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OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Grand Rapids, Michigan)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
UPON HIS ARRIVAL AT
KENT COUNTY AIRPORT

7:14 P.M. EDT

Let me thank all of you for coming out today. Betty and I have had a very, very thrilling day going from Flint to Niles on a train, and then we just had a tremendous reception down at Holland at the Tulip Festival, but it is so nice to be back in Grand Rapids, our home town.

We have the First Mama with us, and we have Susan. You want a date, Susan? (Laughter)

But, as we were flying with the helicopter from Holland over to Grand Rapids, my memories went back to 1948 when I first made the gamble to run for Congress from the Fifth Congressional District, and at that time I appealed to a lot of Republicans. I appealed for support from a lot of Independents and I asked for the help and assistance of a lot of Democrats. The net result was I think I got a lot of all of them, and for that I am deeply grateful because that was the beginning of my opportunity to serve the people of Grand Rapids, of Holland, Grand Haven, all of the Fifth Congressional District.

Now some 27 years later I am asking for the help and assistance of all of the people of this part of Michigan and the great State of Michigan. This includes all of the Republicans who believe in the philosophy and believe in the record that I have tried to carry out in 21 months. It includes all of the Independents in our great State of Michigan, and the Democrats, and may I thank the Democrats who are here, including Dick Vander Veen, including the others who have been helpful over the years in supporting what we have tried to do for the Fifth District, the City of Grand Rapids.

This is our home town, and when I think of the days at Madison School, the days at South High -- of course Betty went to Central -- but when I think of the wonderful people that have been so kind to all of us over a long, long period of time, we have done the best job we could, whether it was in Congress, whether it was Vice President and for 21 months as President.

It is a great, great part of this country where we are now and there are some wonderful people that we have tried to help, some wonderful people that we have tried to represent as best we could, and some people who have supported us through thick and thin.

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Our hearts and our affection, they are all with you in this part of our great country. To see you all here in this sort of disagreeable night, it makes me -- and I am sure Betty and Susan -- feel like we are kind of welcome back home.

So, I thank you for all of the support over the years. I thank you for what you can do to help us on next Tuesday. We have never let you down in the future - and we will never let you down in the future as President of the United States.

Thank you very, very much. It is nice to see you all.

END (AT 7:18 P.M. EDT)