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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
GROSSMONT SHOPPING CENTER

8:17 P.M. PDT

Congressman Bob Wilson, Mayor Pete Wilson, Congressman Clair Burgener, Mayor Fordem, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen:

Let me thank this wonderful group of entertainers, superb performers, celebrities: Peter Graves, thank you very much; Hugh O'Brien, thank you; Zsa Zsa, we love you; Lance Alworth, thank you; Rod McKuen; and those super singers, Serendipity Singers; and the chicken, I love it. (Laughter)

And then we have four wonderful bands -- the Helix, Grossmont, Mt. Miguel and El Cajon. Thank you all very much.

But now I brought with me two super people who were on a program with me this afternoon, which was shown all over the State of California. They are known to all of you. First, is Joe Garagiola; and then one of the finest Members of Congress that I have ever known, a tough adversary -- when she was with you, you couldn't lose -- supporting me, Edith Green of Oregon.

What a treat to be in San Diego and its wonderful surrounding communities. I love you and thank you very, very much.

As I said in Kansas City, I won't concede a single State; I won't concede a single vote. The Ford-Dole ticket, as I see California today, will win in California, and thank you very, very much. Let me extend to all of you a wonderful invitation, a very special invitation: Come to Washington next January for the inauguration of Jerry Ford and Bob Dole.

You know where I stand. I stand on your side for limited Government, for fiscal responsibility, for rising prosperity, for lower taxes, for military strength, for peace in the world, and I say with pride, not a single young American is fighting or dying on any foreign soil tonight, and we will keep it that way.

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After so many years in which America's defensive needs were shortchanged I proposed the last two years the two biggest defense budgets in the history of the United States. I convinced the Congress in 1976 that they should stop slashing, stop cutting, stop gutting the defense appropriation, and the net result is today, America today and America in the future will be number one, and we are going to keep it that way.

But let me add parenthetically, my opponent in this campaign has promised defense cuts of at least \$5 to \$7 billion. What does that mean? That kind of defense cut would require troop withdrawals from many strategic outposts around the world. It would delay or cancel our advance new weapons systems like the B-1 bomber. It would slow down our ship construction program. It would do serious damage in some of our other research and development programs. It might be just closing defense plants throughout the United States, including some right here in the great State of California. We aren't going to let that happen. America must stay number one.

After so many years of runaway inflation, runaway growth in the Federal budget, I submitted a budget for the third fiscal year which will cut the rate of growth in Federal spending by 50 percent. I have held the line on Government spending with 66 vetoes and saved you, the hard-pressed American taxpayer, \$9 billion, and each family in this country has been saved \$200 by those tough vetoes, and we are going to have more and more if the next Congress is as bad as this Congress. Because I said no on these 66 bills, we will be able to submit a balanced budget to the American people and to the next Congress in 1978. And we will have another tax reduction, in addition.

My idea of tax reform is tax reduction. I proposed, for example, raising your personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. The middle income taxpayer in this country has been shortchanged, and we are going to change it in the next Congress.

The other day I was out to a factory talking to some hard-working people who put in their eight hours a day, who work hard, pay their taxes, and they asked me about tax reduction. I said, "How many children do you have in your family?" He said three. He has five exemptions. I said that if the tax reduction that I proposed goes through -- and we are going to get it next time -- it would mean that you, when you fill out your income tax return, will be able to take a \$1,250 more tax exemption in your next tax return. That helps the middle income taxpayer, and that is what we are going to get.

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After so many years of uncontrolled inflation, I am proud to say that we have cut inflation by 50 percent in the past two years, and I pledge to you we will do better in the next four years. After the worst recession in 40 years, we have added four million new jobs in the American economy, not by creating deadend jobs for those that want to work, jobs created at the taxpayers' expense, but by stimulating jobs with a future in the private economy where five out of those six jobs exist today.

Too many people are out of work, I recognize that. We are not satisfied with the progress we have made, but more Americans were on the job in 1976 than ever before in the history of this great country -- nearly 88 million people -- and that is a tremendous comeback from where we were just a year and a half ago.

After suffering -- and I say this with sadness -- after suffering a tragic betrayal of public trust two years ago, America has had its faith restored in the White House. My Administration has been open, candid, straightforward and we will keep it that way for the next four years.

In every field America is on the move, on the march. We have made an incredible comeback in the past two years, and we are not through yet. You can believe me when I say -- I say it from my heart -- America, this nation, is sound, this nation is secure, this nation is on the 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 don't need a Government to do everything for us or tell us everything we can or cannot do. As I travel around this great country, I find we have a great reservoir of talent and industry in America, and it is not all concentrated, believe me, on the banks of the Potomac. Don't ever believe that.

Jimmy Carter has indicated -- Jimmy Carter has told the American people that the United States is not respected anymore. This week America made a clean sweep of the Nobel Prizes for economics, chemistry, physics, medicine and literature. This is the first time in history that a single country has brought home all of these winners. That doesn't sound like a second-rate nation to me.

As I stand before this fantastic crowd of wonderful people from this part of California, I say from the bottom of my heart I am proud to be an American, I am proud of all of you and we are proud of America.

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We have our problems, but in the past two years we have come a long, long way. At home and abroad, we are putting all of our differences aside. We are putting our old problems behind us and we are healing the wounds. There is an old saying among many of us, "You can disagree without being disagreeable," and America is united. We are healed. We are on our way. Let's keep going.

As I look back over these troubled two years, it is a record that I think all of us can share. It is a record that I am proud of, a record for the people of California, and concerned citizens throughout America -- Democrats, Independents and Republicans. I think it is a record you will support and the people in 49 other States will support November 2.

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

Give me your mandate and we will create a tax structure that is fair to all, that will preserve the family home, the family business, the family farm, that will give us business tax incentives to build new plants, to modernize old ones and to create more jobs.

Give me your mandate and I will lead this nation on a path of peace through strength, and we will live in peace and freedom in the United States of America. I have no fear for the future of this country. For America, the future is a friend, and as we go forward together, I promise you once more -- as I 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 our beloved America. God helping me, I will not let you down.

Thank you and good night.

END (AT 8:33 P.M. PDT)