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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
ANNOUNCING HIS NOMINEE FOR
VICE PRESIDENT

THE EAST ROOM

AT 9:06 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Members of the Cabinet, Members of the Congress, members of the diplomatic corps, all of our distinguished guests here in the East Room and my fellow Americans:

I have invited you here tonight so that I could share with all of you, not only in this room, but the millions listening on television and radio, my announcement of the man whose name I shall submit to the Congress tomorrow for confirmation as Vice President of the United States.

I shall ask the Congress tonight and also, when I submit the name tomorrow, to act as expeditiously as possible on this nomination because of the great challenges we face at home and abroad today.

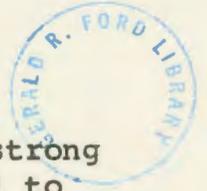
We live at a time in which we face great dangers, but also a time of very great opportunities. We can be thankful tonight that for the first time in 12 years the United States is at peace with every nation in the world. We can also be thankful that we are in the midst of a rising expansion of our economy in which more Americans have better jobs at higher wages than at any time in the history of our country.

But also on the other side, we have to recognize the fact that the peace we have worked so hard to build, not only for ourselves, but for all the world, is now threatened because of a new outbreak of war in the Mideast.

And also we must recognize the fact that the prosperity that we seek is plagued by an inflation which is a burden on the family budget of millions of Americans.

This is a time therefore, that we need strong and effective leadership because the hope of the world for peace lies with the leadership that we have here in the United States of America. And our ability to build a new prosperity in





Never in our history has the world more needed a strong America, a united America, with both the power and the will to act in the spirit that made this a great country, and that has kept it a free country.

That is why at this particular time it is vital that we turn away from the obsessions of the past, and turn to the great challenges of the future. This is a time for a new beginning for America, a new beginning in which we all dedicate ourselves to the tasks of meeting the challenges we face, seizing the opportunities for greatness and meeting the dangers wherever they are, at home or abroad.

I am confident tonight as I stand here before the leaders of both parties, I am confident we shall meet those dangers, and also seize those opportunities. I am confident that we shall do so, but we can and will do so only if we have the support of millions of our fellow Americans all across this land. We can and will do so only if we have bipartisan support in the Congress of the United States in matters in which no partisanship should ever enter. We can and will do so only if we have strong effective leadership in the Executive Branch of this Government.

These were the considerations that I had in mind as I considered what man or other individual to select as the nominee for Vice President of the United States.

Let me tell you what the criteria were that I had in mind. First, and above all, the individual who serves as Vice President must be qualified to be President. Second, the individual who serves as Vice President of the United States must be one who shares the views of the President on the critical issues of foreign policy and national defense, which are so important if we are to play our great role, our destined role to keep peace in the world. Third, at this particular time when we have the Executive in the hands of one party, and the Congress controlled by another party, it is vital that the Vice President of the United States be an individual who can work with members of both parties in the Congress, in getting approval for those programs of the Administration which we consider are vital for the national interest.



It was these criteria that I had in mind when I pondered this decision last night and early this morning in the quiet beauty of Camp David. And the man I have selected meets those three criteria.

First, he is a man who has served for 25 years in the House of Representatives with great distinction. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, please don't be premature. There are several here who have served 25 years in the House of Representatives. (Laughter)

In addition to that service in the House, I should point out that in that period of time he has earned the respect of both Democrats and Republicans. He is a man also who has been unwaivering in his support of the policies that brought peace with honor for America in Vietnam and in support of a policy for a strong national defense for this country, which is so essential if we are to have peace in the world, and above all, he is a man who, if the responsibilities of the great office that I hold should fall upon him, as has been the case with eight Vice Presidents in our history, we could all say, the leadership of America is in good hands.

Our distinguished guests and my fellow Americans, I proudly present to you the man whose name I will submit to the Congress of the United States for confirmation as the Vice President of the United States, Congressman Gerald Ford of Michigan. (Applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, Congressman Ford knows the rules, that since he now has to be confirmed by both Houses, his remarks will be very brief.

VICE PRESIDENT-DESIGNATE GERALD R. FORD: Mr. President, I am deeply honored and I am extremely grateful and I am terribly humble, but I pledge to you, Mr. President, and I pledge to my colleagues in the Congress, and I pledge to the American people, that to the best of my ability, if confirmed by my colleagues in the Congress, that I will do my utmost, to the best of my ability, to serve this country well and to perform those duties that will be my new assignment, as effectively and as efficiently and with as much accomplishment as possible.

Mr. President, with pride I have supported our country's policies, both at home and abroad, aimed at seeking peace world-wide and a better well being for all of our citizens throughout our great land, and I will continue to work with

It seems to me that we want, in America, a united America. I hope I have some assets that might be helpful in working with the Congress in doing what I can throughout our country to make America a united America. I pledge to you my full efforts, and I pledge the same to my colleagues and to the American people. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: I know that all of you will want to meet Congressman Ford and Mrs. Ford. We will be in the Blue Room if you would like to come by and say hello and congratulate them. Also there will be refreshments, I understand, in the State Dining Room in case some of you did not have supper.

Thank you and good evening.

END

(9:18 P.M. EDT)

