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THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN. *df.*

YOUNG REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

WHITE HOUSE RECEPTION

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1975

I WANT TO ADD MY PERSONAL WELCOME TO THOSE OF
BETTY AND SUSAN AND TO CONGRATULATE YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN
THIS IMPORTANT YOUNG REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE.

PERSONALLY, I LOVE TO TALK TO YOUNG REPUBLICANS
BECAUSE YOU BRING BACK SO MANY FINE MEMORIES OF MY EARLY DAYS
IN POLITICS. I CAN REMEMBER ONE OF MY VERY FIRST SPEECHES.
IT WAS GIVEN IN A CHURCH BASEMENT AND YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW
NERVOUS I WAS. AND THE BULLETIN BOARD IN FRONT OF THE CHURCH
DIDN'T HELP. IT SAID IN BIG, BOLD LETTERS: COME IN AND FIND OUT
WHAT HELL IS REALLY LIKE! / AND THEN THEY LISTED MY SPEECH.

TODAY I CONGRATULATE YOU ON THIS YEAR'S THEME --

"BACK TO BASICS."

ONE OF THE BIG LESSONS OF THE 1974 ELECTIONS WAS THE
NEED FOR ALL OF US -- PARTICULARLY THE REPUBLICAN PARTY --
TO RETURN TO THE BASICS. WE MUST REBUILD. WE MUST
RESTORE CONFIDENCE. WE MUST LEARN FROM OUR LOSSES AND
MOVE FORWARD -- LOCALLY, STATEWIDE AND NATIONWIDE.
AND THAT MEANS MASTERING THE NUTS-AND-BOLTS DETAILS.

AMERICA'S YOUNG VOTERS PRESENT A CHALLENGE TO THE
Y-R'S. IN THE 1974 ELECTIONS LESS THAN THIRTY-SEVEN PERCENT
OF POTENTIAL VOTERS AGED EIGHTEEN TO TWENTY WERE EVEN REGISTERED.
EVEN FEWER -- UNDER TWENTY-ONE PERCENT -- ACTUALLY VOTED.
THE FIGURE WAS ALMOST AS BAD FOR CITIZENS IN THE TWENTY-ONE
TO TWENTY-FOUR AGE BRACKET, LESS THAN TWENTY-SEVEN PERCENT VOTING.

IN FACT, THE ONLY GROUP OF AMERICANS TO GET OUT A
MAJORITY WERE THOSE OF US OVER FORTY-FIVE. ONE OF THE BIGGEST
CONTRIBUTIONS YOU CAN MAKE IS TO SELL YOUNG AMERICANS ON
REPUBLICANISM. GET THEM TO THE POLLS ON TIME.

AS I LOOK AROUND THIS ROOM, I SEE THAT WE HAVE AT LEAST ONE GREAT ASSET. YOU HAVE THE IDEALISM AND THE APPETITE FOR LEARNING AND HARD WORK THAT OUR PARTY NEEDS TO ENSURE ITS FUTURE.

IN MANY WAYS, YOUR GENERATION CAN PLAY THE MOST ACTIVE, POSITIVE ROLE IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS SINCE THE FIRST GENERATION OF YOUNG AMERICAN PATRIOTS IN 1776.

WE SOMETIMES TEND TO THINK OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS AS
A GROUP OF ELDERLY GENTLEMEN IN POWDERED WIGS. THAT IS NOT
THE WAY IT WAS.

IN 1776, THOMAS JEFFERSON WAS ONLY THIRTY-THREE;

JAMES MADISON WAS TWENTY-FIVE; ALEXANDER HAMILTON WAS

TWENTY-ONE AND JAMES MONROE WAS ONLY EIGHTEEN. EVEN

GEORGE WASHINGTON, WHO HAS COME DOWN TO US AS THE ULTIMATE

FATHER FIGURE, WAS ONLY FORTY-THREE WHEN HE ASSUMED COMMAND

OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMY.

THE CHALLENGES THAT THE YOUNG GENERATION FACED
TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO MAY HAVE BEEN MORE GLAMOROUS AND
DRAMATIC. BUT THEY WERE NO MORE REAL OR URGENT THAN
THE ONES YOU FACE TODAY.

I KNOW YOU ARE GOING TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF
TODAY -- AND THAT THE SPIRIT OF 1976 WILL EQUAL THE SPIRIT OF 1776.

IT IS GOING TO TAKE THE SAME IDEALISM -- THE SAME
SPARK OF PATRIOTISM AND SENSE OF PURPOSE -- THAT MOTIVATED
THE FOUNDERS.

YOUNG REPUBLICANS HAVE THESE QUALITIES --
I CAN SENSE THEM HERE IN THIS ROOM TODAY.

A GOOD PRESCRIPTION FOR AMERICA TODAY IS THE
DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ENERGY SOURCES -- INCLUDING YOUNG
REPUBLICAN ENERGY. THERE IS OBVIOUSLY NO ENERGY SHORTAGE
AMONG THE Y-R'S.

WELCOME TO THE WHITE HOUSE. LET'S WORK TOGETHER
TO STRENGTHEN AND EXPAND OUR REPUBLICAN PARTY AND BUILD A BETTER
AMERICA.

END OF TEXT