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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
GOP FUND-RAISING DINNER

PHILADELPHIA CIVIC AUDITORIUM

7:52 P.M. EDT

Bill Simon, the great Secretary of the Treasury; my good friend and your great Senator, Senator Hugh Scott; my good friend, and again your great Senator, Dick Schweiker; your next Senator, John Heinz; a very fine former colleague of mine in the House of Representatives, Larry Coughlin:

I am here to first express my deep appreciation for the wonderful job that all of you did under the leadership of Drew Lewis at the time of the Convention in Kansas City. I want to thank Drew. I want to thank Dr. Ethel Allen. I want to thank all of you who did such a wonderful job. Thank you very, very much.

But I add very quickly, it has been wonderful to come to the State of Pennsylvania, or the Commonwealth, I should say. Like yesterday I was in Pittsburgh early in the morning, and who was right at my side? Dick Schweiker. I appreciate that kind of loyalty, that kind of cooperation. That is what we are getting in Pennsylvania.

In Kansas City, I said that we were not going to concede a single State, we would not concede a single vote, and we haven't. We have campaigned the length and the breadth of this country, and the net result is we have the momentum going. We have the momentum going because we have the right programs, because we are appealing to the patriotic spirit, the faith that people in this great country have in their Nation, the kind of Government that we have.

And let me give you one or two things that I would like to use, or have you use, in the remaining days of this very critical campaign. There are many reasons why we can appeal to Independents, Democrats, Republicans. But there are two things that I think are almost overriding.

Peace -- one of the greatest achievements of this Administration is the fact that we have peace and not a single young American is fighting or dying on any foreign soil tonight, and we have the military strength and the diplomatic skill to keep it that way in the next four years, and we will.

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It would be tragic if the military strength that we have was in any way eroded by suggestions by some that we should slash \$5 to \$7 billion away from those necessary funds from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines, because I can tell you, as one who has negotiated with our allies to strengthen our relationship, as one who has sat across the table negotiating with the leaders of adversary nations, it is so reassuring to know that when I say America is strong, America is united, we have the United States Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines standing ready to do a job. We can depend on them and we are going to keep them number one.

As I travel in many, many States, another overriding concern of the American people is that their tax burden is rising, locally and statewide. I can say -- and look them right in the eye -- and say to taxpayers in Oregon or California, New York or Pennsylvania, that President Ford recommended in January of last year a \$28 billion tax reduction with a \$28 billion restraint on Federal spending.

Congress gave us half of both. They didn't cut the rate of growth in Federal spending as much as they should have, as much as I proposed. They only gave the American people half of the tax reduction that I recommended.

But let me say this: We laid it on the line. We recommended the best way to help the shortchanged middle income taxpayer -- and he has been given short shrift in the last 10 years -- we recommended -- and Bill Simon I can recall very vividly saying, "Mr. President, this is the way to do it" -- we proposed that we increase the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. Congress didn't respond. I can't understand it, but nevertheless they didn't.

But, let's take an example. This is what you can tell people as you campaign in Philadelphia or the surrounding suburbs or anyplace else -- that if Congress had done its job, a man who has a wife and three children, when he would make out his income tax returns next April, under President Ford's plan he could have had for his five that he is accountable for -- he would have had \$1,250 more in personal exemption, and that would have made a difference to that taxpayer.

Now I make a pledge to you. Congress didn't do the job. It is going to be on their shelf next January. When I submit the budget, the economic plan, we are going to recommend the same thing, and if they fail the American people again, we will put it on their platter in January of 1978, and if they fail again in the Congress, then we are going to the American people in that next election in 1978 and we are going to beat those individuals in the Congress that don't respond with the right kind of tax reduction.

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Well, those are the things -- peace and a tax reduction.

But now let's talk about the new spirit I find in America, whether it is on the West Coast or the East Coast. The spark was really lighted here in Philadelphia on July 4. I am sure many of you attended the great ceremonies that we held in the City right here.

The American people have been disillusioned. They lost faith and trust in their country, maybe in themselves. But we turned things around. We restored trust in the White House; we ended the war in Vietnam; we have been quite successful in battling inflation, from over 12 percent to under 6 percent; we have added 4 million jobs.

But the main thing that happened on July 4 was there was a rebirth of spirit. The American people got that old patriotism back. Instead of fighting with one another, they got together. There is a new belief, not only in our form of Government but in each other, and in themselves.

And so America has made an incredible comeback. We have the momentum going, and I happen to believe that when the people go to those polls on November 2 they are going to say "Jerry Ford, you did a good job. We want you to do it for the next four years."

So, I thank you all. I thank Billy Meehan, Bill Devlin, your two great Senators, your next Senator, Larry Coughlin, all of you. We have five and a half days to go. We can do it. Pennsylvania is crucial. Let's make certain that the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania leads the pack so that we will have four good years under Jerry Ford.

Thank you.

END (AT 8:02 P.M. EDT)