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(ROBINSON)

AUGUST 26, 1984

RECEPTION FOR WOMEN APPOINTEES IN  
COMMEMORATION OF WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY

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GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO THE WHITE  
HOUSE. I WANT TO THANK EACH OF YOU FOR  
JOINING US TODAY. AND I WANT ALL OF YOU TO  
KNOW HOW GRATEFUL I AM FOR YOUR  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR ADMINISTRATION.

SPEAKING TO YOU ON A HOT AUGUST DAY  
LIKE THIS REMINDS ME OF GOING TO CHURCH  
DURING THE SUMMER BACK IN MY HOMETOWN OF  
DIXON, ILLINOIS. ONE SWELTERING SUNDAY,  
THE MINISTER TOLD US HE WAS GOING TO PREACH  
THE SHORTEST SERMON WE EVER HEARD. THEN HE  
SAID JUST SEVEN WORDS. "IF YOU THINK IT'S  
HOT NOW -- WAIT." WELL, TODAY I'LL FOLLOW  
THE PREACHER'S EXAMPLE AND KEEP THE SERMON  
SHORT.

TODAY, ON THIS WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY,  
WE REMEMBER THE HISTORY OF WOMEN IN AMERICA  
AND CELEBRATE ALL THE GAINS THAT WOMEN HAVE  
MADE.

DURING OUR EARLY YEARS, WOMEN COOKED,  
CLEARED FIELDS, HARVESTED CROPS, AND RAISED  
THE CHILDREN WHO WOULD GO ON TO MAKE THIS  
THE GREATEST NATION ON EARTH.

YET, WHILE IN THOSE EARLY, DIFFICULT  
DAYS WOMEN WERE PARTNERS IN HARD WORK,  
IN MANY OTHER RESPECTS, THEIR VALUE AND  
DIGNITY WERE IGNORED. IN MANY STATES IT WAS  
DIFFICULT FOR WOMEN TO GET A PUBLIC  
EDUCATION. IN THE WORKING WORLD, WOMEN WERE  
PREVENTED FROM HOLDING MOST JOBS.

WORST OF ALL, WOMEN WERE DENIED OUR MOST  
FUNDAMENTAL DEMOCRATIC RIGHT, THE RIGHT  
TO VOTE.

AS AMERICA BECAME A MORE MATURE AND  
THOUGHTFUL NATION, ALL THIS BEGAN TO CHANGE.  
THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT AT THE TURN OF THE  
CENTURY HAD A PROFOUND EFFECT. WORLD WAR II  
BROKE DOWN MANY OF THE BARRIERS THAT WOMEN  
USED TO CONFRONT IN THE WORKPLACE.

AND THE 1960's GAVE RISE TO A WOMEN'S  
MOVEMENT THAT HAS MADE ALL OF US AWARE OF  
THE RIGHTFUL ROLE OF WOMEN IN OUR SOCIETY ~~f~~  
A ROLE THAT INCLUDES FULL ACCESS TO THE  
PROFESSIONS AND COMPLETE EQUALITY BEFORE THE  
LAW.

---

WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO, ~~/~~  
BUT ALREADY AMERICAN WOMEN ARE FINDING  
OPPORTUNITIES THAT THEIR FOREBEARERS NEVER  
DREAMED OF, TODAY, TWO-THIRDS OF WOMEN  
BETWEEN 25 AND 44 WORK IN PAID POSITIONS.  
HALF OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS ARE WOMEN ~~/~~ AND  
GROWING NUMBERS OF WOMEN ARE DOCTORS ~~/~~  
LAWYERS / POLICE AND MILITARY OFFICERS.

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YOU KNOW, I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT  
WOMEN LIKE YOU ~~/~~-- WOMEN WHO HAVE ACCEPTED  
THE BURDENS OF GOVERNMENT SERVICE AND WORKED  
SO SUCCESSFULLY TO GIVE OUR COUNTRY A NEW  
BIRTH OF FREEDOM AND VITALITY ~~/~~-- SHOW  
CLEARLY JUST HOW MUCH AMERICAN WOMEN CAN  
ACCOMPLISH.

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FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE A CERTAIN WOMAN NAMED  
MAUREEN. MAUREEN HAS WORKED IN RADIO AND  
TELEVISION / PROMOTED OVERSEAS TRADE / AND RUN  
FOR POLITICAL OFFICE. TODAY SHE'S HELPING  
HER OLD MAN COMMUNICATE TO WOMEN ALL THAT  
OUR ADMINISTRATION IS TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH.

OR LOOK AT OUR AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS, JEANE KIRKPATRICK. WHAT A SPEECH  
SHE GAVE IN DALLAS! AMBASSADOR KIRKPATRICK  
HAS RAISED THREE SONS / WRITTEN FIVE BOOKS /  
AND HOLDS A PROFESSORSHIP AT GEORGETOWN  
UNIVERSITY. IN HER OWN WORDS, QUOTE,

"MY EXPERIENCE DEMONSTRATES TO MY  
SATISFACTION THAT IT IS BOTH POSSIBLE AND  
FEASIBLE FOR WOMEN IN OUR TIMES TO  
SUCCESSFULLY COMBINE TRADITIONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL ROLES.... ALL THAT IS REQUIRED  
IS A LITTLE LUCK AND A LOT OF WORK."

ONE OF MY PROUDEST DAYS IN OFFICE CAME WHEN I APPOINTED SANDRA DAY O'CONNOR TO BE THE FIRST WOMAN ON THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT / AND SHE, TOO, ILLUSTRATES ALL THAT THE MODERN AMERICAN WOMAN CAN ACHIEVE.

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JUSTICE O'CONNOR HAS BROUGHT UP THREE SONS AND PURSUED A BRILLIANT LEGAL CAREER THAT HAS RANGED FROM PRIVATE PRACTICE TO SERVICE AS THE ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ARIZONA. ] TODAY, SHE'S SETTING AN EXAMPLE FOR ALL OUR DAUGHTERS AS ONE OF THE HIGHEST-RANKING WOMEN IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

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BECAUSE OF THE SWEEPING AND EXCITING SOCIAL CHANGES OUR COUNTRY HAS UNDERGONE, / IT NO LONGER MAKES SENSE TO TALK ABOUT A GREAT DIVIDE BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN.

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NO, THERE ARE NO LONGER ANY WOMEN'S ISSUES OR MEN'S ISSUES / JUST ISSUES THAT CONCERN EACH OF US AS AMERICANS.

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THAT'S WHY IT'S OUR POLICY TO BENEFIT ALL  
AMERICANS / AND TO DO SO, NOT BY RAISING  
TAXES, MULTIPLYING REGULATIONS, OR FATTENING  
THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY / BUT BY PROMOTING  
ECONOMIC GROWTH. GROWTH IS GOOD FOR  
EVERYBODY. + TOMORROW MORNING -- BE -- GOOD NEWS --

THE ECONOMIC EXPANSION OUR POLICIES  
PRODUCED HAS ALREADY DISTINGUISHED ITSELF AS  
THE STRONGEST SUSTAINED ECONOMIC EXPANSION  
IN AMERICA SINCE 1949. NOT EVEN DURING THE  
BOOM YEARS OF THE FIFTIES / WHEN OUR NATION  
WAS PROVIDING MILLIONS OF NEW JOBS AND  
ACHIEVING UNPARALLELED INDUSTRIAL  
STRENGTH / -- NOT EVEN THEN / WAS OUR ECONOMY SO  
VITAL OR OUR PROGRESS SO RAPID. AND AS THIS  
EXPANSION PROVIDES NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL  
AMERICANS / IT'S GIVING AMERICAN WOMEN A  
POWERFUL LIFT.

- 7 -

LAST YEAR, WOMEN FILLED ALMOST  
THREE-QUARTERS OF ALL THE NEW JOBS IN  
MANAGERIAL / PROFESSIONAL / AND TECHNICAL  
FIELDS / AND TODAY, THE NUMBER OF  
WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES IS GROWING  
THREE TIMES FASTER THAN THE NUMBER OF THOSE  
OWNED BY MEN.

OVER THE NEXT 4 YEARS, WE'LL WORK TO  
PROMOTE STILL MORE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STILL  
MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN. I JUST HAVE  
TO BELIEVE THAT, TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE  
AMERICA A PLACE WHERE WOMEN ARE FREE TO  
PURSUE CAREERS / RAISE FAMILIES / OR BOTH /  
A PLACE WHERE WOMEN NOT ONLY SUCCEED, BUT DO  
IT WITH STYLE.

THANK YOU, AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

# # #



(Robinson/BE)  
August 21, 1984  
3:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: RECEPTION FOR WOMEN APPOINTEES IN  
COMMEMORATION OF WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 26, 1984

Good afternoon and welcome to the White House. I want to thank each of you for joining us today. And I want all of you to know how grateful I am for your contributions to our Administration.

Speaking to you on a hot August day like this reminds me of going to church during the summer back in my hometown of Dixon, Illinois. One sweltering Sunday, the minister told us he was going to preach the shortest sermon we ever heard. Then he said just seven words. "If you think it's hot now -- wait." Well, today I'll follow the preacher's example and keep the sermon short.

Today, on this Women's Equality Day, we remember the history of women in America and celebrate all the gains that women have made. During our early years, women cooked, cleared fields, harvested crops, and raised the children who would go on to make this the greatest Nation on Earth.

Yet, while in those early, difficult days women were partners in hard work, in many other respects, their value and dignity were ignored. In many States it was difficult for women to get a public education. In the working world, women were prevented from holding most jobs. Worst of all, women were denied our most fundamental right, the right to vote.

As America became a more mature and thoughtful Nation, all this began to change. The suffrage movement in the early decades

of this century had a profound effect. World War II broke down many of the barriers that women used to confront in the workplace. And the 1960's gave rise to a women's movement that has made all of us aware of the rightful role of women in our society -- a role that includes full access to the professions and complete equality before the law.

We still have a long way to go, but already American women are finding opportunities that their forebears never dreamed of. Today, more than two-thirds of women between 25 and 44 work in paid positions. Half our college students are women, and growing numbers of women are doctors, lawyers, police and military officers.

You know, I can't help thinking that women like you -- women who have accepted the burdens of high office and worked so successfully to give our country a new birth of freedom and vitality -- show clearly just how much American women can accomplish. For example, take a certain woman named Maureen. Maureen has worked in radio and television, promoted overseas trade, and run for political office. Today she's helping her ~~dad~~ <sup>old man</sup> communicate to women all that our Administration is trying to accomplish.

Or look at our Ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane Kirkpatrick. What a speech she gave in Dallas! Ambassador Kirkpatrick has raised three sons, written five books, and holds a professorship at Georgetown University. In her own words, quote, "My experience demonstrates to my satisfaction that it is both possible and feasible for women in our times to successfully

combine traditional and professional roles. . . . All that is required is a little luck and a lot of work."

One of my proudest days in office came when I appointed Sandra Day O'Connor to be the first woman on the United States Supreme Court, and she, too, illustrates all that the modern American woman can achieve. Justice O'Connor has brought up three sons and pursued a brilliant legal career that has ranged from private practice to service as the Assistant Attorney General of Arizona. Today, she's setting an example for all our daughters as the highest-ranking woman in American history.

Because of the sweeping and exciting social changes our country has undergone, it no longer makes sense to talk about a great divide between women and men. No, there are no longer any women's issues or men's issues -- just issues that concern each of us as Americans. That's why it's our policy to benefit all Americans -- and to do so, not by raising taxes, multiplying regulations, or fattening the Federal bureaucracy, but by promoting economic growth. Growth is good for everybody.

The economic expansion our policies produced has already distinguished itself as the strongest sustained economic expansion in America since 1949. Not even during the boom years of the fifties, when our Nation was providing millions of new jobs and becoming the greatest industrial power on Earth -- not even then was our economy so vital or our progress so rapid. And as this expansion provides new opportunities for all Americans, it's giving American women a powerful lift.

Among adult women, the unemployment rate has plummeted. Last year, women filled almost three-quarters of all the new jobs in managerial, professional, and technical fields. And today, the number of women-owned businesses is growing three times faster than the number of those owned by men.

Over the next 4 years, we'll work to promote still more economic growth and still more opportunities for women. I just have to believe that, together, we can make America a place where women are free to pursue careers, raise families, or both -- a place where women not only succeed, but do it with style.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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After a year and a half duty in Beirut, our Marines <sup>Coming</sup> ~~are coming~~ home from Lebanon. They <sup>have</sup> ~~have~~ known frustration and the pain of seeing friends and comrades die even though their mission was not intended to be one of combat.

They can't help but wonder if those friends died in vain and whether any of them were serving a useful purpose. There are those among us who, for their own reasons, are eager to answer in the affirmative; to add to the sorrow of widows, parents and children, and the pain of <sup>these</sup> ~~these men~~ who <sup>are coming</sup> ~~are coming~~ home.

<sup>They</sup> ~~These returning Marines~~ deserve better. In the first place they lived up to the finest tradition of the Corps every moment they were there. They added lustre, not tarnish, to their motto, "Semper Fidelis." The goal we sought in that troubled place was worthy of their best and they gave their best. They were no part of our failure to achieve that goal. In the end, hatreds centuries old were too much for all of us.

Let me, if I can, cut through the <sup>noisy</sup> ~~noisy~~ rhetoric and explain the purpose of their mission. For as long as Israel has been a nation there has been a state of war between Israel and the Arab states. The Camp David accords and the statesmanship of Egypt's Anwar Sadat brought peace between Israel and Egypt. In the spirit of Camp David and U.N. Resolution 242, I proposed that the United States seek to bring about negotiations between Israel and other moderate Arab states to settle disputes and bring a general peace to the Middle East.

We were hardly underway with this plan when Lebanon caught fire. Lebanon, a nation created after WW II, had become the window on the Middle East, but in 1975 factionalism led to fighting

between the various ethnic and religious groups in the country. Added to this was a sizeable armed force under the P.L.O. which conducted terrorist operations from Lebanon against Israel.

Finally, Israel crossed the border into Lebanon to put an end to these attacks. The original purpose was to set up a defensive line some 25 miles inside Lebanon. Ultimately the P.L.O. forces retreated right into the heart of Beirut and a war was being fought there in the streets of the city. Civilian casualties were in the thousands.

Facing defeat the P.L.O. were afraid to surrender and an appeal was made for outside forces to oversee their total withdrawal from Lebanon. We, the Italians, French and subsequently the United Kingdom sent in a multi-national force and some 13,000 P.L.O. were put aboard ships and sent to a number of nations that had agreed to take them.

Shortly after that the newly chosen President of Lebanon was assassinated. His brother, the present President Amin Gemayel was elected by the Parliament to succeed him.

This brings us to the reason for the multi-national force. Syria had large forces -- eventually more than 50,000 men in Lebanon because of Israel's presence there. Israel and Syria had been at war 5 times. Each made statements that they would withdraw if the other did.

Put very simply we and our allies, the French, Italians and British agreed to help maintain order and stability in Beirut while the new government established itself. We provided, in addition to the Marines, an army training unit to help Lebanon <sup>conduct</sup> have a capable military force. We also equipped that force with ~~the~~

~~most~~ modern weapons and equipment even including uniforms.

The plan was that as Israel and Syria withdrew, the Lebanese Army would move into the <sup>(PREVIOUSLY OCCUPIED)</sup> areas ~~they had occupied~~ to deal with the various militias that were warring among themselves. The multinational force would remain in Beirut keeping order. And they were doing this effectively. Our Marines drew the International Airport as part of their sector. It is Lebanon's doorway to the world, <sup>IT'S</sup> the only airport in Lebanon. ~~It had been~~ closed down because of the fighting — It re-opened under our Marine's protection.

It is almost impossible for us to imagine the savagery to which the people of Beirut had been subjected and what a change was made by our presence. A young woman sent me a letter her sweetheart had smuggled out with someone leaving Beirut. He told her of the terror and hardship when the fighting had been going on -- 17 days straight living in the cellar. Then he told of the difference our Marines had made. He added, without them there would have been a massacre of all the Christians in Beirut.

A woman wrote a letter to me that her daughter had only been able to go to school 2 out of the previous 8 years. She then wrote that because of our Marines, her daughter could at last live a normal life.

During all this we were busy on the diplomatic front trying to persuade the dissident factions and the government of Lebanon to put together a broad based government giving the dissidents a voice. Ambassador Phil Habib was shuttling from Tel Aviv to Damascus to Beirut. When he had served above and beyond human endurance, Robert McFarlane took his place and recently Don Rumsfeld <sup>TOOK ON</sup> ~~has taken~~ the duty.



The Israelis began a phased withdrawal as they had promised and signed a peace agreement with Lebanon. Syria reneged on it's promise rejecting President Gemayel's request that they leave and denouncing the accord with Israel. Syria ~~has~~ made it plain they have territorial ambitions, something called a "greater Syria" encompassing Lebanon and, yes, Jordan and Israel. In the meantime they linked up with the dissident Lebanese militias and brought back radical P.L.O. forces. Syrian artillery as a visible threat was positioned within range of Beirut.

The multi-national force had been performing it's duty for the better part of a year and this was not to Syria's liking. Late last summer our allied force became the target. An Italian patrol suffered a grenade ambush. Then a car bomb was driven into our embassy taking ~~FOR IT TAKEN A LIFE A HUNDRED~~ ~~a great many~~ lives. Sniping at our Marines at the airport began taking a toll finally culminating in the tragic suicide bombing of our Marines with the terrible toll of 240 lives. A similar attack destroyed the French headquarters with a great loss of life.

Our men were told to fire when fired upon and they did so although numerous times when the fire came from civilian populated areas they restrained themselves rather than risk harm to innocent ~~people~~ <sup>CIVILIANS</sup>.

The Lebanese government which would not exist had we not been there, cancelled the agreement with Israel under pressure from Syria. It ~~is now meeting with and seeking~~ <sup>CONTINUES TO SEEK</sup> a consensus with the dissident ~~AND THERE HAS BEEN A CONSIDERABLE REDUCTION IN THE VIOLENCE~~ factions. We are willing to help diplomatically if ~~we can~~ <sup>ASKED</sup> but the purpose served by our military presence no longer exists. ~~So we~~ and our allies ~~have~~ disbanded the multi-national force.

We ~~are going to try and get~~ <sup>ARE STILL WILLING TO HOPEFUL</sup> the original peace plan for the Middle East in motion. ~~No, we didn't reach the goal we sought in~~ <sup>BASED ON THE CAMP DAVID AGREES CAN ULTIMATELY GO FORWARD,</sup>

LEBANON ~~PERHAPS~~ <sup>IS STILL THE STUMBLING BLOCK</sup>

~~Lebanon~~ but at least they are talking to each other for whatever it's worth and even that would not be taking place if we hadn't been there.

Yes, our Marines <sup>CAME</sup>~~are coming~~ home -- but only because they did all that could be done.

Semper Fi and God bless them.

(ROBINSON)

AUGUST 27, 1984

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PRESIDENT'S BACKUP COPY:  
ADDRESS AWARD WINNING SECONDARY SCHOOLS

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. SECRETARY BELL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,  
I'M DELIGHTED TO BE HERE TODAY TO JOIN YOU IN HONORING SOME OF  
THE FINEST SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AMERICA. I WANT TO EXTEND A  
SPECIAL GREETING TO THE STUDENTS IN THE AUDIENCE.

MAY I ALSO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO THE PRINCIPALS HERE  
TODAY, INCLUDING MRS. VERA WHITE, WHO WAS KIND ENOUGH TO SHOW ME  
THROUGH JEFFERSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL THIS MORNING. YOU KNOW, THE  
JOBS OF PRINCIPAL AND PRESIDENT ARE SOMEWHAT ALIKE. BOTH OF US  
HAVE TO KEEP A LOT OF PEOPLE HAPPY. YOU HAVE THE P.T.A., I HAVE  
THE VOTERS. YOU HAVE UNRULY CHILDREN, I HAVE -- WELL, I'D BETTER  
NOT NAME NAMES. BUT LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY: WHEN THE CONGRESS  
LEAVES TOWN, IT'S NO ACCIDENT WE CALL IT RECESS.

BUT I'M PLEASED TO HELP HONOR THE 262 MIDDLE, JUNIOR, AND  
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS THAT ARE RECEIVING AWARDS TODAY FOR  
OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE. TODAY WE HONOR YOU FOR  
DOING A SUPERB JOB OF EDUCATING STUDENTS, AND FOR SETTING AN  
EXAMPLE THAT ALL OUR SCHOOLS CAN FOLLOW.

WE MUST REMEMBER, THOUGH, THAT AMERICAN SCHOOLS HAVE NOT ALWAYS PERFORMED AS WELL AS THOSE REPRESENTED HERE TODAY. FROM THE EARLY SIXTIES TO 1980, COMBINED S.A.T. SCORES DECLINED STEADILY, DROPPING BY 90 POINTS. SCIENCE ACHIEVEMENT SCORES OF 17-YEAR-OLDS ALSO SHOWED A STEADY DROP. AND MOST SHOCKING, OUR NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION REPORTED THAT IN 1980, MORE THAN ONE-TENTH OF AMERICA'S 17-YEAR-OLDS COULD BE CONSIDERED FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE. THE DROPOUT RATE INCREASED SO MUCH THAT BY 1982, 27 PERCENT OF OUR STUDENTS FAILED TO COMPLETE HIGH SCHOOL. AND DROPOUT RATES AMONG MINORITY STUDENTS WERE HIGHER THAN 40 PERCENT.

THIS EROSION IN ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT TOOK PLACE DURING THE VERY PERIOD OVERALL SPENDING ON EDUCATION WAS LEAPING UP BY OVER 600 PERCENT. THE CRISIS IN OUR SCHOOLS WAS SYMPTOMATIC OF A MUCH LARGER CRISIS IN OUR COUNTRY. WE WERE LIVING UNDER A TIRED PHILOSOPHY OF GOVERNMENT KNOWS BEST; IT WAS OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE REALITY OF A CHANGING WORLD, AND WHILE SPENDING WAS GOING UP, THAT TIRED PHILOSOPHY WAS DRAGGING AMERICA DOWN.

BIG TAXING AND SPENDING HAD LED TO SOARING INTEREST RATES AND INFLATION; AND ALL OVER THE WORLD, OUR ONCE-PROUD NATION WAS NO LONGER KNOWN FOR STRENGTH AND RESOLVE, BUT FOR VACILLATION AND SELF-DOUBT. THE FUTURE SEEMED CLOUDED. AND SINCE THE WHOLE AIM OF OUR SCHOOLS IS TO PREPARE OUR CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE, IT WAS ONLY NATURAL THAT, WHEN LEADERS LOST FAITH IN OUR FUTURE, MANY OF OUR PRINCIPALS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS FELT ROBBED OF THEIR SENSE OF PURPOSE AND SELF-ESTEEM.

WELL, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DECIDED TO PUT A STOP TO THAT LONG DECLINE, AND IN THE PAST FEW YEARS OUR COUNTRY HAS SEEN A REBIRTH OF VITALITY AND FREEDOM -- A GREAT NATIONAL RENEWAL. WE'VE KNOCKED INFLATION DOWN, AND, ALL ACROSS OUR LAND, A POWERFUL ECONOMIC EXPANSION IS PROVIDING NEW PRODUCTS AND NEW WORK FOR MILLIONS. ONCE AGAIN, THE UNITED STATES IS RESPECTED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AS A FORCE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM. THIS IS A SPRINGTIME OF HOPE IN AMERICA.

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WHEN WE CAME TO WASHINGTON, WE KNEW THAT THE PROBLEMS IN EDUCATION HADN'T DEVELOPED OVERNIGHT, AND COULDN'T BE CURED OVERNIGHT. WE KNEW THE KEY TO EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT WAS NOT PROPOSING STILL MORE FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT AND CONTROL, BUT HELPING TO CHART A NEW COURSE THAT CHALLENGES STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS, TEACHERS, ADMINISTRATORS, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS TO MEET THE GOALS OF AN AGENDA FOR EXCELLENCE.

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THAT'S WHY ONE OF OUR FIRST ACTIONS WAS TO APPOINT A NATIONAL COMMISSION ON EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION. AND, TODAY, FROM MAINE TO CALIFORNIA, PARENTS, TEACHERS, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, AND PRINCIPALS HAVE BEGUN THE CRUCIAL WORK TO CARRY OUT THE COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS BY IMPROVING FUNDAMENTALS OF BASIC TEACHING AND LEARNING. SINCE THE COMMISSION'S REPORT, WE HAVE BEEN WITNESSING A GREAT REAWAKENING OF LEARNING, REFLECTING A CULMINATION OF CONCERN OVER THE QUALITY OF AMERICAN EDUCATION AT ALL LEVELS.

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ON THE STATE LEVEL, PROGRESS HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANT. WHEN OUR ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE, ONLY A HANDFUL OF STATES HAD TASK FORCES ON EDUCATION. TODAY, THEY ALL DO, AND MANY HAVE BEGUN WORK ON PAY INCENTIVES FOR TEACHERS. THEY KNOW THAT TO PROMOTE GOOD TEACHING WE MUST REWARD GOOD TEACHERS.

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ON THE LOCAL LEVEL, PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND ADMINISTRATORS ARE MAKING DRAMATIC STRIDES. THE P.T.A. REPORTED THAT LAST YEAR, AFTER A 20-YEAR DECLINE IN ITS MEMBERSHIP, 100,000 NEW MEMBERS JOINED THE ORGANIZATION. AS WITH SO MANY CHALLENGES THROUGHOUT OUR HISTORY, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE ONCE AGAIN SHOWING THAT IT CAN BE DONE.

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ALTHOUGH WE'RE DOING MUCH TO MAKE OUR SCHOOLS MORE LIKE THE TEMPLES OF LEARNING WE ALL WANT THEM TO BE, I DON'T BELIEVE THERE'S AN EDUCATOR IN THIS ROOM -- OR IN AMERICA -- WHO WOULDN'T AGREE THAT WE'VE BARELY BEGUN. OUR CHALLENGE IS TO SUSTAIN AND BUILD ON THE PROGRESS WE ARE NOW MAKING.

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AS WE STRIVE TO MOVE FORWARD, LET'S REMEMBER ONE ESSENTIAL PRECONDITION FOR SUCCESS: WE CANNOT REACH FOR THE FUTURE WITHOUT A FIRM GRASP OF BASIC EDUCATIONAL TOOLS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL VALUES.

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LEARNING CANNOT TAKE PLACE WITHOUT DISCIPLINE. TODAY, IN SCHOOLS ACROSS OUR LAND, MANY TEACHERS CAN'T TEACH BECAUSE THEY LACK THE AUTHORITY TO MAKE STUDENTS TAKE TESTS AND TURN IN HOMEWORK. SCHOOL DISORDER DESTROYS THE LEARNING ATMOSPHERE, DRIVES GOOD TEACHERS OUT OF TEACHING, AND HURTS MINORITY AND LOW-INCOME STUDENTS WHO ARE CONCENTRATED IN URBAN SCHOOLS WHERE THE PROBLEM IS MOST SEVERE.

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TO KEEP LEARNING IN OUR SCHOOLS, WE MUST GET CRIME, DRUGS, AND VIOLENCE OUT. WE CANNOT EXPECT TO RAISE A NEW GENERATION OF RESPONSIBLE LEADERS IN A LAWLESS ENVIRONMENT; WE CANNOT EXPECT YOUNG AMERICANS TO MASTER THE COMPLEXITIES OF COMPUTERS, IF THEY ARE HIGH ON DRUGS AND ALCOHOL. WE MUST TEACH OUR SONS AND DAUGHTERS A PROPER RESPECT FOR ACADEMIC STANDARDS, FOR CODES OF CIVILIZED BEHAVIOR, AND FOR KNOWLEDGE ITSELF.

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AS THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FORCEFULLY ARGUED, WE MUST ALSO GET OUR STUDENTS BACK TO THE PROPER STUDY OF BASIC SUBJECTS. TODAY, TOO MANY STUDENTS ARE ALLOWED TO ABANDON VOCATIONAL AND COLLEGE PREP COURSES, SO WHEN THEY GRADUATE THEY'RE PREPARED FOR NEITHER HIGHER EDUCATION, NOR WORK, NOR THE TRAINING THEY MAY LATER NEED TO KEEP UP WITH TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES. IN 1980, 35 STATES REQUIRED ONLY 1 YEAR OF MATH FOR A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; 36 REQUIRED ONLY 1 YEAR OF SCIENCE. THIS, TOO, MUST STOP. WE MUST INSIST THAT ALL OUR STUDENTS MASTER MATH, SCIENCE, HISTORY, READING, AND WRITING -- THE FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR CIVILIZATION.

EARLIER THIS MONTH, I SIGNED INTO LAW THE "EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC SECURITY ACT." IT AUTHORIZES MORE SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCIENCE AND MATH TEACHERS TO HELP RAISE THE LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION IN THOSE CRUCIAL BASICS.

BUT IT ISN'T JUST BASIC SUBJECTS THAT NEED TO BE TAUGHT, IT'S ALSO BASIC VALUES. IF WE FAIL TO INSTRUCT OUR CHILDREN IN JUSTICE, RELIGION, AND LIBERTY, WE WILL BE CONDEMNING THEM TO A WORLD WITHOUT VIRTUE, A LIFE IN THE TWILIGHT OF A CIVILIZATION WHERE THE GREAT TRUTHS HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN.

IN MANY SCHOOLS, STUDENTS ARE BEING TAUGHT THE DANGERS OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND THE BURDENS OF NATIONAL DEFENSE. WELL, LET'S MAKE CERTAIN THEY UNDERSTAND NOT ONLY THE PRICE OF DEFENDING AMERICA, BUT THE PRICE OF FAILING TO. THE STUDENTS FROM ST. GEORGE'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE LEARNED IN GRENADA, FREEDOM IS WORTH STICKING UP FOR.

AND WHILE IT MAKES SENSE THAT OUR CHILDREN LEARN OF OUR NATION'S PROBLEMS, I HOPE THEY'RE ALSO LEARNING THAT AMERICANS ARE GOOD AND DECENT PEOPLE WHO FACE UP TO THOSE PROBLEMS WITH COURAGE AND CONVICTION.

YES, WE'RE HUMAN; WE HAVE OUR FAULTS; BUT BY ANY OBJECTIVE MEASURE, WE LIVE IN THE FREEST, MOST PROSPEROUS NATION IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD -- AND OUR CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW THAT.

JEANE KIRKPATRICK, AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, SAID,  
"...WE MUST LEARN TO BEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT OUR SOCIETY, NO MATTER HOW PLEASANT IT MAY BE."

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SO, WE'VE IDENTIFIED LONG-NEGLECTED PROBLEMS. WE'RE BEGINNING TO TURN THEM AROUND. WE'RE REMEMBERING THE ALL-IMPORTANT FOUNDATION OF BASIC EDUCATIONAL TOOLS, VALUES, AND DISCIPLINE; ALL GOOD AND IMPORTANT STEPS OF PROGRESS -- BUT STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH. IF THE WORLD OF LEARNING IS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF AMERICA'S FUTURE, THEN WE MUST SEE CLEARLY WHERE AMERICA IS HEADED.

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YOU KNOW, DURING MY OWN LIFETIME I'VE SEEN THIS COUNTRY CHANGE SO MUCH. WHEN I WAS A BOY, DIRT ROADS WERE STILL THE RULE; CARS HAD BEEN INVENTED, BUT VERY FEW PEOPLE HAD ONE; IN THE WINTER, PEOPLE GOT AROUND BY HORSE AND SLEIGH; A HUGE NUMBER OF AMERICANS WERE FARMERS, AND THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE WAS COMMON.

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THOSE DIRT ROADS GAVE WAY TO SLEEK INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS. THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AIRPLANE, THEN THE CREATION OF THE JET ENGINE, REVOLUTIONIZED OUR TRANSPORTATION. IN AGRICULTURE, INNOVATIONS IN FARM EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR MORE AND MORE WORKERS TO LEAVE THE FIELDS TO PURSUE OTHER JOBS. AS THEY DID SO, OUR GREAT INDUSTRIES GREW UP AND BECAME THE MAINSTAY OF OUR ECONOMY.

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TODAY WE ARE WELL INTO A NEW REVOLUTION DRIVEN BY TECHNOLOGIES THAT OFFER VIRTUALLY UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR SATISFYING JOBS AND PERSONAL FULFILLMENT.

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THIS REVOLUTION IS BASED, IN LARGE PART, ON AN AMERICAN BREAKTHROUGH -- DEVELOPMENT OF THE MICROCHIP. A CURRENT AUTHOR HAS NOTED, "THROUGH A VAST...BURST OF CREATIVITY IN THE USE OF MICROCHIPS...THE HUMAN RACE HAS PROJECTED ITS COMPUTATIONAL TECHNOLOGY BEYOND ALL THE ASSUMED LIMITS OF TIME AND SIZE, INTO NEW GALAXIES OF INNER SPACE, WHERE DISTANCES ARE MEASURED IN...BILLIONTHS OF A METER, TIME IS MEASURED IN...TRILLIONTHS OF A SECOND, AND COSTS DROP TO...THOUSANDTHS OF A PENNY."

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TODAY, OUR CHILDREN LEARN TO TELL TIME ON DIGITAL WATCHES; THEY MIX TRADITIONAL GAMES LIKE BASEBALL WITH THE LATEST VIDEO CRAZE; AND THEY GROW UP WITH CONSTANT EXPOSURE TO THE MASS MEDIA, WATCHING TELEVISION SOME 25 HOURS A WEEK. TODAY'S CHILDREN CAN EXPECT TO LIVE LONGER, HAVE MORE LEISURE TIME, ENJOY BETTER HEALTH, CHANGE JOBS MORE OFTEN, AND MOVE TO MORE NEW LOCATIONS THAN EVER BEFORE.

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WE'VE HEARD IT SAID THAT OUR NATION'S MOST IMPORTANT RESOURCE IS THE MIND OF A CHILD, AND THAT'S TRUER THAN EVER.

NOT LONG AGO, WE WERE ASKING HOW AMERICA COULD BRING THE WORLD OF LEARNING INTO BETTER HARMONY WITH THE WORLD OF WORK. THOSE WORLDS MUST NOT ONLY COME TOGETHER BUT ALSO STRENGTHEN AND ENRICH EACH OTHER.

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OUR VISION OF EDUCATION MUST BE AS FORWARD-LOOKING AS OUR VISION OF THE REST OF AMERICAN LIFE. THIS WILL MEAN A SCHOOL SYSTEM THAT TEACHES OUR CHILDREN HOW TO ENRICH THEIR LIVES BY USING TELECOMMUNICATIONS AS EDUCATIONAL TOOLS; THAT SHOWS THEM HOW TO EDUCATE THEMSELVES, SO THEY WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP THEIR SKILLS CURRENT IN AN EVER-CHANGING JOB MARKET; AND THAT GIVES THEM AN APPRECIATION OF THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES -- SO THAT THEY MAY BROADEN THEIR VISION AND DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUES THAT GIVE LIFE MEANING.

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ONE WAY OF HELPING AMERICAN SCHOOLS BETTER SERVE AND SHAPE OUR FUTURE IS TO KEEP BRINGING TECHNOLOGY INTO MORE CLASSROOMS. WHEN I WAS A BOY AN APPLE WAS SOMETHING YOU BROUGHT THE TEACHER. TODAY, YOU LEARN ON AN APPLE, OR A MACINTOSH OR AN I.B.M. ALREADY, OUR SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEGUN TO MAKE EXTENSIVE USE OF THE TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION.

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YOUNG CHILDREN CAN USE COMPUTERS TO TEACH THEMSELVES COLORS AND BASIC CONCEPTS LIKE "UP" AND "DOWN," OR "FAST" AND "SLOW." OLDER STUDENTS CAN USE COMPUTERS TO SHARPEN THEIR GRASP OF VIRTUALLY ANY SUBJECT, FROM MATH TO HISTORY. COMPUTERS CAN TIE IN WITH VAST LIBRARIES, AND, IN EFFECT, PUT THOSE LIBRARIES IN EVERY CLASSROOM. ONE DRAMATIC ADVANTAGE OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGY IS THAT, AS WE PUT IT TO USE IN OUR SCHOOLS, IT CAN EASE THE BURDEN ON OUR TEACHERS. IN ANY GIVEN CLASSROOM, SOME STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO WORK QUIETLY WITH COMPUTERS WHILE THEIR TEACHER SPENDS TIME WITH OTHERS -- PERHAPS WITH STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE MORE PERSONAL ATTENTION.

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AT THE SAME TIME, TECHNOLOGY CAN PRODUCE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING IN THE WORKPLACE AND THE HOME. AUDIO-VISUAL COURSES CAN TEACH WORKERS HOW TO USE NEW TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT, AND COMPUTERS CAN HELP THEM PREPARE FOR NEW FIELDS. IN THE HOME, PERSONAL COMPUTERS CAN PUT ALL THE WORLD'S GREAT ART, LITERATURE, AND DRAMA AT A FAMILY'S FINGERTIPS. TWO-WAY CABLE TELEVISION STATIONS CAN BRING CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION INTO THE LIVING ROOM, AND NEW TECHNIQUES OF VIEWER PARTICIPATION CAN ENABLE PEOPLE IN THE HOME TO TAKE TESTS AND PRACTICE SKILLS. IF WE APPLY TECHNOLOGY TO EDUCATION WITH THOUGHTFUL SKILL, GOOD EDUCATION WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ALL. EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY WILL ENABLE ALL TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE WONDERS AND BENEFITS OF AMERICAN LIFE.

ONE AREA WHERE THOSE WONDERS AND BENEFITS IS MOST APPARENT IS SPACE. IT HAS LONG BEEN A GOAL OF OUR SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM TO SOME DAY CARRY CITIZEN PASSENGERS INTO SPACE. UNTIL NOW WE HAD NOT DECIDED WHO THE FIRST CITIZEN PASSENGER WOULD BE. BUT TODAY I AM DIRECTING NASA TO BEGIN A SEARCH IN ALL OF OUR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS -- AND TO CHOOSE AS THE FIRST CITIZEN PASSENGER IN THE HISTORY OF OUR SPACE PROGRAM ONE OF AMERICA'S FINEST: A TEACHER.

WHEN THAT SHUTTLE LIFTS OFF, ALL OF AMERICA WILL BE REMINDED OF THE CRUCIAL ROLE TEACHERS AND EDUCATION PLAY IN THE LIFE OF OUR NATION. I CAN'T THINK OF A BETTER LESSON FOR OUR CHILDREN, AND OUR COUNTRY.

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SO WE KNOW THAT THERE IS REASON FOR HOPE. WE CAN SEE AN EXCITING FUTURE; BUT WE ALSO KNOW WHAT THE CURRENT PROBLEMS ARE. WE HAVE DEFINED THEM, STUDIED THEM, QUANTIFIED THEM. WE HAVE MADE SOME PROGRESS IN COMBATTING THEM. BUT NOT ENOUGH. NOW IS THE TIME TO SET OURSELVES SOME ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES

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WE HAVE SLOWED THE DOWNWARD TREND IN S.A.T. SCORES THE PAST FEW YEARS. WE MAY EVEN HAVE ENDED THAT TREND. BUT THAT ISN'T ENOUGH. WE HAVE TO DO BETTER. WE HAVE TO CHALLENGE OURSELVES FURTHER. AND WE MUST CHALLENGE OURSELVES AS INDIVIDUALS. THE STATE CAN'T DO IT FOR US, THIS TOWN AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CAN'T DO IT FOR US. WE HAVE TO CHALLENGE OURSELVES TO GET MOVING AGAIN.

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I PROPOSE THAT, LIKE AN OLYMPIC ATHLETE, WE SET OURSELVES SOME GOALS -- FOUR SPECIFIC CHALLENGES -- AND GO FOR IT.

BEFORE THIS DECADE IS OUT, SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST SCORES SHOULD REGAIN AT LEAST HALF THE LOSSES OF THE LAST 20 YEARS. A BIG CHALLENGE -- AND WE KNOW WHAT HURDLES LIE AHEAD. BUT IT'S DOABLE IF WE TRY.

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ANOTHER CHALLENGE: BEFORE THIS DECADE IS OUT, STATES SHOULD REDUCE THEIR HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES TO LESS THAN 10 PERCENT. A BIG TASK? YOU BET. BUT FROM THE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS AND ADMINISTRATORS I'VE MET OVER THE PAST 3-1/2 YEARS -- BELIEVE ME, THEY'RE UP TO THE CHALLENGE.

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CHALLENGE NUMBER THREE: VIOLENCE IN THE SCHOOLS IS, IN SOME WAYS, THE TOUGHEST OF OUR PROBLEMS. BUT AGAIN, I KNOW WE'RE UP TO IT. ALREADY SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY CONCERN HAS BEGUN TO PAY OFF. A GALLUP POLL NOW SHOWS THAT THE NUMBER OF PARENTS WITH CHILDREN IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS WHO CITE VIOLENCE AS THEIR MAJOR CONCERN IS DOWN FROM 29 PERCENT LAST YEAR TO 23 PERCENT THIS YEAR. THAT'S REASON TO CHEER -- BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH. WE HAVE TO DO BETTER. SO HERE'S OUR GOAL: BEFORE THIS DECADE IS OUT, EVERY SCHOOL IN THE NATION SHOULD HAVE ADOPTED CLEAR DISCIPLINE CODES, AND THE PERCENTAGE OF PARENTS WHO CITE SCHOOL SAFETY AS A MAJOR CONCERN SHOULD BE HALF WHAT IT IS NOW.

YOU KNOW, OUR COUNTRY IS PERFECTLY POISED TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES AND REACH THESE HEIGHTS. SO MANY THINGS HAVE BEGUN RIGHTING THEMSELVES THE PAST FEW YEARS -- OR, I SHOULD SAY, YOU HAVE HELPED RIGHT THEM. IT IS A TIME OF GOOD FEELING ABOUT THE FUTURE; IT'S A TIME OF PROGRESS. AND WE'RE SHOWING OURSELVES AGAIN THAT EFFORT AND DEDICATION AND TENACITY REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE. AS A YOUNG FELLOW SAID RECENTLY, "AMERICA'S ON TOP AGAIN." AND WE CAN REACH THE TOP IN EDUCATION AGAIN IF ONLY WE TRY.

AND THAT BRINGS ME TO A FOURTH AND LAST CHALLENGE. WE CAN JUDGE OUR SUCCESS IN TURNING THE SCHOOLS AROUND BY MEASURING PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN THE SCHOOLS. IN 1980, ONLY 35 PERCENT OF AMERICANS GAVE THE SCHOOLS AN "A" OR EVEN A "B" WHEN THEY WERE ASKED TO GRADE THEM IN A POLL. WELL, THE LATEST GALLUP POLL SHOWS 42 PERCENT NOW GIVE THE SCHOOLS AN "A" OR A "B". THAT'S A SOLID INCREASE. BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH. WE HAVE TO DO BETTER. WE'VE GOT TO CHALLENGE OURSELVES FURTHER. AND SO: BEFORE THE DECADE IS OUT, THIS GENERAL LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE IN OUR SCHOOLS SHOULD GROW AT LEAST ANOTHER 20 PERCENT SO THAT A SOLID MAJORITY OF OUR PEOPLE GIVE OUR SCHOOLS AN "A" OR A "B". NO -- MAKE THAT "A+" OR "B+".

LESS THAN 2 YEARS AGO, ONE OF OUR GREAT OLYMPIC HEROES, JEFF BLATNICK, WAS LYING IN AN OPERATING ROOM BEING OPERATED ON FOR CANCER. HE VOWED HE'D COME BACK, REACH HIS POTENTIAL AND MEET HIS DESTINY. A FEW WEEKS AGO WE SAW HIM FALL TO HIS KNEES IN JOY WHEN HE WON AN OLYMPIC GOLD MEDAL IN WRESTLING.

MY FRIENDS, THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN'T DO IF WE SET OUR MINDS TO IT; THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN'T ACHIEVE. AND LIKE THOSE SHINING YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN WE SENT TO THE OLYMPICS, WE WILL STICK TO THESE GOALS, WE WILL MEET THEM AND THIS WILL CHANGE OUR COUNTRY. WE WILL CONTINUE TO BE WHAT WE'VE ALREADY STARTED TO BE: AMERICA REEMERGENT, ON THE SCENE, FULL OF EXCELLENCE, DYNAMISM, AND VISION. AMERICA RENEWED IN A GOLDEN AGE OF LEARNING.

I THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME HERE TODAY. IT IS AN HONOR TO MEET THESE SCHOLASTIC HEROES -- OUR OLYMPIANS OF THE CLASSROOM.

AS SCHOOL DOORS OPEN THIS WEEK, AND YOU AND 45 MILLION OF YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS RETURN TO YOUR CLASSROOMS, I WISH YOU SUCCESS IN YOUR STUDIES -- AND SUCCESS IN HELPING AMERICA MEET THESE GREAT CHALLENGES FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION IN THE 1980's, AND BEYOND.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

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