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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
GOP/PFC RECEPTION

SHERATON PORTLAND

2:25 P.M. PDT

Thank you very, very much, Craig, and I want to thank Vic and Wendell, who have been with me and who are here.

It has been a great privilege and pleasure for me to stop in Medford. We had a tremendous welcome and reception in their famous Library Park.

We have had an opportunity to say hello to some other fine people in Oregon and to come here to the PFC headquarters and to see this tremendous group. Believe me, I am absolutely confident that we are going to win in Oregon by a good margin on Tuesday.

No candidate can win -- I have been through 13 Congressional campaigns, I am in one now, I have gone to many States as we have gone down the road of these various primaries -- you can't win unless you have the kind of support that comes from people like you.

I have noticed that we have done the best where we have had the best organization. And I can just feel from shaking hands with you, saying hello, hearing about you from others, that you are tremendous.

So, I thank all of you. And let me say, for the work that you have done and the fact that we are going to win in Kansas City and win in November, I pledge to you that I will not let you down for the next four years.

I was so pleased that Betty came out here a week or so ago. I send her out ahead of me so she can get my votes up to her polls. (Laughter) And then Steve was here a couple of days ago, I guess, on his first -- but you know who preceded the whole Ford family coming out to Oregon? Liberty came out here. (Laughter) And Liberty came back to Washington with nine wonderful puppies. (Laughter)

But, anyhow, let me take a minute or two to give you first-hand the theme that I am trying to spread across the length and breadth of this country, very directly, very forthright, that since I became President we have restored confidence and trust in the White House.

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Since I became President we have turned around the worst economic recession in 40 years, and we are on the upswing toward a healthy, prosperous America.

And, number three, since I became President we ended the war. We have achieved the peace, we have the peace, and the programs that we have of a military strength and diplomatic skill will keep the peace in the future.

We have peace. We are achieving prosperity. And we have restored trust and confidence. That is what the American people want, and the record is clear.

Let me add just a word or two about the three points that I have made. August 8, 1974, wasn't a very good circumstance for this country, and when I took the oath of office we had some problems. But we have had an open, forthright, candid, I think, an Administration of integrity.

One basic promise that I have made in all of my political life, I never promise more than we can produce and we produce everything that we promise.

You go back and check the economic statistics on August 8 of 1974 -- we were suffering inflation of over 12 percent. The good news that we have gotten progressively is that the rate of inflation is going down and for the first four months now of 1976 on an annual basis it is under 3 percent. It is a 75 percent reduction in the rate of inflation. That is a good record.

A year ago today, unemployment was rampant; employment was falling. But, in the last 12 months, we have regained 3,300,000 jobs. In the month of April, we added 710,000 jobs. And the net result is, as of the last reporting date for April of this year, there were 86,400,000 people gainfully employed in the United States -- the largest number in the history of our country. That is progress.

As I said earlier, we have achieved the peace, we have the peace, and we are maintaining the peace. We have the diplomatic skill and the military capability to handle the problems that we foresee.

I am making a speech in Portland tomorrow night (tonight) on foreign policy, and I will discuss it in some depth. But I want to assure you, the United States is unsurpassed in military capability. Our programs for the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines are fully sufficient to meet any assigned missions that they have to protect our national security to deter aggression.

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And let me assure you that the United States of America has the will to meet any challenges. Our mission is not to bully, not to back off; our mission is to go down the line of fairness and equity and strength and peace, and that is what this Administration stands for.

So, I thank you all for what you have done, and I know that in the next 72 hours you are going to maximize your effort. I have seen good teams lose a ball game in the last quarter. The PFC Committee in the State of Oregon is not going to lose in the last quarter; you are going to do better in the last quarter, and that is the way we can make certain and positive that you show the way for the West Coast, that the momentum we have got in Michigan, with a 65 percent margin and 58 percent margin in Maryland, is the kind of momentum we are going to have right on through June 8 of this year.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 2:34 P.M. PDT)