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STATE HOUSE, BOSTON - Governor Francis W. Sargent today made the following statements at the College of Pharmacy.

I saw in the paper this morning Mr. Dukakis charge that my administration had made a mess of things, that I was inept, ineffective. He said I had engineered shabby deals in my appointments to the bench and accused me of lowering the level of this campaign. This is untrue.

To add insult to injury Mr. Dukakis has criticized me for having the colossal nerve to take issue with his outrageous statements.

In other words, according to Mr. Dukakis he can say anything he wants against me, even things that are patently false.

But I am not supposed to respond.

Well, I'm sorry -- I can't go along with that.

I simply will not permit someone to run on untruths and half-truths. There are things which must be said, and I will continue to speak out when Mr. Dukakis is wrong.

Credibility has become not only the single most important issue in this campaignit is the most important issue in this country.

That is what this speech is about today. I am responding to months of charges made against me and false promises made to the voters.

The campaign is no longer simply the Sargent record against the Dukakis promises.

My record is well known. I have been acting on it for six years. It is a public record.

But Mr. Dukakis's promises continue to be vague. In fact, the more he talks about them, the vaguer they become.

What was a five percent cut one day when he is before fiscal conservatives is a five percent productivity increase the next, when he is before social welfare groups.

A pledge not to have signed Chapter 766 --- made to Mayors and Selectmen, he says "he didn't really mean" when he speaks to supporters of Chapter 766.

His proposals vary with the group he talks to. Although they do have one thing in common...they all evaporate under scrutiny.

That would be bad enough --- If Mr. Dukakis admitted his inconsistencies and left it at that. But no, in an attempt to fortify his failing proposals, he backs them up with statements that are untrue.

Let me point to some examples.

Mr. Dukakis continually says that he will be better for business. That Massachusetts has one of the worst economic development records in the nation.

Yet more people are working now than ever before in the state's history. We are seventh best in the country in attracting foreign investment. And we have a fifteen percent increase in overall business expansion this year.

Mr. Dukakis says we are not getting our share of federal funding and haven't even applied for Title 19 mentally retarded funds.

Massachusetts, despite her size, is eighth in the nation in getting federal funds. We not only have applied for Title 19 funds, but will receive twenty-five million dollars beginning this January.

Mr. Dukakis says to support his promise to hold the line on taxes that he will better manage the state's cash flow and save thirty million dollars.

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The fact is that no Governor controls cash management. That is the sole responsibility of an independent constitutional officer, the state treasurer, Robert Crane. He is elected by and accountable to the people -- not the Governor. A Governor can encourage tighter control of money -- and I have -- but ultimately it is the Treasurer who is accountable.

In an attempt to win votes down in North Dartmouth, Mr. Dukakis told students that I favored merging all state universities into one giant UMass. That is untrue.

In fact, the proposal Mr. Dukakis refers to was drafted by the Democratic Legislative Committee on Education as an alternative to my educational reorganization proposal.

Again to uphold his pledge against taxes, Mr. Dukakis says he will collect additional revenues from state institutions. He says this administration isn't doing anything to collect private insurance money from children under the Chapter 750 program.

That too is untrue. We established a special series of offices to collect that money.

These are all major statements made by Mr. Dukakis. They are all untrue.

But there is something my opponent has done consistently which is worse. When confronted with his misstatements, he backs them up with still more untruths. During our last debate in Springfield, I referred to a Dukakis statement made in our Worcester debate. In it, he referred to his "productivity program" as a 5% cut. C-U-T, cut those were his words.

Mr. Dukakis, as usual when a hard truth collides with a soft nerve, self righteously retorted that I had quoted him out of context. That his previous statement had nothing to do with his so-called productivity plan, but rather his so-called no hire/no fire plan.

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I have -- as they say in Washington -- reviewed the tape, the tape of that debate. And Mr. Dukakis' claim again is untrue. His words 5 % CUT referred directly to his productivity program.

But it didn't end here.

In that same debate, he repeated the statement he knew to be false ... that there were new taxes in 1972 and 1973. He originally made that statement in our very first debate.

It was untrue then, and it doesn't get anymore true, no matter how many times he stubbornly repeats it.

I admit, during these hard times with 33% inflation, it has been a darned hard fight to hold the line on taxes. 30 other states have failed. But we did it. And although it might help Mr. Dukakis win the election to say we didn't, it just isn't true.

I won't go on. You get the point of what I am saying.

It is simple. Mr. Dukakis is not being fair with the voters. He is not being honest.

His tactics may be good politics. And he is leading in the polls. But they are a lousy way to begin an administration.

Any administration that is so sure that it knows all the answers, is always right even when it stretches the truth, that is an administration that will isolate itself from the people and drown in its own distortions.

Tough language, perhaps for me to make. But I think it is high time we get the record straight.