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## THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE RECEPTION

## THE EAST ROOM

5:53 P.M. EDT

Thank you very, very much, Mary Louise, and Members of the Congress, members of the National Committee, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is really wonderful to see you all, and I am especially delighted again to see so many good Republicans in the White House. (Laughter)

I was reminiscing as I came over here and the records show that we all got together on a similar occasion on February 26 of this year. At that time, I apologized for Betty being absent. I said she liked to travel. She had at random at that time happened to be in Florida. (Laughter) She still likes to travel. (Laughter) She picked at random today Minnesota. (Laughter)

But I can assure you that she feels as I do, that we welcome each and every one of you to the White House. As Mary Louise said, we strongly believe that this is the home of the American people and we feel very strongly it is wonderful to have so many good Republicans here and it is particularly pleasant to know that we have so many good Republicans who are deeply interested in the philosophy of the Republican Party and, more particularly, the need and necessity for a united Republican Party.

On that point, I think we all have to be very realistic. If you take the polls, the Republican Party has 20 percent of the people in this country who are eligible to vote. Our opposition has substantially a greater percentage. There are a great number of people in-between -- our people and theirs.

So we can't go to Kansas City and end up at the convention at that time where half of the people go home and won't work and won't go out and work to achieve what we really and very strongly believe in; which is the philosophy that the Members on the Republican side in the House and the Senate fight day after day after day to achieve; what you and your associates in 50 States do day after day after day on behalf of the party in the precincts, in the counties, in the cities and in the Congressional districts.

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So our mission is to have whatever contest we have, but when we leave Kansas City after this nominating process it is vitally important for the party, yes, but it is more important for the country and, therefore, I urge and plead that despite whatever differences we might have between now and August that when we leave that convention that we go under a banner of unity and strength, and I pledge to you that I will do that.

I want to make a special plea, if I might, for full support for Hugh Scott and John Rhodes -- is John here, I understood he was -- our leaders and their aides or assistants, Bob Griffin and Bob Michel. They have carried on magnificently under very difficult odds in the Senate as well as in the House. They have been outnumbered 2 to 1, if not more, and they have done a superb job of holding the line, and their cooperation and coordination with me in the White House for the past 22 months has been exemplary.

I could not have asked for stronger support than that which Hugh has given me, Bob Griffin, John Rhodes and Bob Michel, and their associates in the Republican leadership.

What they need is more troops, and so I urge that all of you get your candidates. I met about 170 of them the other day, and they look awfully good to me, and I know some more will be selected between now and some time in August or September, but we have to get a sizable number of more Republicans in both the House and the Senate.

Now, Ted Stevens is the campaign head for the Senate, and Guy Vander Jagt is the Republican Congressional campaign leader, and they have done a super job in raising money, in laying out programs for these candidates. They had a candidates' school here for the House Members this past week. Every candidate that I saw came away with a tremendous feeling of enthusiasm. They had been well-prepared, and I think we are going to go out and get a sizable number of House and Senate Members, and that is vitally important.

We can then do some affirmative things instead of just holding on by our fingertips, which has been the case, as Hugh and Bob and John and Bob Michel know. And I pledge to you that I will be out there helping in whatever way possible. We have got to win from the courthouse to the Congress, and that includes our gubernatorial candidates across the board.

So, number one, we have got to be unified; number two, we have to strengthen the party from the grassroots to the White House; and, number three, it is my honest judgment and opinion that we have a good record to run on as a Republican Party.

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We all know that 1974 was a tough year for Republicans and we all know the reasons why. We had economic problems, we still had the war in Vietnam, and we had troubles involving Watergate, but everything has turned around in 1976 and so a Republican candidate, whether he is running at the local or at the White House level, can go forward with pride and can go forward affirmatively.

Therefore, I think 1976, regardless of who the Democrats put up, will be a good year for the Republican candidates. And I pledge to you that I will do my utmost to work with you, to work with the candidates that you select, and will work hard to the best of my ability to carry on the kind of programs that have been good for America.

I thank you very much, and I appreciate your being here.

I conclude with this observation: We have some refreshments in the State Dining Room. We have arranged -- or Betty has arranged -- that if you would like to go up on the second floor and see the Lincoln Bedroom and see some of the other fabulous rooms there, that is possible. So make yourselves at home.

I look forward to saying a hello and chatting with you. It is good to see you. Let's march to Kansas City, let's march to November 2 with nothing but victory.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 6:02 P.M. EDT)