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(Findlay, Ohio)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
ELKS LODGE

6:47 P.M. EDT

Tenny Guyer, Governor Jim Rhodes, Senator Bob Taft, Congressman Del Latta, my old and very dear friend your former Congressman Jack Betts, your good Mayor, distinguished guests, and all of the wonderful people here in Flag City:

I love you. I understand that is the biggest Bicentennial flag ever made. Congratulations.

But, you know, I would like to express my appreciation also to a couple of wonderful wives of two fine Members of Congress with whom I served -- well, let's see, there is Martha Betts and Mae Guyer. I ought to thank them, too.

This has been a wonderful day in Ohio. We started in Cincinnati this morning. This crowd is fantastic, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It gives me a chance to look each and every one of you right in the eye, and tell you why I think tomorrow's election is vitally important and why you ought to go out and vote for Jerry Ford in tomorrow's election.

In August of 1974, when I became President of the United States, this country was in trouble. The American people had gone through a difficult time. There had been a great loss of trust and confidence in the White House itself. The United States was going through an economic disaster.

Inflation was over 12 percent. Unemployment was beginning to rise. Employment was going down. Taxes were too high. Our allies abroad were uncertain as to what the United States would do, whether the American people and this Government had the will and the resolution to meet the challenges. Our adversaries around the world were wondering whether they should be tempted to take advantage of this unfortunate situation.

I became President in probably as difficult a time as any President ever assumed that great office. We started out first recognizing that we had to achieve peace, we had to turn the economy around, and we had to restore trust and confidence in the White House itself. So, right from the very first day your President decided he would be open, he would be candid, he would be forthright, he would be straightforward with the American people. Your President decided he would not promise anything more than he could produce and he would produce everything that he promised, and he has.

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Then we had the problem of inflation, growing unemployment, fewer jobs, and we decided that we had to take a firm, steady course to correct the problem.

What has happened? In the last 12 months we added 3,600,000 more jobs, 700,000 of them in the month of April, 300,000 more in the month of May.

Last Friday, the Department of Labor announced that we had 87,700,000 people gainfully employed in this country -- the highest number in the history of America. That is a good record. But it is not good enough. I am not going to be satisfied until we get over 90 million people gainfully employed in the United States and President Ford won't be satisfied until everybody who wants a job, who is looking for a job, gets a job in the United States of America.

I said a moment ago that Federal taxes were too high, so last year I recommended to the Congress -- and the Congress approved -- a \$23 billion tax reduction, 25 percent of it to go to business so they can modernize, so they can upgrade their capability, and 75 percent of it went to the individual taxpayers of this country. And that helped to take us out of the recession.

At the same time, I said the Federal Government was spending much too much money, so in January of this year I recommended to the Congress that we cut the growth of Federal spending by 50 percent, and I said we needed another tax cut on July 1 of this year which would include an increase in the personal exemption from \$750 per person to \$1,000 per person. That is what the Congress got to do for you.

But then we ought to make some other adjustments in Federal taxes. As I was driving up here from Lima I saw the beautiful farmlands on each side of the interstate highway. Those are family farms and, as I drove in here to Findlay, I saw some of what are obviously family-owned businesses. What we want to do is to protect the family farm. We want to make certain that family businesses don't go to the Federal Government.

So, I recommended to the Congress a few months ago two things to take care of that problem. Number one, we would increase the estate tax exemption so that the owner of a farm could pass it on to the next generation, so the owner of a business could pass it on more easily to the next generation, and I recommended also that a transfer of property from husband to wife would be tax-free. I think that is right.

And now, speaking about agriculture, you know the American farmer has produced under our Administration the greatest corn crop, the greatest wheat crop, the greatest soybean crop in American agriculture -- once we got the Federal agents off your back and out of your hair -- you could produce.

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And let me say very specifically, under the Ford Administration we will never let the American farmer and what he produces be a pawn in the foreign policy decisions of this Government.

But let's take the last -- peace. When I became President, we were still engaged in that conflict some 8,000 miles away. It is over and, because we are strong, because we have the diplomatic skill to do the job, we are at peace, and we are going to stay at peace because our allies respect us and our adversaries also respect us, and let me point out, as Tenny Guyer did, your great Congressman, there is not an American boy fighting on a foreign soil and dying on a foreign soil under this Administration.

Now, let's talk about tomorrow. You have got a big decision to make. If you want to nominate a Republican candidate for the Presidency who can win in November, if you do, vote for Ford. If you want a candidate on the Republican ticket who can help to reelect Bob Taft, who can help to reelect Tenny Guyer, who can help to reelect Del Latta and all the other Republicans and add to the number of Republicans in the House of Representatives, in the Senate, if you want a Republican at the head of the ticket who will help Jim Rhodes get some more State legislature, if you want a Republican at the head of the ticket that can help get Republicans elected in the courthouse, you go out there tomorrow and vote for President Ford and his delegates. That is the way to do it.

Now you know I come from that State up north. (Laughter) As my great friend Woody Hayes says, "That school up north." Now you have given us a hard time the last few years. And we take it. But, let me challenge you.

A few weeks ago the voters of the State of Michigan gave me a 65 percent majority. Can Ohio beat that tomorrow?

Woody Hayes was down in Columbus a couple of weeks ago and Woody Hayes -- as much as he has some reservations about any Michigander, he came out and endorsed me. That was the greatest commitment I could have received.

And I say to all of you wonderful Buckeyes, nothing would make me happier than to have that vote come in about 8:15 or 8:30 tomorrow and indicate that the voters in the State of Ohio had beaten Michigan and given me 66 percent of the votes. That would be perfect.

So let me thank you wonderful people from Findlay, the Flag City of America -- the largest Bicentennial flag -- it is an inspiration to each and every one of us.

I ask you to support me tomorrow -- go to the polls -- because we have achieved the peace, we are turning the economy around and we are going to have a healthy, prosperous economy, and President Ford has restored the trust and confidence of the American people in the White House.

I want your help. I want your vote.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 7:00 P.M. EDT)