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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
HANCOCK COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

1:05 P.M. CDT

Congressman Trent Lott, Governor Finch, Mayor Carver, Mayor Longo, distinguished guests, all you wonderful Mississippians:

It is great to be in Bay St. Louis and Hancock County, the great State of Mississippi. As we were driving from New Orleans here to Hancock County, it was very obvious to me that you have the most wonderful outdoor recreation area I have ever seen. I congratulate you. You have fishing and hunting.

Speaking of hunting, I don't believe that the law-abiding citizens of this great country should be deprived of the right of freedom of arms, period. And I don't think if you want to go hunting you have to go and register your firearm.

In Kansas City I said that in this great campaign I would not concede a single State, I would not concede a single vote, and that we would campaign from the snowy banks of Minnesota to the sandy plains of Georgia, and we are in Mississippi to prove it. We want to win in Mississippi.

But, let me take just a minute to thank your Congressman Trent Lott. Trent has done a super job. Send him back. We need him, and so do you.

As you will all recall, in August of 1974, just a little over two years ago, this country was in trouble. The American people had lost faith in their Government. We were in serious economic circumstances. Inflation was high, over 12 percent. We were on the brink of a recession, the worst in 40 years. We were still involved in Vietnam and this country had to turn it around.

We have in the last two years made incredible progress and we are going to make more in the next four years. We have restored trust and honor to the White House. We have made significant progress in reducing inflation from over 12 percent to under 6 percent, but we are going to make more.

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Let me say this: The best way to win the battle against the cost of living is to reduce the cost of Federal Government. There are some people running for this office of President that want to add more and more spending, bigger and bigger deficits, more and more inflation.

We are against that. The Ford Administration is going to win the battle against inflation. We are going to hold down the cost of Government and we will make the decision for you here by you and not by some bureaucrat in Washington, D.C.

As I had the privilege and honor of coming by and shaking hands with many people from the great State of Mississippi, I noticed a number of older people. The Ford Administration wants good housing for our older citizens and we want to protect them from the cost of living increases, and we will.

We want jobs for our younger people. We want opportunities for meaningful jobs, not dead-end jobs. I promise you that this Administration will never be satisfied until everybody who wants to work, who will look for work has a job.

But, let me say that it is just wonderful to be here and see the patriotism and the spirit of the people of Mississippi. Let me say that on July 4 we celebrated as a nation the most wonderful 200th birthday that we could possibly make. We have been in trouble for two years, but now we have a rebirth of that kind of spirit in the United States that gave our forefathers the kind of Government that we have inherited from them that gave our forefathers the spirit and the desire and the ambition to make America what it is today; but now that we are over our troubles of the last two years, it is up to you and to me to keep that spirit going, to expand that patriotism, to make America a better place for all of us -- the young, the old.

All Americans deserve in the next four years as we move into our third century the kind of America that we want -- a good America, a better America -- and we will.

But, before I say goodbye, I want to ask you one question. Jerry Ford needs your help. Can you give it to me?

Thank you. It is wonderful to be here in Bay St. Louis.

Thank you, good luck and God bless you.