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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
NASSAU COUNTY VETERANS
MEMORIAL COLISEUM

8:40 P.M. EST

Thank you very much, Joe. Thank all of you wonderful, wonderful people from Nassau County, and what a rally in the home of the Islanders and the Nets.

I want you to listen very carefully. I would like to hear a pin drop. You know, this morning we all set our clocks back. On Tuesday, let's not set America back. On Tuesday, vote for Jerry Ford. This is no time to play trick and treat with America.

But, thank you, Joe. And now I would like to speak very deeply from some feelings that I have about some of your friends, and dear friends of mine.

First, for the benefit of Nassau County, for the benefit of the great State of New York, for the benefit of the United States, you send Jim Buckley back to the United States Senate.

And now I would like to express a very deep personal appreciation for the tremendous effort that a dear friend of mine and a great United States Senator from your State has done. He is one of the outstanding Members of the Congress. I want to thank Jack Javits for his great support.

Now I asked you to be so quiet that you could hear a pin drop. You can cheer a little later. But there are two old friends of mine in the House of Representatives who I know were first class Members of the House who did a superb job for me who are working day and night, day after day, for me and you, and I am speaking here of two guys. You send back to Washington, Jack Wydler and Norm Lent.

And it goes without saying that if I had not had the staunch and steadfast support of Dick Rosenbaum before the Convention, I wouldn't be here speaking to you, urging that we win this election on November 2.

And I want to express my deep appreciation to the Reverend Clergy. But one final acknowledgement -- and I can't think of a more appropriate place to say it than right here in Nassau County -- I have had at my side working with me on our major problems, domestically and internationally, his loyalty, his devotion, his dedication, his vision. Yes, I want to thank the great Vice President, Nelson Rockefeller, for his help.

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But I have a dear friend of mine here that has campaigned with me from California to New York. Well, he has been tremendous, and I would like to have him come here. He is sort of a stranger. You may not recognize him. But, on the other hand, you might. He is a great guy, a tremendous friend of mine. I would like Joe Garagiola to come up.

Let me speak very seriously with you for a few minutes. We are on the final momentum, the countdown of probably the most crucial election in the lifetime of most of us here. A very important decision has to be made between now and next Tuesday when those polls close. I happen to believe that with the momentum we have going, with the performance that we have had, with the vision that we see, with the enthusiasm I find in Northern New York, here in Long Island or anyplace else in this country, I think we are going to win that election good on November 2.

All right. Now listen carefully. On behalf of Betty and myself, I invite you all to come on down to that inauguration on January 20.

All right. Let me tell you why you can go out and talk to your friends between now and November 2, and give them a real sales pitch that should convince them that the Ford-Dole ticket ought to win. Let me give you a quick review of where we were on August 9, 1974, when I took the oath of office in the White House.

America was in trouble. Inflation was 12 percent; we were on the brink of a recession; we were still involved in Vietnam; the American people had lost faith and trust in the White House itself. And as I took the oath of office in the East Room of the White House and Betty held the Bible, I pledged to you that I would uphold the Constitution, that I would do right as God gave me the right to see what we should do. And then afterwards I said I had not been elected by your ballots but I had been confirmed, I hoped, with your prayers. And, believe me, as those tough months went ahead -- and they were difficult -- I knew that the American people were praying for me to give them the leadership, to give them the strength to come out of the difficult time that we went through.

We put the ship of State on a steady course. We put it on an even keel. And we have made incredible progress in the last two years. Yes, we have cut the rate of inflation by more than 50 percent, and I pledge to you we will do even better in the next four years.

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We have added four million jobs in the last 17 months. We have 88 million people gainfully employed. But, I pledge to you I will not be satisfied until we have a job for every American who wants a job in the next four years.

We have restored confidence and trust in the Oval Office in the White House. I have done it by being open, candid, frank, straightforward, and let me assure you that in the next four years we will do just as well because the American people want to believe their President, and they can believe President Ford.

I am honored that I am the first President since Dwight D. Eisenhower who can seek election and say to the American people, our great country is at peace and we are going to keep it that way. There isn't a single young American fighting or dying on any foreign soil tonight. And we are at peace because America is strong. We are strong militarily. We have the finest weapons, the best leadership. We have the greatest capability to deter aggression, to meet any challenge.

I have been able to turn the Congress around and convince them that their President, if he is dealing with our allies on the one hand, they feel strengthened; or if he is dealing with our adversaries, they respect him. And I pledge to you that we are going to keep the Army, the Navy, the Air Force and Marines number one during the next four years. But that requires that we buy the best weapons systems, not for war but to maintain peace.

But I want to thank the people of Nassau County for their contribution. You have in the Grumman Company one of the finest performers with their F-14 and other weapons systems.

So, we have trust, we have peace, we have growing prosperity. But now, what other things must we do? Number one, we have to keep our economy moving in the right direction, and here is an area where there is a difference between myself on the one hand and my opponent on the other.

From the very beginning -- in fact, in January of last year, I recommended to the Congress that we ought to have a tax reduction primarily aimed at helping the middle income taxpayer who has been given short change in the last 10 years. I recommended that we ought to increase the personal exemption from \$750 to \$1,000.

A few weeks ago I was going through a plant, stopped and talked to some of the working people, and one of the men said, "What are you going to do about my Federal taxes?" I said to him, "Well, I recommended to the Congress that they bump up your personal exemption." I said, "How many kids do you have?" He said, "Oh, I have three." I said, "You have your wife, three children and yourself." I said, "If the Congress had acted responsibly, if the Congress had done what they should have done, next April when you were making out your income tax return you could have claimed \$1,250 more on your income tax return."

I said, "Ask your Congressman is he going to follow President Ford or is he going the other direction if Carter should happen to get in the White House." Because Jimmy Carter -- and I asked all these wonderful press people, can they find out where Jimmy Carter stands on taxes. I bet there isn't one of those newspapers or other news media people who could sit down and give a straight story on where Jimmy Carter stands on taxes.

So, here is a clear choice. You have President Ford, who wants to reduce your personal income taxes, who wants to give industry a break so that it can expand, it can modernize, it can do the things that produces jobs for you. That is where I stand. Well, Jimmy Carter, he is up and down.

But, there are some other things that I think now that we are over the hump after the tough two years that we have had, I pledge to you that in the next two to four years, with the help of the Congress, that I am going to give us an opportunity to have a quality of life in America that we have never had heretofore. We are going to have a job for everybody who wants to work. We are going to have a home for every young couple that wants to work and save and buy a home in a decent neighborhood. That is a pledge to you.

We are going to have quality education. We are going to have health care that is affordable, the best in the world. We are going to see to it that the criminal element in this country goes into prison and the victims of crime are protected.

We are going to improve the quality of life. We are going to make the water that you drink pure, the air that you breathe clean. We are going to improve the environment of our whole United States so that we can live in the kind of an atmosphere that is good for all of us.

And so as this great campaign nears its finish, I just know that Nassau County is going to make a tremendous effort and produce results. I was glad to hear what Joe said. With those kind of figures, we will carry New York, and with this kind of enthusiasm I know we will get those figures.

One final word: I leave New York with the kind of enthusiasm that I am sure that other successful candidates for the Presidency have felt as they have been through rallies like this one.

Yes, I have been proud to be your President during a period of two tough years, but with your help and with your faith and with your determination, it will be a great honor for me to serve as your President for the next four years. Our forefathers have given us a tremendous history and we should all be deeply grateful.

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But now it is our responsibility, everybody, to write the history of the third century, and I pledge to you, as the President for the next four years, that we will write that history so historians can look back and say we did a good job in starting off the first four years of our third century.

America is respected. All of you here recall on July 4 when we celebrated our 200th birthday, those Tall Ships that came from all over the world to pay respect to the number one nation in the history of mankind, the United States of America.

And now I ask you on November 2 not only to confirm me with your prayers but to confirm me with your ballots, and I pledge to you that I will not let you down.

Thank you and good night.

END (AT 9:06 P.M. EST)