

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Alton, Illinois)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
ALTON AMTRAK STATION

ABOARD "THE HONEST ABE"

6:50 P.M. CDT

Thank you very, very much. Betty and I have had a wonderful day in Illinois, starting in Joliet this morning, ending here in Alton this evening. We have had a wonderfully warm reception.

Betty and I love Illinois. We are here to ask for your help. We are here to ask for your vote, and with your vote we can carry Illinois and we will win the election November 2.

We have some wonderful friends who have been with us on this trip. First, I want to introduce to all of you a good friend of yours, an outstanding United States Senator, Chuck Percy. We also have your fine Congressman, Paul Findley. He is good for you; he is good for Illinois; he is good for the country. We have also had on the trip most of the way one of the finest candidates for Governor that I have ever met, who is going to be your next Governor, Jim Thompson.

In the two years that I have been your President, I believe we have made a record, 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. I won't be satisfied until everybody who wants to work has a job, and that is what we will do in the next four years.

In the last two years we have achieved a peace. We have the military strength and diplomatic skills to keep the peace. I am proud to say here tonight that not a single young American is fighting or dying on any foreign battlefield. We will keep the peace through our policies, and I am proud of what we have done and I submit we will keep it that way in the future.

I have summarized the record of the last two years under my Presidency. Lay that alongside, if you will, the promises of Jimmy Carter.

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Jimmy Carter will go anyplace, say anything to anybody to get to be President of the United States. When Jimmy Carter is in California, he sounds like Cesar Chavez. When Jimmy Carter goes to Chicago, he tries to sound like Mayor Daley. When Jimmy Carter goes to New York, he tries to sound like Bella Abzug. (Laughter) When Jimmy Carter comes to this great part of Illinois, the breadbasket of America, Jimmy Carter says, "I am just a little old peanut farmer."

Jimmy Carter wavers, he wanders, he wiggles and he waffles. That is not the kind of a person you want as President of the United States. You want a President that has a record, a record of progress in the last two years.

Let me talk about three subjects. One taxes: I believe that the best tax reform is tax reduction, particularly for the middle income taxpayers who have been shortchanged in the last ten years. I submitted to the Congress a proposal to increase the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. That is the best way to give relief; that is the best way to give equity to the middle income taxpayers. Congress didn't do it, but I pledge to you that I will keep the pressure on Congress in the next session, in the next session, in the next session, and in the next session until they do it because it is right.

Now, in contrast, Jimmy Carter, in an interview with the Associated Press, said that he would increase taxes for all medium income earners. What does that mean? That means that all income earners of over \$14,000 under Jimmy Carter will have a tax increase. That is 50 percent of the taxpayers in this country.

Let me say this: If you like Jimmy Carter, you sure like taxes. If you like Jerry Ford, you will get a tax reduction.

President Ford, in the last two years, has tried to keep the lid on Federal spending. We have been partially successful, but in the next four years we will keep the pressure on because if you have more and more spending, you will have more and more inflation and more and more taxes.

Now, Jimmy Carter -- he embraces the platform that came from that Convention in New York City. In fact, he wrote it, and that platform calls for 60 some new programs, programs that if they become law -- and he has promised that they will -- will add \$100 billion a year at a minimum and probably close to \$200 billion.

I don't think the American people want more spending. I think the American people want the kind of a record that I have achieved of keeping the lid on Federal spending.

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Jimmy Carter talks about reorganizing the Federal Government. Let's look at his record in Georgia. In the four years that Jimmy Carter was Governor of Georgia, he increased the number of State employees by over 25 percent. He increased the expenditures in the State of Georgia by over 50 percent, and he increased the bonded indebtedness of the State of Georgia by over \$200 million.

Now, can you imagine, with that record, what he would do to your Federal Government if he ever had the opportunity to reorganize it? Is that what you want for the next four years?

Let me make -- Jimmy Carter on two occasions has said he wanted to cut the defense budget by \$15 billion. At the same time, he talks about making America stronger. Now he can't have it both ways. But anyhow, he has said that he wants to reduce the funds for the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and Marines by \$15 billion. I don't believe that is the way to keep America number one. America is number one today, and we want America to stay number one.

All of you remember that great President of the United States, Teddy Roosevelt. Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Speak softly and carry a big stick." Jimmy Carter, with his \$15 billion reduction in expenditures for the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and Marines -- what Jimmy Carter says is speak loudly and carry a flyspotter -- flyspot -- fly swatter. (Laughter) It has been a long day. (Laughter)

One final point: Last week Jimmy Carter said that America is not respected anymore. That is not right. The United States of America is respected, respected by our allies and respected by our adversaries. When Jimmy Carter says that our country -- yours and mine, the nation of 215 million wonderful people -- when he says we are not respected, he is slandering America.

I don't like it, you don't like it because America is a good country with good people and we love it and we are proud of it and we are going to stay proud of it four years under Jerry Ford.

So, Betty and I are delighted here to be in Alton. Mayor Linds and the wonderful people of this community -- it is a pleasure and honor to be your President, and we ask you between now and November 2 to not only go to the polls yourself, but to get your neighbor, your friend, your business associate, and get them to the polls because this is a crucial, critical election.

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We can win Illinois with your help. We can win this election, and it will be good for America, and we promise not to let you down.

Thank you very much.

Let me ask you one more thing. Wait just a minute. We have asked some wonderful friends, outstanding people in their various professions who have been with us from Joliet to Alton -- I am going to ask Chuck Percy to take just a minute or two to introduce them.

I want to thank all of them personally for their contributions and for this good day. You will love them. They are wonderful people. Betty and I are most grateful for their support.

I want to come out and shake hands with as many of you as I can.

END (AT 7:03 P.M. CDT)