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OCTOBER 23, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY
(Raleigh, North Carolina)

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIRGROUNDS

12:17 P.M. EDT

Governor Holshouser, Liddy Dole, Dave Flaherty, distinguished officials and guests:

It is great to get together with one of my family again, our third son, Steve Ford.

I also wish to express my deep appreciation for the fact that an old and very dear friend of mine, Congressman Jim Broyhill, is here.

For many, many reasons, it is a great privilege and a very high honor to be back here in the Tarheel State, and I thank you for the wonderfully warm and hospitable welcome.

In Kansas City, I promised not to concede a single vote or a single State. I meant it, and let me give you where I have been to prove the point. Some people have said, well, I have been spending my time in the Rose Garden. Some people have been saying I have been hiding out. Well, here is the itinerary.

Today I was in Virginia, now in North Carolina, and later in South Carolina; last week in Oklahoma, Texas; the week before in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. I don't think that is hiding out in Washington, D. C. (Laughter)

A couple of weeks ago I opened up the State Fair in Texas, but Jim Holshouser told me if I wanted to see a really big fair, I would have to come to North Carolina. I am here and I love it. Thank you.

Well, while I am here, let me extend a very special invitation to come to Washington next January for the inauguration of Jerry Ford and Bob Dole; or, to put it another way, you all come. (Laughter)

In Kansas City, I knew I had picked an outstanding teammate or running mate. Bob Dole has a superb record, not only in the House of Representatives but in the United States Senate. But I didn't really understand that I got such a big dividend when we got Liddy Dole with Bob Dole, and thank you very, very much.

Let me express my deepest appreciation to your outstanding United States Senator Jesse Helms, and the two fine Congressmen that I know so well, Jim Broyhill and Jim Martin. Let's add a few more just like them on election day.

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Over the years, I have developed a very close and warm friendship with the people of this State, dating back -- I went to law school here one summer at the University of North Carolina (Laughter), I spent a few months in Chapel Hill -- (Laughter) -- assigned there by the Navy in World War II. My oldest son, Mike, and his wonderful wife, Gayle, graduated from Wake Forest and, of course, as I mentioned earlier, we are delighted to have that wonderful Southern accent, that beautiful gal, Elizabeth Hanford Dole, from Salisbury, North Carolina.

But let me talk very straight to you for a few minutes. You know where I stand. I stand on your side for limited Government, for fiscal responsibility, for rising prosperity, for lower taxes, for military strength and for peace in the world. Not a single young American is fighting or dying on any foreign soil today, and I intend to keep it that way.

After so many years in which America's defensive needs were shortchanged, I proposed the two largest military budgets in America's history, and I was able to convince the Congress to stop slashing away at military spending.

After so many years of runaway growth in the Federal budget, I submitted a budget for this fiscal year which cut the rate of growth in Federal spending in half. I have held the line on Government spending with 64 vetoes and saved you, the hard-pressed taxpayers, \$9 billion.

Because I have not been afraid to say no to excessive spending, we will be able to submit a balanced Federal budget by 1978 and, in addition, we will have another tax reduction for the American taxpayer, particularly the middle income taxpayers of this country.

My idea of tax reform is tax reduction. I am sure you recall that I submitted to the Congress a proposal to increase the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000. That is meaningful tax reduction to the long shortchanged middle income taxpayers. Congress didn't pass it, but I make a pledge to you that I am going to keep the pressure on the next Congress until they do and, if they don't, they will hear about it in the next election.

After so many years of uncontrolled inflation, we have cut the rate of inflation by better than 50 percent. We will do even better in the future. After the worst economic recession in 40 years, we have added 4 million jobs to the American economy in the last 18 months, not by creating deadend jobs at the taxpayer's expense, but we have added these 4 million jobs by stimulating the private economy where five out of the six jobs are in America today.

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Too many people are still out of work. We are not satisfied with the progress we have made, but more Americans were on the job in 1976 than ever before in the history of the United States, nearly 88 million, and that is a tremendous comeback from where we were just a year and a half ago. After suffering a tragic betrayal of public trust just two years ago, America has had its faith restored in the White House. My Administration has been open, candid, straightforward, and we will keep it that way for the next four years.

As I told the Southern Baptist Convention in Norfolk earlier this year, I firmly believe that private morality in public service can and must go hand-in-hand.

I mentioned only a part of the Ford Administration's record in the past two years, but let me add just a few more. Farm exports and farm income are at an all-time high. A major effort is already on the way to cut red tape in the Federal bureaucracy. We are working for peace and justice in the Middle East and throughout the world. In every field, America is on the move, on the march.

We made an incredible comeback in the past two years and we are not through yet. You can believe me when I tell you that America is strong and will be kept strong, because the American people are willing to pay for that kind of national security.

You can believe me when I say this Nation is sound, this Nation is secure, this Nation is on the way to a better quality of life for all Americans, and this Administration has earned the trust of the American people for the next four years.

My record is one of progress, not platitudes; performance and not promises. We don't need Government to do everything for us or to tell us everything we can or cannot do.

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We have a great reservoir of talented industry in this country and it is not all concentrated on the banks of the Potomac River. You have got it here in North Carolina; it exists all over America. That is where the progress will come as we move ahead in our third century in the United States. More often you will find it on the banks of the Neuse River here in Raleigh or on the beautiful New River we helped to save in the mountains of Western North Carolina, or on the Outer Banks down east.

Let me say I was deeply grateful to your great Governor Jim Holshouser for listing some of the things that this Administration has done in working with his Administration. The relationship between your Governor and myself is a close one, and I can say -- because I know a few Governors around the country -- in Jim Holshouser you have one of the best, and you should be proud of him.

Having spent as much time as I have during my life in the great Tarheel State, I think I know something about the way the people in North Carolina feel. I don't think you here in North Carolina are ready to see our free economy bogged down with even more rules, regulations, red tape and red ink, and I hope you will register your opinion loud and clear on November 2.

This great State Fair is a good example of what people can do by themselves. We have the most productive farmers in the history of mankind. One American farmer today feeds 56 other people. The farmers of North Carolina, as Jim Holshouser said, will bring in their highest income from their tobacco crop in 1976. I compliment you for it. We are proud of that productivity.

I want to preserve the family farm in North Carolina, and throughout America. I have been fighting all year to revise the estate tax laws to insure that you won't have to sacrifice your farms just to pay the Federal tax collector.

I recommended this increase in the personal exemption in the estate tax from \$60,000 to a higher figure. The Congress finally passed it, and I was pleased that they raised, on my recommendation, the tax exemption from \$60,000 to something like \$175,000 and stretched out the payments on those estate taxes.

This is constructive legislation because the family farm means so much to the people of North Carolina, as well as in the other 49 States. For those who want to own a home in rural America, I am announcing today that I have directed the Department of Agriculture to raise the moderate income limit for rural housing loans from \$12,900 to \$15,600.

This change, coupled with the recent increase in the low income limit from \$8,500 to \$10,000, and lowering the interest rate to 8 percent, will greatly increase our ability to help rural families buy a home of their own and a home is the most important factor in building a strong America.

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But rural vitality is not all that North Carolina has going for it. The North Carolina Research Triangle and the other fine colleges and universities in this State have helped make America the most advanced technological and educational society in the history of mankind.

Just this week America made a clean sweep in the Nobel Prizes for Economics, Chemistry, Physics, Medicine and Literature. This is the first time in history that a single country has been the home of all of these winners. I am proud to be a citizen of the great United States of America, and you and I can be proud of what has been done and we can be proud of the progress we are going to make in the future.

We have our problems, but in the last two troubled years we have come a long, long way: our long national nightmare is over; four million new jobs have been created in less than two years; inflation cut more than half; trust has been restored in the White House; America is at peace at home as well as abroad; we are putting our old angers aside; we are putting our old problems behind us and healing our wounds.

It is a record I am proud to run on, a record of the people of North Carolina and concerned citizens -- Democrats, Independents and Republicans -- throughout America will support on November 2. Give me your mandate and we will reduce the growth of Government still more. Give me your mandate and we will insure the integrity of the Social Security system.

We will improve Medicare so that our older citizens can enjoy the health and happiness that they have so richly earned. There is no reason that they should have to go broke just to get well.

Give me your mandate and we will make sure that this rich and wonderful nation does not neglect its citizens who are less fortunate than ourselves but provides for their needs with compassion and with dignity. Give me your mandate and we will create a tax structure that is fair to all, that will preserve the family home, the family business, the family farm and give industry in America the opportunity to modernize, to expand, so that we can create more jobs for the young who are coming into the labor market.

Give me your mandate and we will expand the recreational opportunities and restore the healthy environment of this great country so that we can leave a legacy to future generations of America. Give me your mandate and I will lead this nation on the paths of peace through strength and we will live in peace and freedom in the United States of America.

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I have no fear for the future of America. The future is our friend, and as we go forward together, I promise you once more -- as I have promised you before -- to uphold the Constitution, to do what is right, as God gives me to see the right, and to do the very best that I can for America. God helping me, I will not let you down.

Thank you very, very much.

END (AT 12:37 P.M. EDT)