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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 21, 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: ANTHONY R. DOLAN

SUBJECT: Letter to Pope John Paul II

Dave Gergen asked that we send along some thoughts on your letter to the Pope.

(Dolan)

May 21, 1981
First Draft

DRAFT OF PRESIDENTIAL LETTER TO POPE JOHN PAUL II

Your Holiness:

The depth of my personal joy and that of the American people over your speedy recovery is inexpressable.

May I say that your dignity and grace -- and the forgiveness you have shown your attacker -- have been an inspiration to the world and a truly Christlike example.

I know of course that your sufferings now are not just those of the body -- painful though they may be --but those too of the spirit. I know the sadness it must bring you to contemplate the ease with which men violate the dictates of God and their own conscience.

But no one's life has more clearly shown our Lord injunction to bear all things humbly and patiently than your own.

You reminded us that the mystery of suffering is the test of true faith. Even the divine doctor, St. Thomas, noted that there can be no finally satisfactory answer for the presence of evil in the world except our belief in the goodness of God.

Your life, your words and your good example to others are testimony to the truth of this belief and the strength of your faith.

Maurice Baring wrote once that "Sorrow built a bridge for me into the infinite. It often does . . . one has to accept sorrow for it to be a healing power, and that is the most difficult thing in the world."

These words were used to describe the lifework of the daughter of the Great American writer, Nathaniel Hawthorne. Your holiness may be familiar with the work of Rose Hawthorne, an American nun who left a comfortable life to found a nursing order for indigent cancer patients in the poor sections of New York City.

I have taken the liberty of including in my letter a poem she wrote once in the hope that it will be of some comfort and solace.

Holy Father, I want you to know my thoughts and prayers and those of the American people are constantly with you. On behalf of the American Nation I extend our good wishes and our gratitude for your humble and holy example.

"Sorrow, my friend, when shall you come again,
When shall you come again?
Thw wind is slow, and the bent willows send
Their silvery motions wearily down the plain.
The bird is dead
That sang this morning through the summer rain.

"Sorrow, my friend,
I owe my soul to you,
And if my life with any glory end
Of tenderness for others, and the words are true
Said, honoring, when I'm dead,
Sorrow, to you the mellow praise, the funeral wreath
are due."

Dela -

Draft of president letter to Pope John Paul II

Your Holiness,

The depth of my personal joy and that of the American people over your speedy recovery is inexpressible.

May I say that your dignity and grace -- and the forgiveness you have shown your attacker -- have been an inspiration to the world ^{and} a truly Christlike example.

I know of course that your sufferings now are not just those of the body ⁻⁻ painful though they may be, but those ^{too} of the spirit ^{too}. I know the sadness it must bring you to contemplate the ease with which men sometimes violate the dictates of God and their own consciences.

But no one's life has more clearly shown our Lord ^{humbly and patiently} injunction to bear all things ^{patiently and humbly} than your own. ^{example}

You have reminded us that that the mystery of suffering is the test of true faith. ~~xx~~ Even the divine doctor, St. Thomas, noted that there ^{can be no finally} ~~is no finally~~ satisfactory answer for the presence of evil in the world ^{on belief in the goodness of God.} ~~expect our faith that God is good.~~

~~xxxxxx~~ Your life, and your ~~in~~ words and your most recent ~~example~~ ^{this belief and the strength of your faith.} the your good example to others are testimony to the truth of that faith.

^{Holy Father, I want you to know ~~my~~}
Insert → Please be assured of my continuous thoughts and prayers and ~~the~~ ^{you} of the American people ~~which~~ are constantly with you. On behalf of my the American nation I extend our good wishes, ~~our prayers~~ and our gratitude for your humble and holy example.

Insert

It has been said Maruice Baring wrote once that
"Sorrow can build a bridge for me into the infinite."

It often does,,,one has to accept sorrow for it
to be a healing power, and that is the most difficult things
in the world."

your holiness may be familiar ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ these
words were used once to describe the lifework of a great
american nun, Rowse Hawthorne, the daughter of the Great
American writer, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and the American
nun Rose Hawthorne, who left her upper class life to
a comfortable rich and comfortable life to found a nursing
order for indigent cancer patients in a poor section of New York City.

I have taken the liberty of including w in my
letter a poem she wrote once on the meaning of such sorrow --
a poem that your holiness in the hope that it will be of some
comfort and solace.

Your holiness.

I cannot express to you ~~the~~ depth of my personal joy
and that of the American people over your ~~speedy~~
is inexpressible.
~~recovery~~ recovery from the recent attempt on your life.

Your grace and forgiveness at a moment dignity and
grace -- and your forgiveness -- the forgiveness shown your attacker --
was ~~an~~ an inspiration to the world was a Christlike example and
an inspiration to the world.

I know you suffer now -- not just ~~the~~ physically but
not I I know of course that your suffering now are not just
of the body -- painful as those are -- but of the spirit as
well -- knowing the ~~depth~~ knowing how easily men violate
the dictates of the lord and their conscience.

No one's life has more clearly shown, however, the importance
of the mystery of suffering and evil to a true faith. Even
the divine doctor, St. Thomas, Aquinas, who so artfully contrived
resolved the ~~conflict~~ reminded us there was no contradiction between
faith and reason -- said that even there can be no finally
satisfactory message explanation -- at least no in this world.

Your Holiness,

The depth of my prsonal joy and that of the American people over your speedy reocvery is inexpressable.

But may I say,

Your dingit and ~~xx~~ grace -- and the fogivness you have shown have been your attacker -- were an inspriation to the world and a truly Chirstlike example.

I know of course that your sufferrings now are not just those of the body but of the spirit too. It is sad How the ease with which men easily it sometimes seems that men fi violate the dictiates of god and their own concscience.

But no one' s life has more clerly shown our lod's injunction to bear all things with ~~xxxxx~~ patientce and humility than your own. wihci we are asked by Our Lord to bear wrongdoing than your won.

rmeinded us that You have said menat times that the mystery of seffering and evil in the world is the test of true faith -- ven the divine dcotor himself. St Thomas noted that in final anaylsis there is no stafisicatory reational answer to the mystery of evil inthe world ~~xxxxonlyxxfaithxx~~ execpt faith in what we know - that the there is That God is good.

x Please be assured of my ncintued thoughts and prayers and those of the American people. On behalf of the American naton, may I extend to ~~xxxxxx~~ your our