

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 15, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Ann Arbor, Michigan)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

CRISLER ARENA

7:50 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: President Flemming, Senator Griffin, Congressman Esch, Congressman Vander Jagt, Michigan students, faculty and guests:

President Flemming, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to be on this great campus. I am proud of you as the President of the University of Michigan, and I am equally proud of the great record of my alma mater.

I am deeply indebted to Senator Bob Griffin, an outstanding United States Senator who has been my close personal friend and loyal supporter from the very beginning of my political career.

I am delighted to have on the platform with me your effective and able Congressman Marv Esch, who will be the next United States Senator from Michigan.

It is great to be back at the University of Michigan, the home of the number one Wolverines. After what you did to Wisconsin, I will tell you one thing -- I would rather run against Jimmy Carter than Harlan Huckleby any day of the week.

I am reminded of another Michigan football game that I attended in 1948. I had just won my first Republican nomination. Then, as now, I faced a tough challenge.

My mind wasn't on politics that Saturday afternoon. It wasn't even on football. I was on my honeymoon.

Betty and I were married the day before and tonight I would like to introduce you to my bride, Betty Ford.

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MRS. FORD: I see we are back here in Michigan, but this time not on our honeymoon.

THE PRESIDENT: That was some years ago, but as has been indicated, Michigan and Ford have been winners ever since.

I have come home to Michigan to share with you my views of America in 1976 and my hopes for America in the next four years, and beyond.

During the last two years, in the aftermath of a difficult war and a painful ordeal of economic adversity and political crisis, we reached a critical turning point in America's history.

Throughout most of your lives, America has faced turmoil. Some of our most beloved leaders have been assassinated. There was a war we could not either win or end. There were destructive riots on our streets and on our campuses. We suffered runaway inflation and the worst recession in 40 years. We were betrayed by corruption at the highest levels of our Government.

Fortunately, the skies are far brighter. My Administration has restored trust in the White House. My Administration has turned the economy around. We are in the midst of a growing prosperity. We have peace and the capability and the will to keep it.

Through all of this, we found in ourselves a basic strength which has proven mightier than our armaments, more precious than our great store of national wealth and as enduring as our Constitution.

As I said on taking the oath of office as President two years ago, "Our long national nightmare is over." In the last two years, the United States of America has made an incredible comeback, and we are not through yet.

In 200 years as a free people, much has changed in our nation, but America's basic goals remain the same:

- Americans want a job with a good future.
- Americans want homes and decent neighborhoods and schools where our children can get a quality education.
- Americans want physical security, safety against war and crime, safety against pollution in the water we drink and in the air we breathe.
- We want medical and hospital care when we are sick at costs that will not wipe out our savings.

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-- We want the time and opportunity to enlarge our experience through recreation and travel.

We Americans are proud people. We cherish our inalienable rights; the right to speak our minds -- the right to choose the men and women who enact and enforce our laws -- the right to stand equal before the law regardless of sex, age, race or religion -- the right as a farmer, businessman, worker and consumer to bargain freely in the economic marketplace -- the right to worship as we choose.

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It all adds up to the great "American dream."

These are the goals which every politician, every citizen, has for America. They are not some mystic vision of the future. They are the continuing agenda for action.

So, the question in this campaign of 1976 is not who has the better vision of America. The question is who will act to make that vision a reality.

The American people are ready for the truth, simply spoken, about what Government can do for them and what it cannot and what it should not do. They will demand performance, not promises; specifics, not smiles.

There are some in this political year who claim that more Government, more spending, more taxes and more control on our lives will solve our problems.

More Government is not the solution. Better Government is.

It is time we thought of new ways to make Government a capable servant and not a meddling master.

Let's get down to cases.

Let's talk about jobs.

Today, 88 million Americans are gainfully employed -- more than ever before in American history. But, that is not good enough.

My immediate goal is two and a half million new jobs every year with emphasis on youth, especially the minority. I don't mean the demeaning, dead-end jobs paid for out of the Federal Treasury but permanent jobs with a future generated by the demands of a healthy economy.

Can we do it? We have done it.

We proved once and for all that you can cut inflation in half and add four million new jobs in just 17 months. We did it with tax cuts that allowed Americans to spend more of their own money. We did it with tax incentives that encouraged job production. We did it by letting our free economic system do what it does better than any other system in the world -- produce.

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But, I won't be satisfied until every American who wants a job can find a job.

I am particularly concerned that there are too many young Americans who cannot find a good job or get the training and the experience they need to find a job.

Americans have long since recognized the importance of assuring that every high school graduate who is willing, able and qualified be able to go to college. We have done so through grants, loans and scholarships.

I believe we can apply the same principle to create a program for young people who choose not to go to college, but want a job at which they can learn a trade, a craft or practical business skills.

It can be done. Let's put America -- all of America -- to work.

Once a good job is secured, it is an American tradition to put some of these earnings toward a family home, but nowadays, with interest rates too high, down payments too high and even monthly payments too high-- home ownership is not within the reach of many Americans, particularly young Americans beginning a career or marriage.

My goal is home ownership for every American family that wants to own a home and is willing to work and save for it.

Here is how I will meet that goal: First--I will continue to pursue economic policies, including tight control of unnecessary Federal spending which will hold inflation down, reduce interest rates, cut your taxes, increasing your purchasing power and making more funds available for home mortgages.

Second--it is time we did something more about the down payment requirements, which so many people can't afford. I will recommend changes in the FHA loans to reduce down payments on lower and middle priced homes by up to 50 percent.

Third--I will direct the Department of Housing and Urban Development to accelerate implementation of a new Federal guarantee program to lower monthly payments in the early years of home ownership and gradually increase them as the family income goes up.

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A good job; a good home. Now let's talk about the good health we must have to appreciate both. My goal is an America where health care is not only the best in the world but is both accessible and affordable. But raising Federal taxes by \$70 billion a year for Government-dominated health insurance program is not the way to do it. That path leads to more bureaucracy, more fraud, more taxes and second-class medical care.

That is what I am against. Here is what I am for:

As our first priority, I have recommended protection against the cost of a catastrophic or prolonged illness for the aged and the disabled--insuring that never again will they have to pay more than \$750 a year for medical care. People should not have to go broke to get well.

Next, I proposed to the Congress last spring a major reform in Federal health programs. We should combine 16 overlapping and confused Federal health programs, including the scandal-ridden Medicaid program, into one \$10 billion program that distributes the Federal funds more equitably among the States and insures that those who need these services get first-class care.

It is sad but true, America is still awaiting action by the Congress on this urgently needed legislation.

Now, let's turn to an area of special concern to this audience -- education.

One of the most urgent problems is to create a climate in every classroom where teachers can teach and students can learn.

Quality education for every young American is my Administration's goal. Major reforms are necessary in the relationship between the national, State and local units of Government, so that teachers can spend their time teaching instead of filling out Federal forms. Federal aid is necessary but Federal aggravation must stop.

Nine months ago I proposed to the Congress that we replace 24 paper shuffling educational bureaucracies with a single Federal program which would provide \$3 billion 300 million in direct aid to elementary and secondary schools throughout this country.

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The Congress has not acted. Once again this Congress has shown itself to be sitting dead in the water and, I might add, addicted to the status quo. The American people deserve better representation than that, and they will demand it on November 2.

We must insure that low income students have access to higher education.

We must also find ways through the tax system to ease the burden on families who choose to send their children to nonpublic schools and to help families cope with the expenses of a college education. In this Administration the education needs of America's middle income families will neither be forgotten or forsaken.

Education is the key to a better life. The prevention of crime is essential to making our lives secure.

The Constitution demands that we insure domestic tranquility and that is what I called for in my crime message to the Congress about a year ago. Most crimes are committed by hardened career criminals who know no other life than the life of crime. The place for those people is not on our streets but in the jails. The rights of the law-abiding society, the rights of the innocent victims of crime must be fully protected.

Finally, we must give Americans the chance to enjoy America. I have outlined a \$1 billion 500 million program to expand and to improve our national park system over the next ten years. This means more national parks, more recreation areas, more wildlife sanctuaries, more urban parks and historic sites. Let's make this America's Bicentennial birthday gift to all of our future generations.

Today, America enjoys the most precious gift of all. We are at peace. No Americans are in combat anywhere on the earth and none are being drafted, and I will keep it that way.

We will be as strong as we need to be to keep the peace, to deter aggression and to protect our national security.

But if our foreign policy is to have public support, it must represent the moral values of the American people.

What is more moral than peace with freedom and security in the United States?

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As the leader of the free world, America has a special responsibility to explore new paths to peace for all mankind. It is a responsibility we have not shirked. We have been a force for peace in the Middle East, not only in promoting new agreements, but in building a structure for a more lasting peace.

We have worked for peace with the Soviet Union, not only in resolving our many conflicts, but in building a world where nuclear armaments are brought under control.

We are working for peace in Europe where the armies of two major coalitions confront each other.

We will continue to build our relationship with the People's Republic of China, which contributes importantly to peace and stability -- throughout the world.

Now, in the face of a new challenge, we are on a mission for peace in southern Africa.

This is the first Administration in America's history to develop a comprehensive, affirmative African policy. This policy has won respect and trust on that troubled continent.

At my direction, Secretary Kissinger is now engaged in an intensive effort to help all the parties, black and white, involved in the mounting crisis in southern Africa, to find a peaceful and just solution to their many and complex differences.

The African parties in the very grave and complicated problems of Namibia and Rhodesia have encouraged us to help them in the search for peace and justice. We are also backed in our efforts by our European allies with traditional bonds to the African Continent. In particular, we are working in close collaboration with the United Kingdom which has historical and legal responsibility on Rhodesia.

Success will depend fundamentally on the cooperation of the parties directly concerned. We will not and we cannot impose solutions, but will depend upon the goodwill and determined efforts of the African parties themselves to achieve negotiated settlements.

We seek no special advantage for ourselves in these negotiations. We share with the people of Africa these fundamental objectives: a peaceful outcome; a future of majority rule and minority rights; a prospect of widening human dignity and economic progress; and a unified and independent Africa free from outside intervention or threat.

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The tortuous path that leads to these goals is not an easy one. The risks are great. But America's interests and America's moral purpose summon our efforts.

Despite the rigors of a great national election, I have persisted in carrying out this new policy toward Africa -- not because it is expedient -- but because it is right.

I pledge to you that under my Administration, American foreign policy will serve the interests of our country and our people -- it will be true to our great heritage of the past, fulfill our purposes in the present, and contribute to our best vision of the future.

It is not enough for anyone to say "trust me." Trust must be earned.

-- Trust is not having to guess what a candidate means.

-- Trust is leveling with the people before the election about what you are going to do after the election.

-- Trust is not being all things to all people, but being the same thing to all people.

-- Trust is not cleverly shading words so that each separate audience can hear what it wants to hear, but saying plainly and simply what you mean -- and meaning what you say.

I am proud of the maturity of the American people who demand more honesty, truthfulness and candor of their elected representatives.

The American people, particularly its young people, cannot be expected to take pride -- or even participate -- in a system of government that is defiled and dishonored -- whether in the White House or in the halls of the Congress.

Personal integrity is not too much to ask of public servants. We should accept nothing less.

As we enter the last seven weeks of this national election, a new poll indicates that as many as 65 million Americans will not vote in November.

Some people have said that they are not excited about any of this year's candidates. Let them be excited about America.

Let them be excited about their own capacity to grow and change -- about our nation's capacity to grow and change -- and even about the evolution, with their help, of the candidate of their choice.

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In this year of 1976, I stand before you as the last President of America's first 200 years. But with your help, I also intend to be the first President of America's new generation of freedom.

Working together we can build an America that does not merely celebrate history, but writes it -- that offers limited government and unlimited opportunity -- that concerns itself with the quality of life -- that proves individual liberty is still the key to mutual achievement and national progress.

And when the history of this great era is written, future generations will look back at America in 1976 and say -- yes -- they were two hundred years old -- but they had really only just begun.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 8:23 P.M. EDT)