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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE
GOP RECEPTION GUESTS

THE STATLER HILTON HOTEL

10:32 A.M. EST

It is wonderful being in Erie County, Buffalo, the great State of New York. I am extremely proud, Mr. Chairman, to have with me on the platform this morning two very good friends of mine, one a person who is not running for re-election in 1976, but he has been a loyal, dedicated, hard-working Republican for the ticket, and I am delighted that he should be here with me this morning, and that is my good friend Senator Jack Javits.

But, on my right and your left is an equally good friend of mine. He served with me in the House of Representatives for six years or thereabouts, and I learned that he is a team player, he is a hard, tough kind of a guy that goes after a problem and gets it solved, and I am honored and privileged that Jack Kemp is here, and you need him.

Unfortunately, your Senator, Jim Buckley, is not here for good reasons. I just hope that all of you work very, very hard to make sure that Jim Buckley comes back to the United States Senate.

I don't know how many times I have been to Buffalo in Erie County, but it is really countless. The welcome this morning was really fantastic. As I said in the other room -- and I will repeat it here -- we have the momentum going. They are putting their fingers in every hole in the dike trying to stop the problems that they themselves created, and the net result is with our momentum I think I can, with good reason, on behalf of Betty and myself, invite all of you to come to Washington on January 20.

This will be a great inauguration, and Senator Javits and Senator Buckley and Congressman Kemp at the White House -- we will try to find you someplace to sleep, don't worry about it. (Laughter)

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Now, I know from practical experience that those of us who represent you in Washington don't really always do the jobs that are important to you or to your respective neighbors, and so I am delighted, I am pleased, that your County Executive, Ed Reagan, is here with us on the platform today.

The countdown is just about 50-some hours away, and what you decide and what you are able to get your neighbors and friends to decide could very well make the difference of the direction of this great country for the next four, but possibly for the next century.

We just celebrated a magnificent 200th birthday on July 4. We started in Valley Forge, where George Washington and that straggling army went through the most difficult winter you could imagine. We then went to Philadelphia, and saw where it all began. Senator Javits was with me when we saw those tall ships from all over the country (world) coming to the United States to pay their respects to the greatest country in the history of mankind.

That is our history. We can read it. But, our job is to make it in the next four and the next 100 years. We have an obligation to do as well for those future generations as our predecessors did for us. But, what does that mean? It means that we have to preserve our form of Government, our free enterprise system. We have to preserve the liberty and freedom that is so priceless. We can't do it by building the Government bigger and bigger. We can do it by stimulating the efforts of individuals and the efforts of business.

So, I say to you, as we face our economic problems--and we have had them, believe me--when I took that oath of office August 1974, America was in real trouble. We had unemployment. We had inflation of over 12 percent. We were still involved in Vietnam and many, many, many thousands of Americans had lost faith and trust in the White House.

Some of you may recall that I, after taking the oath of office, said, "I have not been confirmed by your ballots, but I ask that you confirm me by your prayers." You did, and things have been turning for the better in America. We have gone through a tough economic problem, but inflation is cut less than half. We have four million more jobs today than we had 18 months ago. We, I think, have restored trust and faith in the White House, and I am proud to say that there is not a single young American fighting or dying on any foreign soil today.

But everything we have done is only the foundation from where we can go. We can go by a tax reduction that gives to each and every one of you and all of your fellow American taxpayers a kind of meaningful tax cut by increasing the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000.

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Mr. Carter says that is going to help the rich. Well, he has been wrong so many times that is just another error on his part. Wouldn't that kind of a tax reduction help every one of you?

That is your tax reduction that you will get under a Ford Administration, and Mr. Carter was one way yesterday and another way the day before. I cannot forecast. (Laughter) I honestly can't tell what his position will be in the next two days.

But I want you to know that on this crucial countdown day I stand for tax reduction, I stand for fiscal responsibility, I stand for a smaller Government, I stand for a strong nation to keep the peace. You know where I stand. I am not all things to all people. I am the same thing to all people.

But, we are not satisfied with the progress we have made. I have been a strong supporter of Senator Javits, and Congressman John Kemp of our mass transit program, which was signed into law after I worked on it with the Members of Congress in 1974, and I am real pleased of the announcement that you are going to have a meaningful program right here in Erie County and in Buffalo.

That not only will mean something in the movement of people, but it will mean something in the way of jobs. Can you get jobs? Yes, with this kind of a program. But, you also get jobs with incentives given to business to modernize and build new plants and, therefore, on January -- whatever the day is that Congress convenes -- we are going to have a tax reduction package that will help the middle income taxpayer and help business to expand and modernize so we will have jobs.

Now, as I leave this great organization which you have here in Erie County and the surrounding areas, I want to leave one thought. I have been very, very proud to be your President during two tough years. I would be very honored to be your President during four years where we can make things better because America is on the move.

In August of 1974, you couldn't confirm me by your ballots, but you did by your prayers, and I ask you between now and November 2 to not only confirm me by your prayers but to elect me by your ballots.

Thank you very much.

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(AT 10:45 A.M. EST)