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OCTOBER 12, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Brooklyn, New York)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
YESHIVA OF FLATBUSH HIGH SCHOOL

12:55 P.M. EDT

Senator Javits, Senator Buckley, Attorney General Lefkowitz, Congressman Peyser, Congressman Gilman, Dick Rosenbaum, Mr. Goldschmidt, Mrs. Eliach, Mr. Klein, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

I commend this outstanding Jewish institution and especially the Center for Holocaust Studies. From the greatest tragedy of the Jewish people came the greatest achievement of the Jewish spirit -- the rebirth of the State of Israel. This inspires Americans of all faiths.

The Jewish people, once tragic victims, today are symbols of human courage, pride and unconquerable determination, and I congratulate you for it. When I think of the terrible atrocities of World War II, when I recall the grim and moving day when I visited Auschwitz, when I think of the 6 million Jewish martyrs and others so brutally murdered, I reflect on how fortunate we are to be citizens of a country which exalts trust in God and God-given rights of every person to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I was just presented with a small lapel pin inscribed with a Jewish or Hebrew word "Remember" -- and I will remember.

God has blessed our great land. With this blessing goes a great responsibility. As a free people, we must remember that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

In our lifetime there has been more than enough tragedy and terror, more than enough fanaticism and fear. My Administration has committed to combat effectively and affirmatively terrorism everywhere on a worldwide basis.

I shared the relief and the pride of the Jewish people last July 4 when our Independence Day was given an added dimension by the heroic Israeli rescue operation in Uganda. And I am proud of the fact that I was the first head of Government to praise this tremendous act of courage and determination by the State of Israel.

Just as I am determined to fight terrorism throughout the world, I will do everything in my power to fight terrorism in our own streets and neighborhoods, in New York and throughout the United States.

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We all know from the records and from personal experiences, there have been too many muggings and too many murders. The time has come to lock up those who make a career of crime and give the streets back to the people.

We are dedicated to American religious freedom, but religious freedom means little if people cannot walk in safety to their synagogues and to their churches, cannot feel secure in their own streets and in their own neighborhoods, and cannot be sure that society is as devoted to the rights of the victim as to the rights of the criminal. A free people must never capitulate to terrorism whether at foreign airports or in our own streets.

I am in Flatbush today to reaffirm that neighborhoods and communities like this are the life blood of America today. Let us expand and encourage the values inherent in our neighborhoods and in our traditions. America's future requires traditional common sense, not radical experimentation at personal expense. We must cherish and preserve our religious traditions, the family, the home and the rich heritage of many cultures and neighborhoods throughout America.

The United States is sound. We are secure. We are on the march to full economic recovery and a better life for all Americans.

But America's salvation will not be found in expensive new programs financed by you who pay the taxes and obey the laws. In the name of justice for some, we must not do injustice to others.

I am totally opposed, completely against arbitrary quotas in hiring and in education. Individual merit must be rewarded. Opportunity should be open to all Americans on an equal basis. I, today, renew my pledge to be President of all the people, not with wild promises and vague plans but with a proven record of performance.

The Arab boycott has been in existence since 1952, and I have opposed it since 1952. Our moral and legal opposition to the Arab boycott is being made forcefully clear, not only to the foreign governments but to the American business community.

Last week I ordered the Department of Commerce to make public every instance in which Arab boycott demands are reviewed from now on by American companies. Such disclosure will allow the public to monitor the response of business and industry.

I have not and will not tolerate the translation of foreign religious prejudice into domestic discrimination against American citizens.

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I am proud to be the first President to take strong, executive action to combat the boycott. In March of 1975, I initiated the first comprehensive White House review of the boycott problem. My action led in November 1975 to a series of Executive Orders that I issued especially to combat religious discrimination against American citizens.

During the 25 years that I was privileged to serve in the Congress of the United States, I acted, as you know, on numerous occasions to bring America's attention to the plight of Soviet Jewry.

As President, I am pressing for new movement on the issue of emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union. I raised this question personally with General Secretary Brezhnev, and I will raise it again and again.

It is immoral for any nation to either dominate other nations or to dominate the religious life and elementary human rights of its own citizens.

From the time that I first ran for Congress in 1948, I recognized that a strong Israel is essential to the cause of peace and the national security of the United States, and I am proud of that record.

That record is as old as the State of Israel, and you know where I stand. I stand firm in my commitment to Israel. I am proud that our delegation at the United Nations has fought and will fight any measure that condemns Zionism as racism or would deny Israel her full rights of United Nations membership.

America's policy of peace through strength has proven itself in the Middle East and throughout the world. Nobody questions our dedication to peace and nobody must doubt my willingness to use our strength when America's vital interests are at stake.

A strong defense is the best insurance for peace. But, our strength has never rested upon arms alone. It is rooted in our commitment to the highest standards of ethics and morality. As President, I am proud to say that peace in the Middle East has been enhanced by the trust that we have elicited on both sides. Israel's future is certainly brighter today than it was before I had the honor of becoming President of the United States.

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In the last two years the forces of moderation in the Middle East have grown stronger. The area's extremists and terrorists are on the defensive. Prime Minister Rabin, who has been my personal friend since he was Ambassador in the United States when I served in the Congress, said recently that relations between our two countries are at a peak.

The funds for Israel in my first two years of office totaled \$4 billion 300 million. Forty percent of the total American aid to Israel since 1948 was authorized during the Ford Administration.

Our support of Israel with weapons, not words, was summed up by Israel's Prime Minister Rabin, who said, and I quote, "The margin between what we want and what we get is very small." Israel's strength enhances the prospects for peace. I reaffirm today that as we pursue peace there will be no imposed solution. There will be no one-sided concessions.

I have met with Prime Minister Rabin and other Israeli leaders in Washington on many occasions since I became President. In my next term I intend to visit Israel and other Middle Eastern countries whenever such a trip would contribute most to a just and lasting peace.

My record as a friend of Israel speaks for itself. My record is one of realism, not rhetoric. My record is one of experience, not expediency. My record is one of performance, not promises.

I recall the timeless question asked by a great Jewish prophet, and I quote, "What doeth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with thy God."

As I visit with citizens like yourselves in neighborhoods like this, I am reassured by the goodness of the United States of America, a nation which strives to do justice and to love mercy. Let us walk humbly together in brotherhood with God as our guide.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 1:09 P.M. EDT)