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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
FOUNTAIN VALLEY RECREATION CENTER

2:20 P.M. PDT

Thank you very, very much, Duke, or John Wayne. We love you however we use the name.

Congressman Chuck Wiggins, our fine Congressional candidates, Bob Badham, Jim Combes, Dan Lungren, Glenn Ford, Ed Nelson, this wonderful group of singers, we really appreciate the talent and the contribution. Thank you very, very much.

And then it is a great privilege for an old "has-been" athlete to have on the platform here with us Steve Garvey, Andy Etchebarren, Don Sutton. I thank you all very, very much.

I am especially honored, it is really a rare privilege to come to California and to see such a tremendous turnout, and one of the highlights of this campaign -- and I can say it without any hesitation or qualification -- is to have Duke do the honors of introducing me and giving me an opportunity to say to all of you and to the many, many millions of people here in California what I believe in and where I stand.

It has been wonderful to come back to California. As I said in Kansas City, I do not concede a single State or a single vote. I believe that the American people in all 50 States want straight talk. They don't want their candidate for the Presidency to promise more than he can deliver, but they want him to deliver everything that he promises.

Since Kansas City, I have come to this great State on two occasions. Betty has been here several times and three of our children have visited various parts of this State. You have given us, as a family, a warm and enthusiastic reception.

But let me reciprocate by saying we admire you, we love you, and we thank you.

I have a feeling, after being here, that the Ford-Dole ticket will carry California on November 2. And while I am here, let me extend to all of you a very special invitation: Come to Washington next January 20 and help us inaugurate the Jerry Ford-Bob Dole ticket for the next four years.

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You know where I stand. I stand for limited Government, for fiscal responsibility, for rising prosperity, for lower taxes, for military strength and peace throughout the world. Not a single young American is fighting and dying on foreign soil today, and we are going to keep it that way.

After so many, many years in which America's defensive needs were shortchanged by the Congress, I proposed the two largest defense outlays in America's history and I convinced the Congress during this last session that they have been playing with fire and that if we were going to keep the peace that we had, that they could not go through the routine that they followed in the past. And they went along with the kind of defense spending that I proposed, the kind that means we not only have security today but we will have it in the years ahead. And let me say, the next Congress, under the Ford-Dole Administration, will have to keep the same commitment to the American people.

Let me add parenthetically, my opponent in this campaign -- and I say this with some sadness -- has proposed a defense cut of at least \$5 to \$7 billion. That kind of defense cut would require troop withdrawals from strategic outposts overseas, delay or cancel many of our new, advanced weapons systems, such as the B-1 bomber, a slowdown in our ship construction program or some degree of damage in all of these areas, which means closing defense plants and military bases right here in the United States and quite possibly in this great State of California.

You don't want that, neither do I, because America must be strong if we are to be the leader, if we are to maintain the peace, if we are to repel aggression, if we are to deter those who would destroy our kind of society.

I pledge to you that in the next four years we will keep our defenses strong and we will keep the peace and freedom that is so dear to all of us.

After so many years of runaway growth in Federal spending, with the Federal budget escalating much too rapidly, I submitted a budget for this current fiscal year which cut the rate of growth in Federal spending by 50 percent. I have held the line on Government spending with 66 vetoes and saved the hard-pressed American taxpayers more than \$8 billion.

And let me look each of you, as a family, right in the eye -- those 66 vetoes have saved each family approximately \$200. That is progress and we will continue that progress in the future.

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Because I have had the will and the courage and sometimes a little toughness, because I have been able to say no to excessive spending, we will have a balanced budget submitted in 1978. But more importantly, as we cut the rate of growth of Federal spending, as we restrain the kind of spending that is uneconomical, non-productive, as we accomplish that, I promise to you that we will have another tax reduction at the Federal level.

But, let me tell you where we are going to have that tax reduction. We are going to give that tax reduction to the middle income taxpayer, who over the years has been shortchanged by the Congress. The middle income taxpayer deserves a break and Jerry Ford will see to it that you get it. The way to do it was the way I proposed in January -- to increase the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000 per person.

Let me illustrate what that means to the head of the household who next January makes out his income tax return. If he has a family of three children, himself and his wife, that means that that taxpayer will get an additional \$1,250 in exemption. That is meaningful. The Congress didn't do it this year, but next year I am going to keep the pressure on that Congress. If they don't do it next year, we will keep the pressure on them the next year, and if they don't do it then, you take them and you lick them in the polls in 1978.

Now, after so many years of uncontrolled inflation, we have cut inflation by half in the past two years, and I pledge to you that we will do even better under the Ford-Dole Administration.

After the worst recession in 40 years, it wasn't pleasant. You know we were in a troubled time. We have added four million jobs to the American economy in the last two years -- not by creating deadend jobs at the taxpayers' expense but by stimulating jobs with a future in a private economy where five out of those six jobs exist in our society.

Too many people are out of work, I admit. We are not satisfied with the progress that we have made, but more Americans were working, were on the job in 1976 than ever before in the history of the United States. That is a tremendous comeback from where we were just a year and a half ago. That is progress.

America has made incredible progress in the last two years, and you and you and millions like you -- wonderful Americans -- ought to be proud of what we have done. I am and you are, but we are going to do better.

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After suffering a tragic betrayal of public trust two years ago, America has had faith restored in the White House. My Administration has been open, candid, straightforward. We have talked straight from the shoulder, and we will keep it that way for the next four years.

As I told the Southern Baptist Convention in Norfolk, Virginia earlier this year, I firmly believe that private morality and public service can and must go hand in hand, and this is what we have done and this is what we will do.

But what I have mentioned so far is only a part of the record of the Ford Administration in the past two years. Farm exports and farm income are at an all-time high. A major effort is already underway to cut and slash the red tape in Federal bureaucracy. We are working for peace and justice in the Middle East, and throughout the world, and America is respected and trusted.

In every field America is on the move, on the march. We have made a tremendous, unbelievable come-back in the past two years, and I pledge to you the next four will be even better. You can believe me when I say with conviction that America is sound, America is secure. This Nation is on its way to a better quality of life, and this Administration has earned the trust of the American people for the next four years.

My record is one of progress, not platitudes; performance, not promises. We do not need a Government to do everything for us or to tell us everything we can or cannot do. America is different.

We should never forget that a Government big enough to give us everything we want is a Government big enough to take from us everything we have. We have a great talent, a great reservoir of industry and ability in this great country, and it is not all concentrated on the banks of the Potomac.

Just this week--let me as an illustration point out to you--America made a clean sweep of the Nobel Prizes in economics, chemistry, physics, medicine and literature. This is the first time in American history that a single country has been the home of all of these great awards. We should be proud.

Because of these accomplishments of great Americans, I am proud to be a citizen of the United States, and as I look around this great crowd, I know that each and every one of you are just as proud as I am of America.

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We have had our problems. In the last two years we have come a long, long way. At home and abroad we are putting away our old differences, we are putting aside our old problems, we are healing our wounds. There is an old saying that used to be common in the House of Representatives. I think it is apropos: "We can disagree in America without being disagreeable."

That is the kind of healing, that is the kind of feeling that we want in this country so that we can march together for a better America for ourselves but, more importantly, for our children and our grandchildren.

This record of two years is a record that I am proud of, a record the people of California and the concerned citizens throughout America -- Democrats, Independents and Republicans -- will support on November 2.

Give me your mandate, and we will reduce the growth of Government still more. Give me your mandate, and we will insure the integrity of the Social Security system. We will improve the Medicare so that our older citizens can enjoy the health and happiness that they have earned. There is no reason why our older citizens should have to go broke just to get well.

Give me your mandate and we will make sure that this rich nation does not neglect its citizens who are less fortunate than ourselves, but provide for their needs with compassion and with dignity. Give me your mandate, and we will create a tax structure that is fair to all, that will preserve the family, the family business, the family farm, that will give business in America the tax incentives that build new plants, to modernize the old ones and to create millions and millions of more jobs for the American working man.

Give me your mandate, and we will expand the recreational opportunities and restore the healthy environment of this country as our legacy for those generations to follow. Give me your mandate, and I will lead this nation on the path of peace through strength and we will live in peace and in freedom in the United States of America.

I have no fear whatsoever for this country, for America, for the future is a friend. As we go forward together, I promise you once more -- as I have promised you before -- to uphold the Constitution, to do what is right, as God gives me to see the right, and to do the very best that I can for America. God helping me, I won't let you down.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 2:40 P.M. PDT)