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Last Updated: 01/17/2025

(ELLIOTT)

AUGUST 30, 1984
GREENBELT, MARYLAND

PRESIDENT'S BACKUP COPY:
ADDRESS AT THE GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

252710SC
SP912

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, JIM BEGGS. WELL, I'M DELIGHTED TO BE WITH YOU TODAY, AND TO HAVE THIS CHANCE TO SAY: CONGRATULATIONS ON THIS MORNING'S LIFT-OFF OF THE DISCOVERY MISSION. I'M HONORED TO MEET ALL OF YOU WHO ARE MAKING THIS GREAT ADVENTURE HAPPEN. YOU HAVE SPARKED THE DREAMS AND IMAGINATION OF A NATION -- FROM THE YOUNGEST BOYS AND GIRLS IN CLASSROOMS ACROSS OUR LAND, TO INDIVIDUALS, LIKE MYSELF, APPROACHING THE OUTER LIMITS OF THEIR MIDDLE-AGE YEARS.

YOU GO QUIETLY ABOUT YOUR WORK, FAR REMOVED FROM THE GLARE, GLOSS, AND GLITTER OF PUBLIC SPOTLIGHTS. BUT WHAT YOU DO IS SO IMPORTANT. YOU ARE EXPANDING OUR WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE; AND WITH THAT KNOWLEDGE, YOU ARE FUELING A MIGHTY TIDE OF PROGRESS CARRYING THE HOPE OF AN OPTIMISTIC FUTURE -- FOR PEOPLE HERE AND EVERYWHERE.

YOURS IS THE WORK OF A TRUE REVOLUTION; NOT A REVOLUTION POISONED BY HATRED, VIOLENCE, AND THE WILL TO CONQUER, BUT ONE RISING FROM THE DEEPEST YEARNINGS OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT TO CHALLENGE THE LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE; AND TO PUT THE POWER OF DISCOVERY AT THE SERVICE OF OUR MOST NOBLE AND GENEROUS IMPULSES FOR DECENCY, PROGRESS, AND, YES, FOR PEACE.

TODAY, ON BEHALF OF A GRATEFUL NATION, I SALUTE YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES IN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE AND THE ACADEMIC WORLD. YOU ARE THE HEROES OF HIGH-TECH; THE PULSE OF AMERICA'S TECHNOLOGICAL POWER; THE CHAMPIONS OF A CONFIDENT PEOPLE, WHOSE FAITH AND COURAGE ARE PUSHING AMERICA UP AND OUT TO A WORLD OF WONDERS FOR US, OUR CHILDREN, AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.

THE SPACE AGE IS BARELY A QUARTER OF A CENTURY OLD, BUT ALREADY WE HAVE TAKEN GIANT STEPS FOR ALL MANKIND. AND OUR PROGRESS IS A TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN TEAMWORK AND EXCELLENCE. WE CAN BE PROUD THAT WE ARE FIRST, WE ARE THE BEST, AND WE ARE SO BECAUSE WE ARE FREE.

THERE IS NOTHING THAT THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CANNOT ACCOMPLISH, IF THE DOUBTING THOMASES WOULD JUST STAND ASIDE AND GET OUT OF OUR WAY. IN A SINGLE GENERATION, WE HAVE FREED OURSELVES FROM THE BOUNDS OF EARTH; WE HAVE SET OUR FOOTPRINTS ON THE SURFACE OF THE MOON; WE HAVE USED OUR INSTRUMENTS TO EXPLORE SPACE, THE SUN, AND OUR SISTER PLANETS; AND OUR SPACE SHUTTLE PROVIDES THE FIRST REUSABLE SPACE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR RESEARCH, COMMERCIALIZATION OF SPACE, AND SCIENTIFIC EXPLORATION.

MEETING THESE GREAT CHALLENGES HAS GIVEN US BENEFITS FAR MORE VALUABLE THAN OUR ORIGINAL INVESTMENTS. IT HAS PROVEN WRONG THOSE DREARY SOULS WHO LACKED THE VISION TO SUPPORT YOUR EFFORTS. WITH THEIR PESSIMISM, AMERICA NEVER WOULD HAVE GOTTEN OFF THE GROUND; WITH YOUR SPACE SHUTTLE, WE HAVE AGAIN AND AGAIN.

AND I'M CONVINCED YOUR SUCCESS CONFIRMS A VISION WE SHARE:
AN AMERICA UNAFRAID, REACHING INTO SPACE WITH COURAGE AND
LEADERSHIP, WILL BE AN AMERICA UNSURPASSED. WE HAVE IT WITHIN
OUR POWER TO CREATE A BOUNTY OF NEW JOBS, TECHNOLOGIES, AND
MEDICAL BREAKTHROUGHS SURPASSING ANYTHING WE HAVE EVER BEFORE
DREAMED OR IMAGINED.

WE ALREADY BENEFIT DAILY FROM A MODERN REVOLUTION IN
WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATIONS. WE CAN COMMUNICATE WITH EACH OTHER AT
A MOMENT'S NOTICE, VIRTUALLY ANYWHERE ON THE GLOBE. WE CAN
ANTICIPATE TOMORROW'S WEATHER AND PREPARE FOR IT. OUR SPACE
SHUTTLE SYSTEM PROVIDES ACCESS TO SPACE FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY,
COMMUNICATIONS, AND NATIONAL SECURITY.

ONLY A FEW WEEKS AGO, WE WATCHED THE OLYMPICS ON TELEVISION,
SHARING EXCITEMENT WITH PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD. I CAN
REMEMBER -- AND, BELIEVE ME, IT DOESN'T SEEM LONG AGO -- WHEN WE
LIVED IN THE HORSE-AND-BUGGY DAYS OF TELEVISION. WE COULDN'T SEE
A BREAKING EVENT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD UNTIL THE FILM
WAS SHIPPED HERE. BUT, TODAY, THANKS TO YOUR RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT WORK, WE HAVE MODERN COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITES
BEAMING CRYSTAL-CLEAR TELECASTS WORLDWIDE.

ANOTHER QUIET REVOLUTION IN TECHNOLOGY HAS ALSO BEEN DRIVEN,
IN PART, BY THE RIGORS OF OUR SPACE PROGRAM. NEW MATERIALS FROM
PLENTIFUL NATURAL RESOURCES LIKE CARBON AND SILICON ARE TAKING
THE PLACE OF EXPENSIVE METALS IN VIRTUALLY ALL MANUFACTURED
PRODUCTS. OUR AUTOMOBILE ENGINEERS IN DETROIT ARE USING
LIGHTWEIGHT, SUPERSTRONG, PLASTIC-LIKE MATERIALS TO REDUCE THE
WEIGHT OF MODERN CARS -- AND CONSUMERS ARE GETTING THE BENEFITS
IN THE FORM OF MORE MILES TO THE GALLON.

COMPUTERS USING MICROCHIPS ARE CONSTANTLY REDEFINING OUR WORLD AS THEY BECOME SMALLER, MORE POWERFUL, AND LESS EXPENSIVE. THOSE CHIPS ARE THE HEART OF INEXPENSIVE ELECTRONIC CALCULATORS NOW COMMONPLACE IN THE WORKPLACE, COMMUNITY, AND CLASSROOM.

SOMETIMES THESE TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES TAKE PLACE SO GRACEFULLY OVER TIME THAT WE HARDLY NOTICE THEM. TODAY, OUR CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO MORE COMPUTER POWER THAN MOST PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS HAD IN THEIR LABORATORIES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SPACE AGE.

DR. ROBERT JASTROW, CHAIRMAN OF THE FIRST NASA LUNAR EXPLORATION COMMITTEE, PREDICTED NEARLY 2 YEARS AGO THAT THE COMPUTER INDUSTRY WOULD DOUBLE IN SIZE BY 1986, BECOMING AMERICA'S BIGGEST BUSINESS. ALREADY, TENS OF THOUSANDS OF PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF SPACE AND AERONAUTICAL TECHNOLOGY ARE TOUCHING OUR LIVES. I'VE JUST SEEN AN EXHIBIT HERE WITH A VAST ARRAY OF NEW PRODUCTS FROM LIFE-SAVING VESTS FOR FIREMEN TO SOPHISTICATED AERIAL SCANNING TECHNIQUES TO LOCATE AND IDENTIFY EVERYTHING FROM SCHOOLS OF FISH, TO MINERAL DEPOSITS TO HEALTHY TIMBERLAND.

IN MEDICINE, WE'RE SEEING THE VISION OF TECHNOLOGY WITH A HUMAN FACE WITH ONE MIRACULOUS BREAKTHROUGH AFTER ANOTHER. THE PROCEDURE CALLED CAT SCANNING USES A COMPUTER TO COMPILE A CLEAR PICTURE FROM X-RAYS TAKEN AT DIFFERENT ANGLES, OFTEN PERMITTING PATIENTS TO AVOID THE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS OF SURGERY. CAT SCANNING HAS BECOME A LIFESAVER IN DETECTING DISEASES OF THE BRAIN AND OTHER VITAL ORGANS.

THE PIONEER FIELD OF COMPUTER-CONTROLLED WALKING HAS GIVEN HOPE TO THOUSANDS OF PARALYZED AMERICANS THAT, SOMEDAY, THEY MAY WALK AGAIN.

THE WIDESPREAD USE OF SOUND WAVES ALLOWS DOCTORS TO AVOID POTENTIALLY HARMFUL USE OF X-RAYS. USING SOUND WAVES TO MONITOR THE PROGRESS OF BABIES INSIDE THE WOMB PERMITS EARLIER DIAGNOSIS OF PROBLEMS, A SAFER PREGNANCY AND DELIVERY FOR THE MOTHER, AND BETTER HEALTH FOR THE BABY.

H.T.S. -- FOR HUMAN TISSUE SIMULATOR -- SENDS ELECTRICAL IMPULSES THROUGH WIRE LEADS TO TARGETED NERVE CENTERS, OR PARTICULAR AREAS OF THE BRAIN, PROVIDING RELIEF FROM PAIN AND STOPPING UNWANTED, INVOLUNTARY MOTION. I'M HAPPY TO POINT OUT THAT H.T.S. WAS SPONSORED BY THE GODDARD SPACE CENTER.

I'VE ALSO BEEN SHOWN A HAND-HELD X-RAY MACHINE AND THE PROGRAMMABLE IMPLANTABLE MEDICATION SYSTEM -- CALLED PIMS -- THAT ADMINISTERS MEDICATION AUTOMATICALLY WITHIN THE BODY.

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PUT A PRICETAG ON THE VALUE OF THESE HUMAN BENEFITS. EVEN MORE DAZZLING OPPORTUNITIES LIE AHEAD -- IF ONLY WE HAVE THE FAITH AND COURAGE TO KEEP PUSHING ON. EACH TECHNOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGH ENABLES US TO WORK FROM A NEW AND HIGHER PLATEAU OF KNOWLEDGE. AND EACH BREAKTHROUGH OPENS THE DOOR TO GREAT LEAPS IN PRODUCTIVITY WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN CONSIDERED UNTHINKABLE ONLY A FEW DECADES AGO.

PERMIT ME TO SUGGEST THAT THE FRATERNITY OF PESSIMISTS, WHO TODAY INSIST STRONG GROWTH WILL IGNITE HIGH INFLATION, ARE LOOKING AT ABSTRACT STATISTICS, THEORIES, AND MODELS, NOT THE REALITY OF A CHANGING WORLD. THEY DO NOT SEE THAT, AS WE ACQUIRE MORE AND MORE KNOWLEDGE FROM NEW TECHNOLOGIES, WE NO LONGER MOVE FORWARD IN INCHES OR FEET -- WE BEGIN TO LEAP FORWARD.

WORKING IN THE ZERO-GRAVITY ENVIRONMENT OF SPACE, WE CAN MANUFACTURE, IN JUST 1 MONTH'S TIME, LIFE-SAVING MEDICINES THAT IT WOULD TAKE 30 YEARS TO MANUFACTURE ON EARTH. AND WE CAN MANUFACTURE CRYSTALS OF EXCEPTIONAL PURITY THAT MAY ENABLE US TO PRODUCE SUPER-COMPUTERS, AND MAKE EVEN GREATER BREAKTHROUGHS IN PRODUCTIVITY.

OUR VISION IS NOT AN IMPOSSIBLE DREAM, IT IS A WAKING DREAM. AS AMERICANS, LET US CULTIVATE THE ART OF SEEING THINGS INVISIBLE. ONLY BY CHALLENGING THE LIMITS OF GROWTH WILL WE HAVE THE STRENGTH AND KNOWLEDGE TO MAKE AMERICA A ROCKET OF HOPE SHOOTING TO THE STARS.

HIGH TECHNOLOGY IS BORN FROM CAPITAL, AND MORE CAPITAL WILL REQUIRE CONTINUED INCENTIVES FOR RISK TAKING AND INVESTMENT, NOT TAX INCREASES, WHICH WOULD STIFLE GROWTH. WE SUPPORT HIGH TECH, NOT HIGH TAXES. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MUST CONSTANTLY ENDEAVOR TO STRENGTHEN THE PRIVATE ECONOMY, WHILE SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, PARTICULARLY IN UNIVERSITIES, TO TRAIN TOMORROW'S INDUSTRIAL AND ACADEMIC SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS.

OUR AGENDA FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AT THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL IS ALSO CRUCIAL, SO STUDENTS, LIKE THOSE I MET AT JEFFERSON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ON MONDAY, CAN ACQUIRE THE KNOWLEDGE TO ENTER UNIVERSITIES AND, ONE DAY, STEP INTO THESE VITAL POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY.

BETWEEN 1981 AND 1985, FEDERAL INVESTMENT IN BASIC RESEARCH WILL HAVE INCREASED BY ALMOST 30 PERCENT IN REAL TERMS -- AND WE WILL CARRY FORWARD THAT STRONG COMMITMENT INTO THE FUTURE. WE WILL ALSO CONTINUE OUR SUPPORT OF TAX CREDITS FOR INDUSTRIAL R&D EXPENSES; AND WE WILL STRIVE TO LESSEN CONCERNS THAT COOPERATIVE R&D BETWEEN COMPANIES MAY VIOLATE ANTITRUST STATUTES.

WITH THE POWER OF ECONOMIC GROWTH, AND THE COURAGE AND DETERMINATION OF A FREE PEOPLE, WE CAN MEET OUR NUMBER ONE CHALLENGE IN SPACE -- TO DEVELOP A PERMANENTLY-MANNED SPACE STATION, AND DO IT WITHIN A DECADE. FROM THAT SPACE STATION, WE CAN CARRY OUT THE KIND OF WORK IN MEDICINES AND CRYSTALS I MENTIONED A MOMENT AGO; WE CAN CONDUCT NEW RESEARCH, EXPLORE THE DISTANT PLANETS, AND, AT THE SAME TIME, UNLOCK THE VAST POTENTIAL FOR COMMERCE IN SPACE BY EASING TAX LAWS AND REGULATIONS WHICH DISCRIMINATE AGAINST COMMERCIAL VENTURES. AND WE WILL BE DOING ALL THESE THINGS FOR THE SAKE OF A MORE PEACEFUL AND PROSPEROUS WORLD.

AMERICA HAS ALWAYS BEEN GREATEST WHEN WE DARED TO BE GREAT. WE WILL BE LEADERS IN SPACE, BECAUSE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WOULD RATHER REACH FOR THE STARS THAN REACH FOR EXCUSES WHY WE SHOULDN'T. AND AS AMERICAN TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMS THE GREAT BLACK NIGHT OF SPACE INTO A BRIGHT NEW WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES, WE CAN USE THAT KNOWLEDGE TO CREATE A NEW AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY SOCIETY HERE AT HOME. WE CAN ENSURE EVERY PERSON HAS NOT ONLY AN EQUAL CHANCE, BUT A MUCH GREATER CHANCE TO PURSUE THE AMERICAN DREAM.

TO DO THIS, WE MUST MAINTAIN AND INCREASE OUR OLDER INDUSTRIES' ABILITY TO COMPETE IN THE WORLD, STIMULATE CREATION OF SUNRISE INDUSTRIES, AND MEET THE CHALLENGE OF ENSURING AMERICAN LEADERSHIP AND PROSPERITY INTO THE 21st CENTURY. CALL ME AN OPTIMIST, BUT I'M CONVINCED THAT, IF WE DO ACCEPT THIS CHALLENGE, IF WE MAXIMIZE INCENTIVES, INVEST FULLY IN THE NEW TECHNOLOGIES, AND STRIVE FOR THE GREAT BREAKTHROUGHS IN PRODUCTIVITY, THEN, YES, WE CAN OUT-PRODUCE, OUT-COMPETE, AND OUT-SELL THE PANTS OFF ANYBODY, ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

WE CAN BUILD AN AMERICA THAT OFFERS PRODUCTIVE, SECURE JOB OPPORTUNITES FOR ALL OUR FELLOW CITIZENS, FROM ASSEMBLY-LINE WORKERS TO RESEARCH SCIENTISTS IN NEW INDUSTRIES SUCH AS BIOTECHNOLOGY, ROBOTICS, AND INFORMATION PROCESSING.

WE CAN MEET OUR GOAL OF ASSURING ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF AFFORDABLE ENERGY -- SO THAT, NEVER AGAIN, WILL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BE HELD HOSTAGE BY A FOREIGN CARTEL.

WE CAN APPLY NEW AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES TO PRESERVE OUR SOIL AND ENVIRONMENT, AND DRAMATICALLY ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH IMPROVEMENTS IN CROP YIELDS AND RESISTANCE TO DISEASE AND HARSH ENVIRONMENTS. WE CAN ENHANCE OUR WORLD LEADERSHIP IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION, AND IN NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO MILLIONS WHO LOOK TO AMERICA FOR HOPE AND FOR HELP.

IF WE ARE TO KEEP OUR ECONOMY HEALTHY AND STRONG, WE NEED TO STAY HEALTHY AND STRONG OURSELVES. OUR SUCCESS WILL DEPEND ON EACH PERSON'S WILLINGNESS TO ADOPT HEALTHY HABITS, OUR COLLECTIVE ABILITY TO IMPROVE AN ALREADY EFFECTIVE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM, AND OUR CONTINUED RESEARCH AND PIONEER WORK IN THE KINDS OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES YOU ARE DEVELOPING RIGHT HERE. BEFORE THIS DECADE IS OUT, OUR ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO REDUCING SIGNIFICANTLY THE DEATH RATE FOR ALL AGE GROUPS, AND TO ENSURING OLDER AMERICANS CAN LIVE HEALTHIER, LONGER, MORE PRODUCTIVE LIVES. WE CAN AND WE MUST.

THE DREAM OF AMERICA IS MUCH MORE THAN WHO WE ARE OR WHAT WE DO -- IT IS, ABOVE ALL, WHAT WE WILL BE. WE MUST ALWAYS BE -- THE NEW WORLD; THE WORLD OF DISCOVERY; THE WORLD THAT REVERES THE GREAT TRUTHS OF ITS PAST, BUT THAT LOOKS FORWARD WITH UNENDING FAITH TO THE PROMISE OF THE FUTURE. IN MY HEART, I KNOW WE HAVE THAT FAITH. THE DREAM LIVES ON. AMERICA WILL REMAIN FUTURE'S CHILD, THE GOLDEN HOPE FOR ALL MANKIND.

THANK YOU FOR WELCOMING ME TODAY, THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO, AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR COURAGE TO DREAM GREAT DREAMS.

GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

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(Elliott)
August 29, 1984
4:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER
GREENBELT, MARYLAND
THURSDAY, AUGUST 30, 1984

OK
RR
Cards are given
done. RR

Thank you very much, Jim Beggs. Well, I'm delighted to be with you today, and to have this chance to say: Congratulations on this morning's lift-off of the Discovery mission. I'm honored to meet all of you who are making this great adventure happen. You have sparked the dreams and imagination of a Nation -- from the youngest boys and girls in classrooms across our land, to individuals, like myself, approaching the outer limits of their middle-age years.

You go quietly about your work, far removed from the glare, gloss, and glitter of public spotlights. But what you do is so important. You are expanding our wealth of knowledge; and with that knowledge, you are fueling a mighty tide of progress carrying the hope of an optimistic future -- for people here and everywhere.

Yours is the work of a true revolution; not a revolution poisoned by hatred, violence, and the will to conquer, but one rising from the deepest yearnings of the human spirit to challenge the limits of knowledge; and to put the power of discovery at the service of our most noble and generous impulses for decency, progress, and, yes, for peace.

Today, on behalf of a grateful Nation, I salute you and your colleagues in private enterprise and the academic world. You are the heroes of high-tech; the pulse of America's technological power; the champions of a confident people, whose faith and

courage are pushing America up and out to a world of wonders for us, our children, and our children's children.

The space age is barely a quarter of a century old, but already we have taken giant steps for all mankind. And our progress is a tribute to American teamwork and excellence. We can be proud that we are first, we are the best, and we are so because we are free.

There is nothing that the United States of America cannot accomplish, if the doubting Thomases would just stand aside and get out of our way. In a single generation, we have freed ourselves from the bounds of Earth; we have set our footprints on the surface of the Moon; we have used our instruments to explore space, the sun, and our sister planets; and our space shuttle provides the first reusable space transportation system for research, commercialization of space, and scientific exploration.

Meeting these great challenges has given us benefits far more valuable than our original investments. It has proven wrong those dreary souls who lacked the vision to support your efforts. With their pessimism, America never would have gotten off the ground; with your space shuttle, we have again and again.

And I'm convinced your success confirms a vision we share: An America unafraid, reaching into space with courage and leadership, will be an America unsurpassed. We have it within our power to create a bounty of new jobs, technologies, and medical breakthroughs surpassing anything we have ever before dreamed or imagined.

We already benefit daily from a modern revolution in worldwide communications. We can communicate with each other at a moment's notice, virtually anywhere on the globe. We can anticipate tomorrow's weather and prepare for it. Our space shuttle system provides access to space for science, technology, communications, and national security.

Only a few weeks ago, we watched the Olympics on television, sharing excitement with people all over the world. I can remember -- and, believe me, it doesn't seem long ago -- when we lived in the horse-and-buggy days of television. We couldn't see a breaking event on the other side of the world until the film was shipped here. But, today, thanks to your research and development work, we have modern communications satellites beaming crystal-clear telecasts worldwide.

Another quiet revolution in technology has also been driven, in part, by the rigors of our space program. New materials from plentiful natural resources like carbon and silicon are taking the place of expensive metals in virtually all manufactured products. Our automobile engineers in Detroit are using lightweight, superstrong, plastic-like materials to reduce the weight of modern cars -- and consumers are getting the benefits in the form of more miles to the gallon.

Computers using microchips are constantly redefining our world as they become smaller, more powerful, and less expensive. Those chips are the heart of inexpensive electronic calculators now commonplace in the workplace, community, and classroom. Sometimes these technological changes take place so gracefully

over time that we hardly notice them. Today, our children have access to more computer power than most professional scientists and engineers had in their laboratories at the beginning of the space age.

Dr. Robert Jastrow, chairman of the First NASA Lunar Exploration Committee, predicted nearly 2 years ago that the computer industry would double in size by 1986, becoming America's biggest business. Already, tens of thousands of practical applications of space and aeronautical technology are touching our lives. I've just seen an exhibit here with a vast array of new products from life-saving vests for firemen to sophisticated aerial scanning techniques to locate and identify everything from schools of fish, to mineral deposits to healthy timberland.

In medicine, we're seeing the vision of technology with a human face with one miraculous breakthrough after another. The procedure called CAT scanning uses a computer to compile a clear picture from X-rays taken at different angles, often permitting patients to avoid the risks and discomforts of surgery. CAT scanning has become a lifesaver in detecting diseases of the brain and other vital organs.

The pioneer field of computer-controlled walking has given hope to thousands of paralyzed Americans that, someday, they may walk again.

The widespread use of sound waves allows doctors to avoid potentially harmful use of X-rays. Using sound waves to monitor the progress of babies inside the womb permits earlier diagnosis

of problems, a safer pregnancy and delivery for the mother, and better health for the baby.

H.T.S. -- for Human Tissue Simulator -- sends electrical impulses through wire leads to targeted nerve centers, or particular areas of the brain, providing relief from pain and stopping unwanted, involuntary motion. I'm happy to point out that H.T.S. was sponsored by the Goddard Space Center.

I've also been shown a hand-held X-ray machine and the Programmable Implantable Medication System -- called PIMS -- that administers medication automatically within the body.

It would be difficult to put a pricetag on the value of these human benefits. Even more dazzling opportunities lie ahead -- if only we have the faith and courage to keep pushing on. Each technological breakthrough enables us to work from a new and higher plateau of knowledge. And each breakthrough opens the door to great leaps in productivity which would have been considered unthinkable only a few decades ago.

Permit me to suggest that the fraternity of pessimists, who today insist strong growth will ignite high inflation, are looking at abstract statistics, theories, and models, not the reality of a changing world. They do not see that, as we acquire more and more knowledge from new technologies, we no longer move forward in inches or feet -- we begin to leap forward.

Working in the zero-gravity environment of space, we can manufacture, in just 1 month's time, life-saving medicines that it would take 30 years to manufacture on Earth. And we can manufacture crystals of exceptional purity that may enable us to

produce super-computers, and make even greater breakthroughs in productivity.

Our vision is not an impossible dream, it is a waking dream. As Americans, let us cultivate the art of seeing things invisible. Only by challenging the limits of growth will we have the strength and knowledge to make America a rocket of hope shooting to the stars.

High technology is born from capital, and more capital will require continued incentives for risktaking and investment, not tax increases, which would stifle growth. We support high tech, not high taxes. The Federal Government must constantly endeavor to strengthen the private economy, while supporting research and development, particularly in universities, to train tomorrow's industrial and academic scientists and engineers.

Our agenda for excellence in education at the elementary and secondary school level is also crucial, so students, like those I met at Jefferson Junior High School on Monday, can acquire the knowledge to enter universities and, one day, step into these vital positions of leadership and responsibility.

Between 1981 and 1985, Federal investment in basic research will have increased by almost 30 percent in real terms -- and we will carry forward that strong commitment into the future. We will also continue our support of tax credits for industrial R&D expenses; and we will strive to lessen concerns that cooperative R&D between companies may violate antitrust statutes.

With the power of economic growth, and the courage and determination of a free people, we can meet our number one

challenge in space -- to develop a permanently-manned space station, and do it within a decade. From that space station, we can carry out the kind of work in medicines and crystals I mentioned a moment ago; we can conduct new research, explore the distant planets, and, at the same time, unlock the vast potential for commerce in space by easing tax laws and regulations which discriminate against commercial ventures. And we will be doing all these things for the sake of a more peaceful and prosperous world.

America has always been greatest when we dared to be great. We will be leaders in space, because the American people would rather reach for the stars than reach for excuses why we shouldn't. And as American technology transforms the great black night of space into a bright new world of opportunities, we can use that knowledge to create a new American Opportunity Society here at home. We can ensure every person has not only an equal chance, but a much greater chance to pursue the American dream.

To do this, we must maintain and increase our older industries' ability to compete in the world, stimulate creation of sunrise industries, and meet the challenge of ensuring American leadership and prosperity into the 21st century. Call me an optimist, but I'm convinced that, if we do accept this challenge, if we maximize incentives, invest fully in the new technologies, and strive for the great breakthroughs in productivity, then, yes, we can out-produce, out-compete, and out-sell the pants off anybody, anywhere in the world.

We can build an America that offers productive, secure job opportunities for all our fellow citizens, from assembly-line workers to research scientists in new industries such as biotechnology, robotics, and information processing.

We can meet our goal of assuring adequate supplies of affordable energy -- so that, never again, will the American people be held hostage by a foreign cartel.

We can apply new agricultural technologies to preserve our soil and environment, and dramatically enhance productivity through improvements in crop yields and resistance to disease and harsh environments. We can enhance our world leadership in agricultural production, and in nutritional assistance to millions who look to America for hope and for help.

If we are to keep our economy healthy and strong, we need to stay healthy and strong ourselves. Our success will depend on each person's willingness to adopt healthy habits, our collective ability to improve an already effective health care system, and our continued research and pioneer work in the kinds of medical technologies you are developing right here. Before this decade is out, our Administration is committed to reducing significantly the death rate for all age groups, and to ensuring older Americans can live healthier, longer, more productive lives. We can and we must.

The dream of America is much more than who we are or what we do -- it is, above all, what we will be. We must always be -- the new world; the world of discovery; the world that reveres the great truths of its past, but that looks forward with unending

faith to the promise of the future. In my heart, I know we have that faith. The dream lives on. America will remain future's child, the golden hope for all mankind.

Thank you for welcoming me today, thank you for all you do, and thank you for your courage to dream great dreams.

God bless you all.

(NOONAN)

~~The President~~ has seen
AUGUST 31, 1984

CATHOLIC GOLDEN AGE SOCIETY
CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

232369SC
RM031

THANK YOU, ALL OF YOU, VERY MUCH.

IT IS A JOY TO HAVE YOU HERE. IT IS VERY
KIND OF YOU TO UNDERSTAND THE SCHEDULING
DEMANDS OF A FEW WEEKS AGO, AND TO COME BACK
AGAIN AND GIVE ME THE CHANCE TO MEET WITH
YOU.

I WAS THINKING OF HOW I WAS GOING TO
BEGIN MY REMARKS HERE, AND I STARTED
THINKING ABOUT MY FEELINGS ON AGE. THEY CAN
BE SUMMED UP BY THIS GREETING: HI KIDS!

AGE IS A STATE OF MIND, AN ATTITUDE.
THE DISTINGUISHED PHILOSOPHER DR. SATCHEL
PAIGE, WHO ALSO PLAYED A LITTLE BASEBALL,
ONCE SUMMED THIS UP WITH A QUESTION.
HE SAID, "HOW OLD WOULD YOU BE IF YOU DIDN'T
KNOW HOW OLD YOU WAS?" THINK ABOUT IT.
FOR THE LAST 34 YEARS, I HAVE CHOSEN 39.

I WANT TO PERSONALLY SAY HELLO TO SOME
REMARKABLE PEOPLE HERE ON YOUR BOARD OF
DIRECTORS. THERE IS MARGARET MEALEY, WHOSE
WORK I'VE KNOWN OF FOR SOME TIME. SHE HAS
BEEN HONORED BY FIVE FORMER PRESIDENTS FOR
HER WORK WITH MANY ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING
THE U.S.O. AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
CATHOLIC WOMEN. SHE IS PRESIDENT OF THE
CATHOLIC GOLDEN AGE ASSOCIATION. SHE IS A
MARVEL, AND WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE HER HERE
TODAY.

AND BISHOP THOMAS DOLINAY, OF MY HOME
STATE OF CALIFORNIA. WE ARE VERY HAPPY TO
HAVE HIM HERE. HE TENDS A SMALL AND HUMBLE
FLOCK IN A WEE LITTLE PARISH THAT EXTENDS
FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TO ALASKA. SO HE
THOUGHT COMING ALL THE WAY TO WASHINGTON WAS
JUST A LITTLE SUNDAY OUTING.

I WANT TO RECOGNIZE, ALSO, TOM HINTON, WHOSE MARVELOUS WORK THROUGH THE YEARS HAS MADE HIM KNOWN TO AND RESPECTED BY EVERY BISHOP, AND JUST ABOUT EVERY PRIEST, IN THE UNITED STATES.

AND I WANT TO MENTION, EVEN THOUGH SHE COULDN'T BE HERE, SISTER BERNADETTE DE LOURDES. ALL OF YOU KNOW HER WORK. SHE IS ONE OF THE REASONS THAT SOME WRITERS WHO MUSE ON HUMANITY CONCLUDE THAT THERE ARE SAINTS AMONG US.

NOW, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF THINGS I WANT TO TALK ABOUT TODAY, AND I'M GOING TO GET TO IT. BUT SINCE WE'LL BE TALKING ABOUT FEDERAL PROGRAMS THAT HAVE HAD SOME PROBLEMS, I WANT TO TELL YOU A STORY I HEARD ABOUT HOW SUCH PROBLEMS CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE.

THE STORY GOES THAT ONE DAY ST. PETER WAS HAPPILY WALKING AROUND NEAR THE PEARLY GATES, AND HE HEARD A FUNNY LITTLE SOUND AND SAW A LOT OF LITTLE THINGS SCURRYING ABOUT, AND HE REALIZED HEAVEN HAD A NEW DELEGATION OF MICE. ST. PETER LEANED DOWN AND TALKED TO THE MICE AND SAID, "WELL FOLKS, HOW DO YOU LIKE IT UP HERE?" THEY SAID THE ACCOMMODATIONS WERE SUPERB, BUT THEY HAD A COMPLAINT. "HEAVEN IS SO LARGE," THEY TOLD HIM, "AND OUR LEGS ARE SO SHORT, IT'S HARD FOR US TO GET AROUND AND SEE EVERYTHING." SO, ST. PETER ORDERED THAT THEY ALL BE GIVEN LITTLE ROLLER SKATES. AND THEY PUT THEM ON, AND THE NEXT DAY THEY WERE DARTING ALL OVER THE PLACE HAVING A HECK OF A TIME.

A WEEK LATER ST. PETER WENT FOR HIS STROLL, AND NO MICE. HE LOOKED AROUND, BUT COULDN'T FIND THEM. ALL OF A SUDDEN HE CAME UPON A FAT AND HAPPY OLD CAT SLEEPING IN THE CORNER.

ST. PETER SAID, "WELL CAT, HOW ARE YOU DOING, HOW DO YOU LIKE HEAVEN?" CAT SAID, "IT'S PARADISE! IT'S CLEAN, IT'S QUIET, THE WEATHER'S NICE -- AND THOSE MEALS ON WHEELS ARE TERRIFIC!"

SERIOUSLY, I THINK I HAVE A SENSE OF WHAT YOUR CONCERNS ARE, WHAT THE REALITIES ARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN AMERICA. THOSE 85 AND OLDER ARE ALMOST THE FASTEST GROWING SEGMENT OF OUR POPULATION. BACK IN 1920, THE PERCENTAGE OF OUR POPULATION AGED 65 OR OLDER WAS LESS THAN 5 PERCENT. NOW IT'S MORE THAN TWICE THAT, AND GROWING. AND AS THE BABY BOOM GENERATION GETS OLDER -- AND SOME OF THEM ARE ENTERING THEIR FORTIES -- THE SENIOR CITIZENS OF OUR COUNTRY WILL BE A HUGE GROUP, AND THEIR INTERESTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE A MATTER OF GREAT CONCERN TO OUR SOCIETY.

THERE ARE SOME PROGRAMS I AM GOING TO TALK ABOUT THAT TOUCH ON YOUR CONCERNS.

THEY ARE IMPORTANT PUBLIC PROGRAMS, BUT THEY
HAVE HAD THEIR SHARE OF PROBLEMS.

FIRST, THERE IS SOCIAL SECURITY.

NO AMERICAN NEED FEAR FOR THE INTEGRITY AND
FUTURE OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM. AS A
RESULT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF OUR
BIPARTISAN COMMISSION WHICH WERE ENACTED BY
THE CONGRESS, WE RESCUED SOCIAL SECURITY
FROM IMMINENT BANKRUPTCY AND ASSURED ITS
GOOD HEALTH WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY.

WE HAVE ALSO PROPOSED SOMETHING THAT
WILL BENEFIT THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WHO
DEPEND SO MUCH ON SOCIAL SECURITY NOW.
UNDER PRESENT LAW, SOCIAL SECURITY
BENEFICIARIES WOULD RECEIVE NO COST OF
LIVING INCREASE NEXT JANUARY, IF THE COST OF
LIVING ADJUSTMENT IS BELOW 3 PERCENT. GIVEN
THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE IN FIGHTING
INFLATION, THAT COULD BE A REAL POSSIBILITY.

BUT WE CAN AND WE SHOULD GIVE SOCIAL SECURITY RECIPIENTS THE FULL COST OF LIVING INCREASE IN A TIMELY MANNER -- SO I HAVE ASKED THE CONGRESS TO AMEND THE LAW TO ASSURE THAT THIS IS DONE.

SECOND, MEDICARE. ALL OUR ACTIONS HAVE BEEN AIMED AT MAKING IT STRONGER AND ASSURING ITS CONTINUATION. MILLIONS OF AMERICANS DEPEND ON THE MEDICARE PROGRAM TO HELP MEET THEIR HEALTH CARE COSTS. WHILE MEDICARE IS NOT IN THE SAME IMMEDIATE TROUBLE THAT SOCIAL SECURITY WAS, WE MUST ENSURE THE LONG-TERM SOLVENCY OF THE MEDICARE PROGRAM; AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT WE CAN FIND THE RIGHT SOLUTIONS IN A BIPARTISAN MANNER AS WE DID WITH SOCIAL SECURITY.

WE HAVE ALREADY TAKEN THE FIRST STEP BY ESTABLISHING A NEW METHOD OF PAYING HOSPITALS UNDER THE MEDICARE PROGRAM. EVER SINCE MEDICARE WAS ESTABLISHED IN THE MID-1960's, HOSPITALS WERE PAID PRETTY MUCH WHATEVER THEY SPENT. GIVING HOSPITALS A BLANK CHECK RESULTED IN COSTS THAT WERE RISING OUT OF CONTROL. NOW, UNDER A NEW PROGRAM, HOSPITALS ARE PAID SET RATES, AND IF THE HOSPITAL CAN PROVIDE CARE FOR LESS, THEY KEEP THE SAVINGS. THIS HAS SUCCESSFULLY REDUCED COST INCREASES, WHILE ENSURING THAT THE QUALITY OF THE HOSPITAL CARE STAYS HIGH. WE ARE MONITORING THIS NEW PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM CLOSELY TO CONTINUE TO ASSURE THAT QUALITY IS PRESERVED WHILE HEALTH COST INFLATION CONTINUES TO GO DOWN.

THIRD, DOCTORS, AND THE HIGH COST OF MEDICAL CARE. IT'S TERRIBLY TOUGH WHEN YOU'RE TIGHT ON FUNDS AND GET SICK.

IT'S TOUGH WHEN YOU'RE NOT TIGHT ON FUNDS
BUT YOU HAVE AN ONGOING AILMENT, AND YOU'RE
HIT WITH A LOT OF BILLS.

THIS PAST JULY, WE ESTABLISHED A
15-MONTH FREEZE ON DOCTORS' CHARGES TO
MEDICARE PATIENTS. BELIEVE ME, WE ARE
TRYING BOTH TO CONTROL COSTS FOR OLDER
AMERICANS AND THE GOVERNMENT -- AND WE'RE
DOING EVERYTHING WE CAN TO TRY TO ENSURE
THAT MEDICAL CARE WILL BE BOTH AVAILABLE AND
AFFORDABLE FOR ALL OF THE SENIOR CITIZENS IN
OUR COUNTRY.

THERE IS A WHOLE HOST OF OTHER,
RELATED, ISSUES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THE
QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OLDER AMERICANS. CRIME
FOR ONE. OUR ADMINISTRATION IS MAKING EXTRA
EFFORTS TO HELP LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT
AGENCIES COMBAT STREET CRIME AS A GREAT
NATIONAL MENACE. IN THE PAST 2 YEARS, WE
HAVE ACTUALLY SEEN A DROP IN THE OVERALL
NATIONAL CRIME RATE.

I ASSURE YOU THAT WE INTEND TO CONTINUE OUR
EFFORTS IN A SECOND ADMINISTRATION.

WE BELIEVE AS YOU DO THAT DECENT PEOPLE HAVE
THE RIGHT TO WALK THE STREETS AT NIGHT OR
TAKE A STROLL THROUGH A PARK... WE'RE A
LITTLE TIRED OF THE FACT THAT WITH ALL THE
LOCKS ON OUR DOORS AND SUCH, IT'S THE
LAW-ABIDING PART OF OUR SOCIETY THAT'S
REALLY LOCKED UP. WE'RE TIRED OF IT, AS YOU
ARE, AND WE'RE TRYING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT
IT.

WE LIVE IN A TIME OF GREAT CHALLENGES.
THAT DOESN'T WORRY ME BECAUSE ALL OF US HAVE
SEEN, AGAIN AND AGAIN, THAT AMERICA IS VERY
GOOD AT MEETING CHALLENGES. ONE OF THE
GREAT CHALLENGES OF OUR TIMES IS TO IMPROVE
THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL AMERICANS, AND
ESPECIALLY OUR OLDER AMERICANS --

THE FOLKS WHO'VE PAID THEIR DUES, WHO KEPT THE WORLD GOING DURING THE TOUGH YEARS OF THE THIRTIES AND THE DEPRESSION, AND THE FORTIES AND THE WAR, AND THE FIFTIES, AND SIXTIES, AND SEVENTIES, AND BEYOND. ALL OF YOU HAVE EARNED THE RIGHT TO SIT BACK AND TAKE IT EASY AND LET THE WORLD TAKE CARE OF ITSELF... BUT YOU DON'T. } YOU'RE IN THERE SWINGING, YOU'RE CONTRIBUTING THINGS NO ONE ELSE COULD. } YOU'RE OUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET. I'M PROUD TO BE ONE OF YOU. } I'M PROUD WE'RE STILL IN THERE SLUGGING TOGETHER.

WE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE PROUD OF OUR GENERATION. } WE'VE LIVED THROUGH FOUR WARS AND A GREAT DEPRESSION THAT TOPPLED GOVERNMENTS AND BROUGHT MISERY SUCH AS YOUNGER GENERATIONS HAVE NEVER SEEN.

WE ARE ONE OF THOSE RARE GENERATIONS THAT SAW IN A LIFETIME A GREAT TRANSITION. YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY WILL SEE ASTOUNDING THINGS BUT NEVER THE GREAT CHANGES WE KNEW.

WE LITERALLY WENT FROM THE HORSE AND BUGGY
TO WALKING ON THE MOON.

BACK IN THOSE RIOTOUS DAYS OF THE
SIXTIES WHEN I WAS GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA,
A GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM OUR UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA CAMPUSES DEMANDED A MEETING WITH
ME. I WAS DELIGHTED BECAUSE IN THOSE DAYS I
COULD START A RIOT JUST GOING TO A CAMPUS.

THEIR SPOKESMAN DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME.
RESPLENDENT IN TORN T-SHIRT AND BAREFOOT HE
OPENED BY TELLING ME IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR
ME TO UNDERSTAND THEM. HE SAID, "YOUR
GENERATION DOESN'T UNDERSTAND ITS OWN SONS
AND DAUGHTERS. YOU DIDN'T GROW UP IN A
WORLD OF INSTANT ELECTRONICS, OF COMPUTERS
FIGURING OUT PROBLEMS THAT ONCE TOOK MONTHS
OR EVEN YEARS. YOU DIDN'T HAVE NUCLEAR
POWER, JET TRAVEL, JOURNEYS INTO SPACE."

HE TALKED JUST LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO
REALIZE THE ANSWER. WHEN HE PAUSED FOR
BREATH I SAID, "YOU ARE RIGHT."

WE DIDN'T HAVE THOSE THINGS WHEN WE WERE
GROWING UP. WE INVENTED THEM."

ALL OF US CARE ABOUT OLDER AMERICANS
AND THEIR FINANCIAL SECURITY. BUT WE'RE NOT
JUST CONCERNED ABOUT OURSELVES. WE SEE THE
YOUNGER PEOPLE GROWING UP THESE DAYS AND
THEY'LL BE LIVING IN A WORLD WE CAN'T EVEN
ENVISION. AND WE CARE ABOUT THOSE YOUNG
PEOPLE, AND WE CARE ABOUT OUR COUNTRY, AND
ITS FUTURE.

AND THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING THAT WE GO
FORWARD TO MEET A CHALLENGE TOGETHER —
TO BUILD A WORLD IN WHICH THE FUTURE
GENERATIONS OF AMERICA CAN BE FREE FROM
FEARS ABOUT ECONOMIC SECURITY — FREE FROM
FEARS THAT WHEN THEY'RE OLD THEY'LL BE
SUPERFLUOUS PEOPLE, FREE FROM FEARS THAT
THEY WON'T HAVE A PLACE IN THE WORK FORCE IF
THEY WANT ONE, THAT THEY'LL BE LONELY, THAT
THEY'LL BE FORGOTTEN.

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WE HAVE TO ENSURE THAT THE AGED GET THE
RESPECT THEY DESERVE, THAT THEY HAVE
OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPRESS THEIR CREATIVITY.

THESE ARE CHALLENGES FOR ALL OF US. } AND I
ASK ALL OF YOU IN PARTICULAR TO BRING YOUR
WISDOM, YOUR EXPERIENCE, YOUR CREATIVITY TO
THESE QUESTIONS, SO THAT TOGETHER WE CAN
HELP THOSE YOUNG ONES ON THE WAY UP.

AND NOW, I THANK YOU. } IT IS AN HONOR
TO HAVE YOU HERE AND TO MEET YOU, AND MAY
GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

#

The President has seen _____

(Noonan/BE)
August 30, 1984
12:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: CATHOLIC GOLDEN AGE ASSOCIATION
CHAPTER PRESIDENTS
FRIDAY, AUGUST 31, 1984

Thank you, all of you, very much. It is a joy to have you here. It is very kind of you to understand the scheduling demands of a few weeks ago, and to come back again and give me the chance to meet with you.

I was thinking of how I was going to begin my remarks here, and I started thinking about my feelings on age. They can be summed up by this greeting: Hi kids!

Age is a state of mind, an attitude. The distinguished philosopher Dr. Satchel Paige, who also played a little baseball, once summed this up with a question. He said, "How old would you be if you didn't know how old you was?" Think about it. For the last 34 years, I have chosen 39.

I want to personally say hello to some remarkable people here on your Board of Directors. There is Margaret Mealey, whose work I've known of for some time. She has been honored by five former Presidents for her work with many organizations, including the U.S.O. and the National Council of Catholic Women. She is president of the Catholic Golden Age Association. She is a marvel, and we are proud to have her here today.

And Bishop Thomas Dolinay, of my home State of California. We are very happy to have him here. He tends a small and humble flock in a wee little parish that extends from Southern California to Alaska. So he thought coming all the way to Washington was just a little Sunday outing.

I want to recognize, also, Tom Hinton, whose marvelous work through the years has made him known to and respected by every Bishop, and just about every priest, in the United States.

And I want to mention, even though she couldn't be here, Sister Bernadette de Lourdes. All of you know her work. She is one of the reasons that some writers who muse on humanity conclude that there are saints among us.

Now, there are a number of things I want to talk about today, and I'm going to get to it. But since we'll be talking about Federal programs that have had some problems, I want to tell you a story I heard about how such problems can happen anywhere.

The story goes that one day St. Peter was happily walking around near the Pearly Gates, and he heard a funny little sound and saw a lot of little things scurrying about, and he realized Heaven had a new delegation of mice. St. Peter leaned down and talked to the mice and said, "Well folks, how do you like it up here?" They said the accommodations were superb, but they had a complaint. "Heaven is so large," they told him, "and our legs are so short, it's hard for us to get around and see everything." So, St. Peter ordered that they all be given little roller skates. And they put them on, and the next day they were darting all over the place having a heck of a time.

A week later St. Peter went for his stroll, and no mice. He looked around, but couldn't find them. All of a sudden he came upon a fat and happy old cat sleeping in the corner. St. Peter said, "Well cat, how are you doing, how do you like Heaven?" Cat

said, "It's Paradise! It's clean, it's quiet, the weather's nice -- and those meals on wheels are terrific!"

Seriously, I think I have a sense of what your concerns are, what the realities are for older people in America. Those 85 and older are almost the fastest growing segment of our population. Back in 1920, the percentage of our population aged 65 or older was less than 5 percent. Now it's more than twice that, and growing. And as the baby boom generation gets older -- and some of them are entering their forties -- the senior citizens of our country will be a huge group, and their interests will continue to be a matter of great concern to our society.

There are some programs I am going to talk about that touch on your concerns. They are important public programs, but they have had their share of problems.

First, there is social security. No American need fear for the integrity and future of the social security system. As a result of the recommendations of our bipartisan commission which were enacted by the Congress, we rescued social security from imminent bankruptcy and assured its good health well into the next century.

We have also proposed something that will benefit the millions of people who depend so much on social security now. Under present law, social security beneficiaries would receive no cost of living increase next January, if the cost of living adjustment is below 3 percent. Given the progress we have made in fighting inflation, that could be a real possibility. But we can and we should give social security recipients the full cost

of living increase in a timely manner -- so I have asked the Congress to amend the law to assure that this is done.

Second, medicare. All our actions have been aimed at making it stronger and assuring its continuation. Millions of Americans depend on the medicare program to help meet their health care costs. While medicare is not in the same immediate trouble that social security was in when we took office, experts agree it may face bankruptcy in the early 1990's if nothing is done. We have the time to consider carefully how best to ensure the long-term solvency of the medicare program; and I am confident that we can find the right solutions in a bipartisan manner as we did with social security.

We have already taken the first step by establishing a new method of paying hospitals under the medicare program. Ever since medicare was established in the mid-1960's, hospitals were paid whatever they spent. Giving hospitals a blank check resulted in costs that were rising out of control. Now, under a new program, hospitals are paid set rates, and if the hospital can provide care for less, they keep the savings. This has successfully reduced cost increases, while ensuring that the quality of the hospital care stays high. We are monitoring this new Prospective Payment system closely to continue to assure that quality is preserved while health cost inflation continues to go down.

Third, doctors, and the high cost of medical care. It's terribly tough when you're tight on funds and get sick. It's

tough when you're not tight on funds ^{but} ~~and~~ you have an ongoing ailment, and you're hit with a lot of bills.

This past July, we established a 15-month freeze on doctors' charges to medicare patients. Believe me, we are trying both to control costs for older Americans and the Government -- and we're doing everything we can to try to ensure that medical care will be both available and affordable for all of the senior citizens in our country.

~~And~~ There is a whole host of other, related, issues that have to do with the quality of life for older Americans. Crime for one. Our Administration is making extra efforts ~~to hit out at street crime~~, to help local law enforcement agencies combat street crime as a great national menace. In the past 2 years, we have actually seen a drop in the overall national crime rate. I assure you that we intend to continue our efforts in a second Administration. ~~I assure you that~~ We believe as you do that decent people have the right to walk the streets at night or take a stroll through a park . . . We're a little tired of the fact that with all the locks on our doors and such, it's the law-abiding part of our society that's really locked up. We're tired of it, as you are, and we're trying to do something about it.

We live in a time of great challenges. That doesn't worry me because all of us have seen, again and again, that America is very good at meeting challenges. One of the great challenges of our times is to improve the quality of life for all Americans, and especially our older Americans. The folks who've paid their



RONALD REAGAN

Insert

We have every right to be favored of our generation. We've lived through 4 wars and a great depression that toppled gov'ts. and brought misery & such as younger generations have never seen.

We ~~were~~ ^{are} one of those rare generations that ~~experienced~~ ^{saw} in a lifetime a great transition - young people today will see ~~and~~ astounding things but never the great changes we knew. We literally went from the horse & buggy to walking on the Moon.

Back in those riotous days of the 60's when I was Gov. of Calif. A group of students from our U. of Calif. campuses demanded a meeting with me. I was delighted because in those days I could start a riot just going to a campus.


Their spokesman didn't waste any time. Resplendent in torn T shirt & barefoot he opened by telling me it was impossible for me to understand them. He said; "your generation doesn't understand it's own sons & daughters." You didn't grow up in a world of instant electronics, of computers figuring out problems that once took months or even years."

(over)

"

You didn't have nuclear power,
jet travel, journeys into space?

He talked just long enough for
me to realize the answer. When he
paused for breath I said; "You are
right. We didn't have those things
when we were growing up. We
invented them."

dues, who kept the world going during the tough years of the thirties and the depression, and the forties and the war, and the fifties, and sixties, and seventies, and beyond. All of you have earned the right to sit back and take it easy and let the world take care of itself . . . But you don't. You're in there swinging, you're contributing things no one else could. You're our most valuable asset. I'm proud to be one of you. I'm proud we're still in there slugging together. 

All of us care about older Americans and their financial security. But we're not just concerned about ourselves. We see the younger people growing up these days and they'll be living in a world we can't even envision. And we care about those young people, and we care about our country, and its future.

And that's why I'm asking that we go forward to meet a challenge together -- to build a world in which the future generations of America can be free from fears about economic security -- free from fears that when they're old they'll be superfluous people, free from fears that they won't have a place in the work force, that they'll be lonely, that they'll be forgotten. We have to ensure that the aged get the respect they deserve, that they have opportunities to express their creativity. These are challenges for all of us. And I ask all of you in particular to bring your wisdom, your experience, your creativity to these questions, so that together we can help those young ones on the way up.

And now, I thank you. It is an honor to have you here and to meet you, and may God bless you all.