wanted to make sure that the people of Ohio know that I care about the 97 delegates in the State of Ohio who are very crucial in the convention victory that we are going to have in Kansas City and the eventual victory in November when the contest is between the Republican candidate and the Democratic candidate.

QUESTION: Mr. Reagan said today that you had reduced the campaign to a very low level that he thought the Republicans would never aspire to. Do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the Ford campaign has been conducted at a very high level. We have only told the truth. We have been very straightforward in meeting any comments or issues that have been raised. We have told the truth across the board, and I have faith in the committee that represents me at the national level. I think as long as we tell the truth to the American people, you can't lose.

THE PRESS: Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: It is real nice to see you all. See you tomorrow.

END (AT 10:20 P.M. EDT)