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(Lutcher, Louisiana)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
ABOARD THE SS NATCHEZ

LUTCHER-VACHERIE FERRY LANDING

9:54 A.M. CDT

Thank you very much, Hanson. Before I make any remarks, may I introduce to you my bride, Betty Ford.

Congressman Moore, Congressman Treen, Senator Thurmond, distinguished members of my Cabinet, distinguished guests, Skipper of this great ship, Doc Hawley, ladies and gentlemen:

Betty and I are delighted to be in Louisiana, in Lutcher, and in Grammercy.

In Kansas City, I said that I would not concede a single State; I would not concede a single vote. I said I would campaign from the snowy banks of Minnesota to the sandy plains of Georgia. We are going to be in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida, and we are going to win.

Let me thank you from the bottom of my heart for your warm and wonderful welcome on behalf of both Betty and myself. We are delighted to be here in the South. As I said, we are delighted because I want to talk affirmatively about what we are going to do and what we have done in the last two years. Your President believes that the Federal Government spends too much money. Your President tried to cut the rate of growth of Federal spending by 50 percent. We made a little headway, but in the next four years, we will do even better, so you can have more money in your pocket and not in the Federal Treasury.

I believe that by holding the rate of spending down, we can give to the taxpayers of this country the kind of tax reform that makes sense. It makes sense to you. That is why I recommended a \$28 billion tax decrease with an increase in the personal exemptions from \$750 to \$1,000 so you will have more of your hard earned cash in your pockets.

All of you, I know from talking to Congressman Dave Treen and Congressman Hanson Moore, that you are as concerned as I am that the United States be strong militarily. Let me say that in the two years that I have been your President, I have recommended to the Congress the two strongest military budgets in the history of this nation and we are going to keep America number one, period.

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One way we have tried to hold down the spending of the Federal Government is to veto 56 bills passed by the Congress. Forty-two of those vetoes have been sustained, and we have saved you, the taxpayers of this country, \$9 billion. I might add a postscript. The Vice Presidential candidate on the other side, who is a big spender, has voted to override every veto that I have made, which proves without any doubt he is the biggest spender in the United States Senate.

On the 4th of July, we had a wonderful celebration of America's 200th birthday. We have had a tough two years. We were divided. We have healed those divisions and America today has a new spirit -- a new spirit that has given us the capability to move out of our troubles into brighter skies.

Now, we have some new problems to solve to improve the quality of our lives -- a job for everybody who wants to work; a house for everybody who will work and save so he can have that home in a decent neighborhood; the best health care in the world; the solution of the problem of crime and greater opportunities for recreation.

Those are the visions and the goals of all of us in Litcher, in Grammercy, in Louisiana, in Michigan, in California and in Texas. We have the greatest form of Government in the history of mankind. I have faith in the strength and character of the American people, and if we work together, then we can have the brightest 100 years ahead of us this country has ever had.

Thank you. I want your vote.

I want to thank the Governor's wife, Elaine Edwards, who, I am proud to say, indicated publicly she thinks President Ford will be a good President for the next four years. I thank you, Elaine. I thank you from the bottom of my heart and I will prove it to you in the next four years.

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(AT 10:00 A.M. CDT)