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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE  
GOP RECEPTION

EXHIBITION HALL  
HOWARD JOHNSON'S MOTOR LODGE

7:32 P.M. CDT

Thank you very, very much, Governor Bond, Senators Tower, Baker and Dole, Lieutenant Governor Phelps, Attorney General Danforth, Lowell McCuskey, Gene McNary, Rog Morton, delegates and guests:

It is great to be back in Missouri. I love you.

As many of you know, I have been in Missouri a great many times campaigning for Republican candidates for all offices. As many of you know, I have been in Missouri a great many times to help raise money we could have a strong two-party system in the great State of Missouri.

So it is good to be here and to see 1400 good delegates who are going to do the right thing for the Republican Party tomorrow.

I would like to take a very few minutes to talk positively and affirmatively about the record of the Ford Administration for the last 22 months. Refresh your memory just a bit. In August of 1974 this country was in serious trouble for reasons that we all know. There had been a great loss of confidence in the White House itself. This country was facing economic chaos in August of 1974. We were suffering 12 percent or higher inflation. We were on the brink of the worst economic recession in 40 years. We were still in war. Our allies were uncertain and our adversaries were tempted. In the last 22 months we have turned all three around.

We have restored confidence and trust in the White House by the fact that we have had an open, straightforward, candid Administration. The door is open to individuals, the door is open to people who will come in and work with us, bring us their criticism, their complaints and their recommendations.

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The net result is the White House is trusted. The White House has had a restoration of confidence.

Number two, in the last 12 months we have added 3 million 700 thousand more jobs in America. Last Friday the Department of Labor announced that 87 million 700 thousand people had jobs, an all time record in the history of the United States. We should be proud of it. We have done a good job.

We have gone from 12 percent inflation in 1974 down to 3 percent or less for the first five months of 1976. We have reduced the rate of inflation by 75 percent. That is a good record.

Let me speak for just a minute on how we have done it. We have done it because we have held the lid on Federal spending. Most of you know that in the last 22 months I vetoed 49 spending bills. A majority of the Congress sent budget busting deficit increasing spending bills down, and with the help of people like Bob Dole, John Tower, Howard Baker, we have been able to sustain 42 of them and save the taxpayer \$13 billion.

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And let me add, if this Democratic Congress sends any more like that, we will veto them again and again and again and again.

But we have turned the economy around by good economic policies. Instead of adding people to the Federal payroll, I recommended a year ago that we have a tax reduction. We approved a \$23 billion tax reduction in 1975 -- 25 percent went to business, 75 percent went to individual taxpayers -- and, as a result, the economy is moving in the right direction.

But, in order to keep that momentum going, I have recommended that the Congress approve another \$10 billion tax reduction, beginning July 1, including an increase in the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. The taxpayers deserve it.

But I also recommended -- and this is something that is very fundamental -- that we increase the estate tax exemption from \$60,000 to \$150,000, so that family farms, so that small businesses could go from one generation to another without the taxpayer grabbing all of the work and the love and affection that people have.

I am glad to report to you that Senator Dole said to me on the way out here that the Senate Committee on Finance in effect has recommended that that proposal be included in the tax legislation which will be on the Senate Floor next week.

One provision which is vitally important under current law -- when a husband passes property to his wife or vice versa, there is a Federal estate tax imposed. Under my proposition, those transfers are nontaxable, as they should be.

I am pleased to stand here in this great City of Springfield in the State of Missouri and say to you that not a single American boy is fighting and dying on foreign soil. We have peace, we have the military capability to maintain it, and under the Ford Administration, because we are strong, we are going to keep it.

I am the first President since Ike ran in 1956 who could go to the American people and say, "I want your votes. We have peace. We don't have a war that the United States is engaged in." That is progress, by any standard.

So, I come to you in Springfield and ask for your help and assistance. I can be elected. I can help elect other Republicans from the courthouse to the Congress. That is the way you build a two-party system in Missouri and the other 49 States.

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Let me conclude with this observation: This country is on the brink of its third 100th year. In our third century in America, I think we ought to emphasize the freedom of the individual. In our first 100 years in America, we developed a form of Government that protected that precious freedom which we enjoy. In our second century of America, we developed the greatest economic industrial machine in the history of mankind.

But our third century must be the century for the protection of the individual. We must protect that individual against mass Government, against mass labor, against mass business, against mass education. The third century of this country must be the one where the individual has a new birth of freedom, and in the first four years under the Ford Administration I guarantee you we will get a kick-off in the right direction.

Tomorrow, every one of the 1,400-plus delegates here has a great responsibility and that responsibility reminds me of the responsibility that 59 delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Independence Hall in the City of Philadelphia, about 200 years ago, had. They had a responsibility of representing 13 small, struggling colonies, about 3 million people. They labored from May until September, and when they concluded that responsibility of drafting the greatest document in the history of mankind for the governing of people and a Nation -- after they had all signed, Benjamin Franklin, one of those delegates, wandered down onto the street and he was accosted by an old lady and that lady said to Ben Franklin, "Mr. Franklin, what have you given us, a monarchy or a republic?" And Ben Franklin said, "We have given you a republic, if you can keep it."

All of you here in Springfield tomorrow have an awesome responsibility to a very high degree. You have the same responsibility, whether you can keep or help to keep the republic. I have faith and trust in you.

We are going to win in Kansas City and we are going to win in November.

Thank you very much.

END (AT 7:42 P.M. CDT)