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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
FORD CITY SHOPPING MALL

1:14 P.M. CDT

Chuck Percy, Ron Bukema, Governor Ogilvie, Edith Green, Joe Garagiola, Senator Carl Curtis:

It is great for President Ford to be in Ford City. Thank you. Let's make all of Illinois Ford country November 2.

With this kind of enthusiasm and the wonderful welcome that we had a week ago Saturday in downstate Illinois, I can say with confidence that we are going to carry the State of Illinois November 2. Are we?

While I am here in Ford City, let me extend to all of you a very special invitation next January to come to the inauguration in Washington, D.C. of Jerry Ford and Bob Dole.

Let me say you are here because you want to know where I stand on the issues. I stand on your side 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 or dying on foreign soil today, and we are going to keep it that way. After so many years in which America's defense needs were shortchanged, I proposed the two largest defense budgets in the history of the United States, and I was able to convince the Congress to stop slashing away at military spending.

After so many years of runaway inflation and runaway growth in the Federal budget, I submitted a budget to the Congress last January that cut the rate of growth in Federal spending by over half.

I have held the line on Government spending with 66 vetoes and saved you -- and I emphasize you -- the hard-pressed taxpayers, more than \$9 billion.

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Those vetoes saved each American family about \$200 in Federal spending, and that is progress. Because I have not been afraid to say no, to say no to excessive spending, we will submit a balanced budget by 1978 and we will have another tax reduction for the American taxpayer in the meantime.

My idea -- and listen vary carefully -- my idea of tax reform is tax reduction -- tax reduction for the shortchanged, middle income taxpayer. Therefore, I recommended that you have your personal income tax exemption increased from \$750 to \$1,000. That is the kind of tax reform that we want.

After so many years of uncontrolled inflation we have cut the rate of inflation in half in the past two years.

I commit, I promise, we will do better each year and the next four years. After the worst economic recession in 40 years, we have added four million jobs to the American economy in the past two years, not by creating deadend jobs at a taxpayer's expense, but by stimulating jobs with a future in the private economy where five out of the six jobs exist anyhow.

I admit, too many people are still out of work. We are not satisfied with the progress that we have made, but more Americans were on the job in 1976 than ever before in the history of this country -- 88 million -- and that is a tremendous comeback from where we were 18 months ago.

After suffering a tragic betrayal of public trust two years ago, America has had its faith restored in the White House itself.

My Administration has been open, candid, frank, forthright and we are going to keep it that way for the next four years.

In every field America is on the move. We are on the march. We made an incredible comeback in the past two years and we are not through yet.

You can believe me when I say this nation is sound, this nation is secure. This nation is on the way to a better quality of life for all Americans, and this Administration has earned the trust of the American people for the next four years.

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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. This is a pledge of the Ford Administration.

We have a great reservoir of talent in industry throughout all 50 of our States. It is not all concentrated on the banks of the Potomac.

Jimmy Carter says we are not respected any more. This week America made a clean sweep of the Nobel Prizes for economics, chemistry, medicine and literature. This is the first time in the history of these awards that a single country, the United States, has come home with every winner. We should be very proud. I might add, that record doesn't sound like a second rate operation to me.

As I look around this great crowd and thank you all for coming, I am proud to be an American and I know that you are. And although we have had our problems in the past two years, we have come a long, long way. At home and abroad, we are putting aside old differences, we are putting old problems behind us and healing our wounds. It is a record I am proud to run on, a record the people of Illinois and 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.

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 earned. There is no reason why they should 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. Then we will give business the 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 the path of peace through strength and we will live in peace and freedom in the United States.

I find, or have no fear for the future of this great country. The future for America is a friend, and as we go forward together I promise you once more, as I promised you before, to uphold the Constitution and to do what is right as God gives me to see the right, and to do the very, very best I can for America.

God helping me, I won't let you down.

Thank you very, very much.

END

(AT 1:24 P.M. CDT)