

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
SPRINGFIELD AMTRAK STATION

ABOARD "THE HONEST ABE"

4:03 P.M. CDT

Let me introduce a few of my very, very good friends, and a special one. We celebrated our 28th anniversary last night in the great State of Illinois. I want you to know my bride, Betty Ford.

This is my third visit to Springfield in the time that I have been President. But before making a few observations and comments, let me introduce some people that you know that I know you want to support; first, my good friend, your Senator, Chuck Percy. And let me introduce to you -- I shouldn't have to -- but I want you to know that it is important for this district, for the State of Illinois, and for the United States that you reelect your Congressman Paul Findley. And can I give you some good, sound, friendly advice? I think you ought to elect an outstanding candidate who will be a great Governor -- Jim Thompson. And then I think it would be great if you also did the same thing for George Lindberg, as State Comptroller.

As I said at the outset, it is great to be in Springfield and in Illinois. We have had a wonderful day coming from Joliet. Betty and I are here because we want your help. We think we have a record of performance, a record that shows that we have restored confidence and trust in the White House.

We have turned the economy around from the worst recession in the last 40 years, and right today we are on the road and a path toward real prosperity, not only for 1977 but for the kind of prosperity that will be good for America for a long, long time. And I won't be satisfied until every American who wants to work has a job.

But also we have peace, and we have the military capability and the diplomatic skill to keep the peace, and I am very proud that not a single young American is fighting or dying on any foreign soil today. That is a good record.

So, in the last two years-plus we have restored trust in the White House, we are on the road to real prosperity and we have peace. That is a record of performance. I lay that along side of the promises made by Jimmy Carter. It seems to me that Jimmy Carter will say anything anywhere to get to be President of the United States. When Jimmy Carter is in California he sounds like he is trying to be Cesar Chavez. When Jimmy Carter is in Chicago he tries to sound like Mayor Daley. When he is in New York he sounds like Bella Abzug. (Laughter) But when Jimmy Carter comes down to Illinois, down State, Jimmy Carter tries to tell you he is just a little, old peanut farmer. (Laughter)

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(OVER)

Jimmy Carter -- he wanders, he wavers, he wiggles and he waffles. (Laughter) I think you deserve a better candidate for the Presidency than Jimmy Carter, and Jerry Ford is the candidate that I want you to support on November 2.

I believe that the best tax reform is tax reduction, and Jerry Ford tried to get it for you with an increase in the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. That would be sound tax relief, tax reduction, for the middle income taxpayer who has been shortchanged by the Democratic Congress.

Jimmy Carter -- he wants to increase taxes for the individuals who will go from the median income on up. That means that under Jimmy Carter's platform, Jimmy Carter will increase the taxes of 50 percent of the Federal taxpayers in America.

Let me tell you, if you like Jimmy Carter, you like taxes. I think you prefer Jerry Ford, who wants to reduce your middle income taxes. A big issue, a major difference, between Jimmy Carter and myself -- I think we have to keep a lid on Federal spending. I think the Federal Government has to pull in its belt and stop spending your money as recklessly as we have.

Jimmy Carter embraces the Democratic platform, which calls for 60 new programs that will spend a minimum of \$100 billion more each year, and if you cost them all out, it will probably cost you \$200 billion more a year. I don't think the American people want that kind of spending, which means more inflation and more taxes.

But, Jimmy says, well, he is going to reorganize the Federal Government. Jimmy Carter, when he was Governor of the State of Georgia, told the people of Georgia the same thing. What happened? Well, in four years he increased the number of State employees by over 25 percent, he increased the spending by over 50 percent and he added to the funded indebtedness of Georgia by \$200 million.

Well, with that kind of record in Georgia, I think it would be catastrophic if he tried to do the same thing with the Federal Government. I don't think you want that kind of reorganization. I think you want a Federal Government that is responsive and responsible to the American people, and under the Ford Administration we are going to give you that.

Now, Jimmy Carter on two occasions -- once in Savannah, Georgia and once in Los Angeles -- said that the Defense Department ought to be cut by \$15 billion. He denied it, but the facts are that is what he said. On the other hand, Jimmy Carter says America isn't strong enough. Now, you can't cut the defense budget by \$15 billion and keep the United States number one. We are number one under President Ford and we are going to keep you number one for the next four years under President Ford.

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But, as we have traveled from Joliet down here to Springfield, we have gone through the heart of the agricultural area of this country. It has been a great privilege and honor for us to see so many people who produce the food and the fiber that makes America really run. Five percent of the people produce more than enough for us to eat and wear and, at the same time, produce enough for us to sell overseas.

Every one of us ought to be thankful that we are blessed with the farmers of America who through their hard work do that job for us, and I thank each and every one of them for making America strong with their efforts.

A few days ago many of you probably heard Jimmy Carter say that America is not respected anymore. That isn't true. The leaders of the world, whether they are the leaders of the free world or the leaders behind the Iron Curtain, respect the United States of America, and when Jimmy Carter says that America isn't respected, I think he is slandering our country, slandering the efforts, the beliefs, the convictions of 215 million Americans.

Jerry Ford has faith and trust and confidence in the American people in our great country. I am proud of America, and with me as President for the next four years we will keep America number one.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 4:14 P.M. CDT)