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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
WHITE PLAINS CITY HALL

11:02 A.M. EDT

Dick Rosenbaum, Senator Javits, Senator Buckley, distinguished Members of the House of Representatives, Mayor Delveccio, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

At the outset, let me express my deep gratitude and appreciation for this wonderful crowd, to see all of these tremendous young people from all of the high schools, and I am especially appreciative of the student body of Archbishop Stepinac.

But, may I say one other comment. I had a wonderful day in the State of New York yesterday in Flatbush and Brooklyn and Manhattan, and we have had a superb day so far in Yonkers and White Plains.

But, it has been made especially meaningful to me because I have had with me your two outstanding United States Senators, Senator Jack Javits and Senator Jim Buckley. But, I have also been privileged to have the various Members of Congress who represent the various areas in the State of New York that I have been privileged to visit in this day and a half so far. They are quality people. Send them back and give me some help by getting some more good people like that.

Mayor Delveccio said that White Plains has a great, wonderful historical background. I was looking just the other day, in contemplation of coming to White Plains, that 200 years ago young Americans fought the British Redcoats right in the battle of White Plains.

In 1976 a different kind of battle is raging the length and the breadth of this country. In this battle the citizens of White Plains and all Americans are not fighting Redcoats but red tape and red ink, and we are going to win that battle, too. That is the basic difference between Plains, Georgia and White Plains, New York.

My opponent from Plains, Georgia makes the promises. You here in White Plains, New York would have to pay for them, and you don't want to, so let's win this battle November 2.

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One of the most important issues in this campaign is taxes. You heard over the last few months all four sides of the same question, three of them from Mr. Carter. As a matter of fact, the liveliest debate of this campaign has been the debate between Jimmy Carter and Jimmy Carter. He says he is for a balanced budget but he refuses to support the 60 vetoes that have saved the American taxpayer \$9-plus billion.

He says America is weak militarily but he wants to cut the defense budget by \$15 billion. Jimmy Carter says he is against inflation, but he supports the Democratic platform with \$100 billion to \$200 billion in new spending. He can't have it both ways, and we are not going to let him have it both ways.

He says he is for tax reform, but he reneged on his promise to provide specifics before the election. He says he is for higher taxes for people earning over \$14,000 a year. But, I say -- and listen carefully -- I say the middle income taxpayer is already overtaxed, overburdened and under-represented.

Jimmy Carter says he wants to tax the churches except on their church property. I am opposed to that and I know you are. I have been told few things upset New Yorkers as much as your skyrocketing taxes. I think that bothers people all over the country. The way to reverse that trend is not to expand Government spending but to cut it back, and thanks to my 60 vetoes you know which candidate for President stands for cutting back expenditures, holding the line and reducing your taxes -- it is Jerry Ford.

Property taxes all over the country are climbing. But, let me add this: They would climb a lot faster if we didn't have general revenue sharing, which I just signed into law in the City of Yonkers. Revenue sharing is the kind of a specific program to help all of you, to encourage all of you to solve your problems at the local level.

Let me tell you something that some of you may have forgotten. Last February Jimmy Carter came out in favor of eliminating the deduction for mortgage interest on your Federal income tax return. Obviously, when the American people rebelled he retreated back into the same old generalities.

Well, there is no such confusion about my stand on that deduction of mortgage interest. Jerry Ford supports that deduction. I did for 25 years in the House of Representatives and I will do it for the next four years as President of the United States.

I am not going to let homeowners become the next endangered species. Jimmy Carter would.

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To me, tax reform means tax reduction. Nine days ago I signed into law a tax bill which extended the cuts that I recommended last year. But, the Tax Reform Act of 1976 fails to include some other suggestions that I have proposed to give the proper kind of tax relief that the taxpayers deserve. For example, I recommended that we increase the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. That is a meaningful tax return to the middle income taxpayer, and we are going to get it next year if we didn't get it this year.

You know we have heard a lot of talk in this campaign about compassion. Our Government must always show compassion toward the truly needy. The time has come, as I see it, to show as much compassion toward the people who make the generosity of Federal Government programs possible in the first place. But, let me add this great big important extra comment: How about a lot of compassion for the American taxpayer? That is what Jerry Ford stands for.

The people of White Plains work hard for every dollar that you make. You are the people who get up early ever day, go to bed tired every night, quietly building a better life for your families and your fellow citizens. You pay the taxes, you obey the laws, you are the people who make possible the good things that Government does.

So, when a Federal spending bill reaches my desk, I keep each and every one of you in mind. It may be Congressional compassion, but it is your money and that is why I have vetoed 60 bills sent down to the Oval Office from Capitol Hill, because they want to spend and spend and spend, and Jimmy Carter wants to spend and spend and spend, and I am going to be there to be compassionate about your tax dollar, period.

The American people cannot afford to have leaders who try to be all things to all people. The President of the United States must be the same thing to all people. When voters look at the record of the last two years, they will see that the United States has made an incredible comeback.

Today we are on the steady road to peace, prosperity and trust. But, on November 2 we will reach a fork in that road. We can continue the policies and the leadership that have brought us back from a national nightmare, back from recession, back from international conflict, or we can take instead the same old path that leads to bigger Government--higher taxes and more inflation and more unemployment. The choice to each and every one of you voters in this great State of New York, that is your choice. Through two difficult years, I have stood for the little taxpayer against the big tax spender. It is from your ranks that I come and on your side that I stand.

On November 2 I ask that each and every one of you stand with me. I would appreciate your help.