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Office of the White House Press Secretary

THE WHITE HOUSE

TEXT OF REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BE DELIVERED AT
CRISLER ARENA, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
SEPTEMBER 15, 1976

I have come home to Michigan to share with you my views of America in 1976 and my hopes for America in the next four years and beyond.

During the last two years, in the aftermath of a difficult war and a painful ordeal of economic adversity and political crisis, we reached a critical turning point in America 's history.

Throughout most of your lives, America has faced turmoil. Some of our most beloved leaders have been assassinated. There was a war we could not either win or end. There were destructive riots on our streets and campuses. We suffered runaway inflation and the worst recession in 40 years. We were betrayed by corruption at the highest levels of government.

Through all of this, we found in ourselves a basic strength which has proven mightier than all our armaments, more precious than our great store of national wealth, and as enduring as our Constitution.

As I said on taking the oath of office as President two years ago, "our long national nightmare is over." In the last two years, the United States of America has made an incredible comeback -- and we're not through yet.

In 200 years as a free people, much has changed in our nation but America's basic goals remain the same:

- Americans want a job with a good future.
- Americans want homes in decent neighborhoods -- and schools where our children can get a quality education.
- Americans want physical security -- safety against war and against crime safety against pollution in the water we drink and the air that we breathe.
- We want medical and hospital care when we are sick, at costs that will not wipe out our savings.
- We want the time and opportunity to enlarge our experience through re-creation and travel.

- MORE -

We Americans are a proud people. We cherish our inalienable rights: the right to speak our minds -- the right to choose the men and women who enact and enforce our laws -- the right to stand equal before the law, regardless of sex, age, race or religion -- the right as a farmer, businessman, worker and consumer to bargain freely in the economic marketplace -- the right to worship as we choose.

It all adds up to the "American dream".

These are the goals which every politician and every citizen has for America. They are not some mystic vision of the future. They are the continuing agenda for action today.

And so, the question in this campaign of 1976 is not "who has the better vision of America." The question is "who will act to make that vision a reality."

The American people are ready for the simply truth, simply spoken, about what the government can do for them and what it cannot and should not do. They will demand specifics -- not smiles; performance -- not promises.

There are some in this political year who claim that more government, more spending, more taxes and more controls on our lives will solve our problems.

More government is not the solution. Better government is.

It is time we thought of new ways to make government a capable servant and not a meddling master.

Let's get down to cases.

Let's talk about jobs.

Today 88 million Americans are gainfully employed -- more than ever before in our history. But that's not good enough.

My immediate goal is two and a half million new jobs every year with emphasis on our youth, especially the minorities. Not demeaning, dead-end jobs paid for out of the Federal Treasury, but permanent jobs with a future generated by the demands of a healthy economy.

Can we do it? We have done it.

We proved once and for all that you can cut inflation in half and add four million new jobs in just 17 months. We did it with tax cuts that allowed Americans to spend more of their own money. We did it with tax incentives that encouraged job production. We did it by letting our free economic system do what it does better than any other system in the world -- produce!

But I won't be satisfied until every American who wants a job can find a job.

I am particularly concerned that there are too many young Americans who cannot find a good job, or get the training and experience they need to find a good job.

Americans have long since recognized the importance of assuring that every high school graduate who is willing, able and qualified be able to go to college. We have done so through grants, loans and scholarships.

I believe we can apply this same principle to create a program for young people who choose not to go to college, but want a job at which they can learn a trade, a craft or practical business skills.

Let's put America -- all of America -- to work!

Once a good job is secured, it's an American tradition to put some of those earnings toward a family home. But nowadays, with interest rates too high, down-payments too high, and even monthly payments often too high -- home-ownership is not within the reach of many Americans, particularly young Americans beginning a career or marriage.

My goal is home-ownership for every American family that wants to own a home and is willing to work and save for it.

Here is how I will meet that goal: First--I will continue to pursue economic policies, including tight control of unnecessary Federal spending, which will hold inflation down, reduce interest rates, cut your taxes, increasing your purchasing power and making more funds available for home mortgages.

Second--It's time we did something more about the down-payment requirements which so many people can't afford. I will recommend changes in the FHA law to reduce down-payments on lower and middle-price houses, by up to 50 percent.

Third--I will direct the Department of Housing and Urban Department to accelerate implementation of a new federal guaranty program to lower monthly payments in the early years of home-ownership and gradually increase them as the family income goes up.

A good job. A good home. Now let's talk about the good health we must have to appreciate both. My goal is an American where health care is not only the best in the world--but is both accessible and affordable. But raising Federal taxes by 70 billion dollars a year for a government-dominated national health insurance program is not the way to do it. That path leads to more bureaucracy, more fraud, more taxes and second class medical care.

That's what I'm against. Here's what I'm for:

As our first priority, I have recommended protection against the costs of a catastrophic or prolonged illness for the aged, and the disabled--insuring that never again will they have to pay more than \$750 for medical care in any year. People should not have to go broke just to get well.

Next, I proposed to the Congress last spring, a major reform in federal health programs. We should combine sixteen overlapping and confused Federal health programs--including the scandal-ridden Medicaid program--into one \$10 billion program that distributes the federal funds more equitably among the states and insures that those who need these services get first class care.

America is still awaiting action by the Congress on this urgently needed legislation.

Now let's turn to an area of special concern to this audience--education.

One of the most urgent problems is to create a climate in every classroom where teachers can teach and students can learn.

Quality education for every young American is my Administration's goal. Major reforms are necessary in the relationship between the national, state and local units of government so that teachers can spend their time teaching instead of filling out Federal forms. Federal aid is necessary, but Federal aggravation should stop.

Nine months ago, I proposed to the Congress that we replace 24 paper-shuffling, educational bureaucracies with a single federal program, which would provide 3.3 billion dollars in direct aid to elementary and secondary schools.

They have not acted. Once again this Congress has shown itself to be sitting dead in the water -- addicted to the status quo. The American people deserve better representation than that! They will demand it on November 2.

We must ensure that low-income students have access to higher education.

We must also find ways through the tax system to ease the burden on families who choose to send their children to non-public schools and to help families cope with the expenses of a college education. In my Administration the education needs of America's middle-income families will neither be forgotten nor forsaken.

Education is the key to a better life. The prevention of crime is essential to making our lives secure.

The Constitution demands that we ensure domestic tranquility, and that is what I called for in my crime message to Congress. Most crimes are committed by hardened career criminals who know no other life than the life of crime. The place for those people is not on the streets, but in jail. The rights of a law-abiding society, the rights of the innocent victim of crime, must be fully protected.

And finally, we must give Americans the chance to enjoy America. I have outlined a 1.5 billion dollar program to expand and improve our national park system over the next ten years. This means more national parks, more recreation areas, more wild-life sanctuaries, more urban parks and historic sites. Let's make this America's Bicentennial birthday gift to all of our future generations.

Today America enjoys the most precious gift to all: we are at peace. No Americans are in combat anywhere on earth, and none are being drafted--and I will keep it that way.

We will be as strong as we need to be to keep the peace, to deter aggression, and to protect our national security.

But if our foreign policy is to have public support, it must represent the moral values of the American people. What is more moral than peace with freedom and security?

As the leader of the free world, America has a special responsibility to explore new paths to peace for all mankind. It is a responsibility we have not shirked. We have been a force for peace in the Middle East, not only in promoting new agreements, but in building a structure for a more lasting peace.

We have worked for peace with the Soviet Union, not only in resolving our many conflicts, but in building a world where nuclear armaments are brought under control.

We are working for peace in Europe, where the Armies of two major coalitions confront each other.

We will continue to build our relationship with the People's Republic of China, which contributes importantly to peace and stability in the world.

Now, in the face of a new challenge, we are embarked on a mission for peace in southern Africa.

This is the first Administration in America's history to develop a comprehensive, affirmative African policy. This policy has won respect and trust on that troubled continent.

At my direction, Secretary Kissinger is now engaged in an intensive effort to help all the parties--black and white--involved in the mounting crisis in southern Africa, find a peaceful and just solution to their many and complex differences.

The African parties in the very grave and complicated problems of Namibia and Rhodesia have encouraged us to help them in the search for peace and justice. We are also backed in our efforts by our European Allies with traditional bonds to the African Continent. In particular we are working in close collaboration with the United Kingdom which has an historical and legal responsibility in Rhodesia.

Success will depend fundamentally on the cooperation of the parties directly concerned. We will not and we cannot impose solutions, but will depend upon the goodwill and determined efforts of the African parties themselves to achieve negotiated settlements.

We seek no special advantage for ourselves in these negotiations. We do share with the people of Africa these fundamental objectives: a peaceful outcome; a future of majority rule and minority rights; a prospect of widening human dignity and economic progress; and a unified and an independent Africa free from outside intervention or threat.

The path that leads to these goals is not an easy one. The risks are great. But America's interests and America's moral purpose summon our effort.

Despite the rigors of a great national election, I have persisted in carrying out this new policy toward Africa -- not because it is expedient -- because it is right.

I pledge to you that under my Administration, American foreign policy will serve the interests of our country and our people -- it will be true to our great heritage of the past, fulfill our purposes in the present, and contribute to our best vision of the future.

It is not enough for anyone to say "trust me". Trust must be earned.

- Trust is not having to guess what a candidate means.
- Trust is leveling with the people before the election about what you're going to do after the election.
- Trust is not being all things to all people, but being the same thing to all people.
- Trust is not cleverly shading words so that each separate audience can hear what it wants to hear, but saying plainly and simply what you mean -- and meaning what you say.

I am proud of the maturity of the American people who demand more honesty, truthfulness and candor of their elected representatives.

The American people, particularly its young people, cannot be expected to take pride -- or participate -- in a system of government that is defiled and dishonored -- in the White House or in the halls of Congress.

Personal integrity is not too much to ask of public servants. We should accept nothing less.

As we enter the last seven weeks of this national election, a new poll indicates that as many as 65 million Americans will not vote in November.

Some people have said that they are not excited about any of this years' candidates. Let them be excited about America.

Let them be excited about their own capacity to grow and change -- about our Nation's capacity to grow and change -- and even about the evolution, with their help, of the candidate of their choice.

In this year of 1976, I stand before you as the last President of America's first 200 years. But with your help, I also intend to be the first President of America's new generation of freedom.

Working together we can build an America that does not merely celebrate history, but writes it -- that offers limited government and unlimited opportunity that concerns itself with the quality of life -- that proves individual liberty is still the key to mutual achievement and national progress.

And when the history of this era is written, future generations will look back at America in 1976 and say -- yes -- they were two hundred years old -- but they had really only just begun.