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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
WOODFIELD SHOPPING MALL

8:11 P.M. CDT

Thank you very, very much, Jim Thompson, the next Governor of the great State of Illinois.

It is great to be here in this wonderful plaza and to have the opportunity of being on the platform not only with Jim Thompson but my good friend and your first class outstanding United States Senator, Chuck Percy.

But let me add, we have here two former colleagues of mine in the House of Representatives who I hope and trust that you will strongly support, Phil Crane and Sam Young.

And let me add one other point: Jim Thompson can't do the job alone in running the State of Illinois the way you want it run. He has an outstanding State ticket and I hope you will pull that lever and go right down the line for that State ticket to help Jim Thompson do the job.

I can't imagine a more wonderful way to end a beautiful day in the State of Illinois than to come to this plaza and see so many wonderful people who are going to support Jerry Ford for President. Let me extend to every one of you a special invitation to come to Washington, D. C. next January 20 to participate in the inauguration of Jerry Ford and Bob Dole as President and Vice President of the United States.

As we come to the final countdown in this great election that will determine the direction of this country for the next four years and will determine the direction perhaps of the next century in America, I want each and every one of you to 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 may I say, aren't we proud that not a single young American is fighting or dying on foreign soil tonight. As your President, we will keep it that way for the next four years.

After so many years of runaway growth in Federal spending, I submitted a budget last January in which I 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, the hard-pressed American taxpayers, more than \$9 billion.

MORE

Those 66 vetoes saved each American family \$200 in Federal spending, and that is progress by any standard. Because I have not been afraid to say no to excessive spending, we will submit a balanced budget for the Federal Government in 1978, and we will have another tax reduction for the American taxpayer in the meantime.

My idea of tax reform is tax reduction. I proposed raising your personal income exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. What does that mean to a family of five -- three children, a husband and a wife? Let's bring it right down to practicalities.

That means if Congress had done its job, next April when the head of the family would have made out that return, that taxpayer could have taken \$1,250 more in personal exemption. Congress didn't do it. We are going to get them next year. If they don't do it next year, we will go after them the next year, and if they don't do it then we will go after them in the next election in 1978.

After so many years of uncontrolled inflation, we have cut the rate of inflation in half in the past two years and we will do even better in the next two years, in the next four years.

After the worst economic recession in 40 years, we have added 4 million jobs to the American economy in the last 18 months, not by creating deadend jobs at the taxpayer's expense but by stimulating jobs with a future in the private economy where five out of the six jobs exist today.

Too many people are still out of work. We are not satisfied with the progress that we have made, but more Americans were working in 1976 than ever before in the history of this great country -- nearly 88 million people gainfully employed, and we should be proud of it.

That is a tremendous improvement over where we were, and we are going to do better in the future. 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, forthright, straightforward, and we are going to keep it that way in 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 that 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, and we won't let you down.

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My record is one of progress, not platitudes; performance, not promises. Listen to this very carefully. We do not need Government to do everything for us or to tell us everything we can or cannot do. We have a great reservoir of talent and industry in this country, and it is not all concentrated on the banks of the Potomac. It is right here in Illinois, in Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin and the other 45 or 46 States.

Jimmy Carter says that the United States of America is not respected anymore. This week America made a clean sweep of Nobel prizes for economics, chemistry, physics, medicine and literature. This is the first time in the history of Nobel prizes that a single country has been the home of all of these winners. That doesn't sound like a second-rate operation to me. Does it to you?

I am proud to be a citizen of this great country and I kind of gather you are, too. We have our problems, but in the past two years we have come a long, long way. At home and abroad, we are putting our old differences aside. We are putting our old problems behind us and healing our wounds.

It is a record that I am proud to run on, a record the people of Illinois and concerned citizens throughout America -- Democrats, Independents, Republicans -- will support on November 2, and we are going to win.

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 Medicare so that our older citizens can enjoy the health and the happiness that they have so richly earned. There is no reason why 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 farm, the family business, that will give 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 with pride on the 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 for America. The future is our 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 I can for America. God helping me, I will not let you down, and let me conclude by saying I love you.

Thank you. Good night.

END

(AT 8:27 P.M. CDT)