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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
ROCKLAND COUNTY COURTHOUSE

12:25 P.M. EDT

Dick Rosenbaum, Senator Javits, Senator Buckley, Congressman Ben Gilman, distinguished guests, wonderful people from Rockland and Orange County:

I love you. Thank you. I am deeply, deeply grateful to the fine Congressman that you have from this Congressional District. All of you know Ben Gilman. You know the job he has done. You know that he got the Otisville Prison for you. You know he works day after day for you. Let me congratulate you, and reelect Ben Gilman.

In the last day and a half I have had a great privilege to be in the State of New York. We started out in Manhattan, we went to Brooklyn, we were in the Flatbush, we, this morning started in Yonkers, we were in White Plains, and now we are in Rockland County with all the fine people from Orange County along side of us.

But all during this time where we have had great crowds like all of you here, I have had the privilege and the honor of having with me your two outstanding United States Senators -- my good friends Jack Javits and Jim Buckley -- and I want you to give them a great big show of appreciation.

I can't express to them adequately my personal appreciation and gratitude. But now let me express particularly to the young people who I see here from the various schools -- elementary, secondary and otherwise -- their coming here and warmly welcoming their President.

Let me say I couldn't think of a better way to spend a brisk fall afternoon than being in this particular county with all of you. I only wish that I could talk to each one of you individually.

Since I can't, let me tell you what I would do, what I would say to each of you if I could sit down with you over a cup of coffee or just a plain, old sandwich. Let me give you some straight talk from the White House.

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Mr. Smith, I would say to you, or to Mrs. Jones, you have been hearing an awful lot of words and a lot of numbers in the last several weeks. You have heard statistics, percentages and conflicting claims. I don't believe those are the most important things in this campaign. Let me tell you what I believe and believe very deeply is the most important thing -- and that is you and you and you and 10,000 people who are here in Rockland County right now.

But each of you between now and November 2 have some clear choices to make, and let me present some of the alternatives.

My opponent leaves a lot of issues up in the air, but he is clearly in favor of additional Federal spending, Federal spending which he endorses -- \$100 billion or \$200 billion each year.

I happen to believe -- and this is where the choice is very clear -- I happen to believe in restraining Federal spending, holding the lid on expenditures from the Federal Government, so we can dampen the threat of inflation and let you keep more of your own hard-earned money in your pocket.

Do you want your taxes raised so you can pay for those hundred billion dollar programs of Jimmy Carter? (Chorus of no's) I think I heard that loud and clear.

Let me talk for just a minute about taxes. You know where I stand. I recommended last year a \$28 billion tax reduction which included a tax reduction of the personal income exemption, increasing that exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. Do you want that tax reduction?

I think you want your personal taxes cut. Jimmy Carter wants to raise them. Whose side are you on?

Mr. Carter wants to increase the tax or take away the deduction for those people who are buying homes who get a deduction from the interest payments on those mortgages. I am against Jimmy Carter on that. I am against Jimmy Carter's plan to tax church property other than the churches themselves.

Whose side are you on?

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Let me talk for just a minute. We want to have peace at home, a prosperous economy, less inflation, less Federal spending, less Federal taxes. But, if we are going to keep peace at home, we have to have the peace throughout the world. I don't think you can keep the necessary military strength to meet the challenges around the world by cutting the defense budget \$5 billion. I think we have to have the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps number one, and that is what Jerry Ford wants.

I am not willing to take a chance with a weakened national security. The United States represent leadership throughout the world. We are at peace today. Not a single young American is fighting or dying on a foreign battlefield today because we are strong and we are going to stay that way. But, the United States as a leader throughout the world has an obligation to stand tall and strong with certain allies and friends throughout the world.

The Ford Administration stands shoulder to shoulder with the State of Israel. We believe in its security and survival and independence. But, let me conclude with just this final observation: I have been your President for two years. Let's look at the record. Inflation is half of what it was when I became President. More Americans are working today than at any time in the history of the United States.

But, Jerry Ford won't be satisfied until every American who wants a job has a job period. And as Dick Rosenbaum said, when I became President there was a loss of faith and trust in the White House itself. I believe that in the last 24 months we have restored that trust that is essential in the Oval Office, and I can assure you in the next four years we will maintain that trust, that confidence, that candor, that openness and that straight talk, and that is what the American people want.

But, let me say this one final word to all of you. Between now and November 2 you have to make a very important choice. I need your help. This is a critical, crucial election. It is an election that will make the determination whether the United States goes down one path or another. Our path -- the path I represent -- is a healthy economy at home, peace throughout the world and trust in the White House.

I want to represent you in your White House in the Oval Office in the next two (four) years. I need your help. Can I count on it?

Thank you very much. Good luck and God bless you.

END

(AT 12:36 P.M. EDT)