

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Roberts, John G.: Files
Folder Title: JGR/Presidential Remarks, Statements,
[& Addresses] February 1984
(2 of 3)
Box: 40

To see more digitized collections visit:
<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:
<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS 

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Dinner for the
Nation's Governors and Their Spouses
Sunday, February 26, 1984

Richard Darman has asked that comments on the above-referenced remarks be sent directly to Ben Elliott by close of business today. The brief remarks discuss Federalism in a general way, and praise the efforts of state and local government officials. I have reviewed the remarks and have no legal objection.

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHWRITING OFFICE

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING *Orig. signed by FFF*
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Dinner for the
Nation's Governors and Their Spouses
Sunday, February 26, 1984

Counsel's Office has reviewed the above-referenced remarks,
and finds no objection to them from a legal perspective.

cc: Richard G. Darman

FFF:JGR:aea 2/21/84

bcc: FFFielding/JGRoberts/Subj/Chron

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHWRITING OFFICE

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Dinner for the
Nation's Governors and Their Spouses
Sunday, February 26, 1984

Counsel's Office has reviewed the above-referenced remarks,
and finds no objection to them from a legal perspective.

cc: Richard G. Darman

FFF:JGR:aea 2/21/84

bcc: FFFielding/JGRoberts/Subj/Chron

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence
Received (YY/MM/DD) 1/1Name of Correspondent: Richard Darman☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Presidential Remarks Dinner
for the Nation's Governors and
their spouses, Sunday, Feb 26

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CEH/HOU</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>84,02,21</u>			<u>1/1</u>
<u>CEH/AT 18</u>	Referral Note: <u>D</u>	<u>84,02,21</u>		<u>5</u>	<u>84,02,21</u>
	Referral Note:			<u>C.O.B.</u>	
		<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:				
		<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:				
		<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:				

ACTION CODES:

A - Appropriate Action
C - Comment/Recommendation
D - Draft Response
F - Furnish Fact Sheet
to be used as Enclosure

I - Info Copy Only/No Action Necessary
R - Direct Reply w/Copy
S - For Signature
X - Interim Reply

DISPOSITION CODES:

A - Answered
B - Non-Special Referral
C - Completed
S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

Type of Response = Initials of Signer
Code = "A"
Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: _____

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.

Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).

Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.

Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 2/21/84 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. TODAY, 2/21/84

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: DINNER FOR THE NATION'S GOVERNORS AND
THEIR SPOUSES
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1984

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	☐	☐	McFARLANE	☐	☐
MEESE	☐	☒	McMANUS	☐	☒
BAKER	☐	☒	MURPHY	☐	☒
DEAVER	☐	☒	OGLESBY	☒	☐
STOCKMAN	☐	☐	ROGERS	☐	☐
DARMAN	☐	☒	SPEAKES	☐	☒
FELDSTEIN	☐	☐	SVAHN	☒	☐
FIELDING	☒	☐	VERSTANDIG	☒	☐
FULLER	☒	☐	WHITTLESEY	☒	☐
HERRINGTON	☐	☐	TUTWILER	☒	☐
HICKEY	☐	☐	WIRTHLIN	☒	☐
JENKINS	☐	☐	HENKEL	☒	☐
			ROSEBUSH	☒	☐
			FISCHER	☒	☐
			ELLIOTT		☒

REMARKS:

Please forward comments/edits directly to Ben Elliott in room 100 by cob TODAY, 2/21/84, with an information copy to my office.

Thank you.

RESPONSE:

1984 FEB 21 PM 3:22

Richard G. Darman
 Assistant to the President
 Ext. 2702

1004 FEB 21 11 3: 20

(Rohrabacher/BE)
February 21, 1984
2:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: DINNER FOR THE NATION'S
GOVERNORS AND THEIR SPOUSES
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1984

Nancy and I are delighted to welcome you to the White House. Preparing for tonight was a bit more difficult than usual. I knew I'd be in front of a group composed of the individuals whose own speaking ability was enough to capture the highest office of government in their respective States, and it is not always easy to keep the attention of such an august body.

That dilemma brought to mind the story of a young preacher who was having trouble keeping the attention of his congregation. He went to an older minister to ask advice. The older minister told him that all men of the cloth experience this problem at one time or another. The older minister handled it by stunning his unattentive congregation. In the middle of his sermon he'd say: I just want all of you to know that last night I was in the arms of another man's wife. And that woman was my dear mother.

A few weeks later, the young preacher was doing his best, but people were falling asleep, the kids were passing notes, and nobody was paying much attention. So the young minister took a deep breath and blurted out: I just want all of you to know that last night I was in the arms of another man's wife.

Sure enough that got their attention. The ladies were poking their husbands and the kids looked up. The young minister was startled for a moment and then said, "And that woman was . . . was . . . my, I forget who that woman was."

Seriously though, I am pleased and honored to have you here tonight. This room is often used for State dinners honoring visiting heads of state. It is fitting that we, too, share this room in recognition that you are also heads of sovereign States.

Our Federal system of sovereign States is, today, as vital to the preservation of freedom as it was in the time of Jefferson, Adams, and those other farsighted individuals who we revere as our Founding Fathers. They envisioned a system that would secure the greatest degree of liberty, while at the same time be functional and efficient.

They knew well that if too much power and authority were vested in the central Government -- even if intended for a noble purpose -- not only would liberty be threatened, but it wouldn't work. Jefferson warned, "Were we directed from Washington when to sow and when to reap, we should soon want bread."

During the last decade I think we got a taste of just what it was Jefferson was warning us about. So much power had centralized in Washington that frustration and stagnation ruled the day. The Federal Government taxed away the available revenue and set up a confusing web of regulations and bureaucratic controls to be complied with in order to get it back. Furthermore, the rules and restrictions, to a large degree, were coming from faraway unelected officials. This neither worked, nor was it consistent with principles of American freedom.

Over the last 3 years, we've put a stop to this ever-increasing centralization of power. Through our block grant program, through our efforts to get control of Federal spending

and taxing, we have halted what I considered to be a very ominous trend. People are no longer looking to Washington to solve every problem. As a result we are seeing a renaissance of direct involvement -- whether in the local schools or in neighborhood watch programs -- and the reemergence of State and local government as significant forces in determining the future of our country and the quality of life of our people.

This has been accomplished with close consultation and cooperation with you and other State and local officials. I want each of you to know I deeply appreciate the mature and, in most cases, nonpartisan way we've worked together to ensure progress in the area of Federalism. There is still much to be done, and I hope we can build on the working relationship we've already established.

Technology today is opening up new opportunities at the State and local level. State government has some of the most competent and hardworking employees to be found in government at any level. And in the last few years, we've seen creativity and innovation as never before in the State Houses throughout the country. Today, that vision of our Founding Fathers of a Federal system of States is as viable, if not more so, than at any time in our history.

So let us continue working together to keep faith with that dream. Please join me as I toast you, the Governors of the States of the Union. To our freedom and to strong and efficient State government.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS *JGR*

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Address to the
Nation's Governors -- East Room

Richard Darman has asked that comments on the above-referenced remarks be sent directly to Ben Elliott by 9:30 a.m. tomorrow. In these remarks the President urges support for a line-item veto and a constitutional requirement that the budget be balanced. He also reiterates his opposition to raising taxes to "cure" the deficit problem, and calls upon the governors to support his plea for bipartisan support for a \$100 billion "downpayment" of deficit reductions.

In the last sentence on page 2, "the specific reform, a reform" should be "these specific reforms, reforms." I assume the remarks intend to refer to both the line-item veto and the balanced budget amendment.

Attachment

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHWRITING OFFICE

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING *Orig. signed by FFF*
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Address to the
Nation's Governors -- East Room

Counsel's Office has reviewed the above-referenced remarks. In the last sentence on page 2, "the specific reform, a reform" should be "these specific reforms, reforms." I assume the remarks intend to refer to both the line-item veto and the balanced budget amendment.

cc: Richard G. Darman

FFF:JGR:aea 2/21/84

bcc: FFFielding/JGRoberts/Subj/Chron

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 21, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR BEN ELLIOTT
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL SPEECHWRITING OFFICE

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Presidential Remarks: Address to the
Nation's Governors -- East Room

Counsel's Office has reviewed the above-referenced remarks. In the last sentence on page 2, "the specific reform, a reform" should be "these specific reforms, reforms." I assume the remarks intend to refer to both the line-item veto and the balanced budget amendment.

cc: Richard G. Darman

FFF:JGR:aea 2/21/84
bcc: FFFielding/JGRoberts/Subj/Chron

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence
Received (YY/MM/DD) 1/1Name of Correspondent: Richard Darman☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Presidential Remarks : Address to the
Nation's Governors East Room, Feb. 27

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CUHOC</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>84, 02, 21</u>		<u>1/1</u>
<u>CUAT 18</u>	Referral Note: <u>D</u>	<u>84, 02, 21</u>		<u>5 84, 02, 22</u> <u>9:30 a.m.</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>		<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>		<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>		<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>		<u>1/1</u>

ACTION CODES:

A - Appropriate Action
 C - Comment/Recommendation
 D - Draft Response
 F - Furnish Fact Sheet
 to be used as Enclosure

I - Info Copy Only/No Action Necessary
 R - Direct Reply w/Copy
 S - For Signature
 X - Interim Reply

DISPOSITION CODES:

A - Answered
 B - Non-Special Referral
 C - Completed
 S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

Type of Response = Initials of Signer
 Code = "A"
 Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: _____

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.

Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).

Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.

Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 2/21/84 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 9:30a.m. WEDNESDAY, 2/22

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: ADDRESS TO THE NATION'S GOVERNORS
EAST ROOM
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1984

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	☐	☐	McFARLANE	☐	☐
MEESE	☐	☒	McMANUS	☐	☒
BAKER	☐	☒	MURPHY	☐	☒
DEAVER	☐	☒	OGLESBY	☒	☐
STOCKMAN	☒	☐	ROGERS	☐	☐
DARMAN	☐	☒	SPEAKES	☐	☒
FELDSTEIN	☒	☐	SVAHN	☒	☐
FIELDING	☒	☐	VERSTANDIG	☒	☐
FULLER	☒	☐	WHITTLESEY	☒	☐
HERRINGTON	☐	☐	TUTWILER	☒	☐
HICKEY	☐	☐	WIRTHLIN	☒	☐
JENKINS	☐	☐	HENKEL	☒	☐
			FISCHER	☒	☐
			ELLIOTT		☒

REMARKS:

Please forward any comments/edits directly to Ben Elliott in room 100 by 9:30 a.m. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, with an information copy to my office.

Thank you.

RESPONSE:

1984 FEB 21 PM 3: 22

Richard G. Darman
 Assistant to the President
 Ext. 2702

Received SS
1984 FEB 21 PM 2:27

(Rohrabacher/BE)
February 21, 1984
1:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: ADDRESS TO THE NATION'S GOVERNORS
EAST ROOM
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1984

Welcome again. By now you've had a chance to speak with the top people in the Administration in specific areas concerning the domestic economy and foreign affairs. I don't want this to be a lecture on my part, so, if you'll bear with me for a few opening remarks, we can spend the rest of the time with your questions.

Whatever the format, when meeting with individuals who know their material, it takes a certain degree of preparation.

Last night I told you a young preacher story. I thought I'd follow up with another today. Apparently, a young minister arrived at his very first church and met with the deacons. During the discussion, naturally, they asked what was the subject of his first sermon. He replied that he hadn't thought about it because he said, "God will speak to me and give me the words."

The deacons winced a bit, but nothing else was said about the matter. The next day when the new minister met with the ladies of the church, the subject of his first sermon came up again. His answer was, as it was the day before, "God will speak to me and give me the words."

Well, Sunday arrived and the entire congregation was anxious. The time came and the young minister marched to the pulpit, took a deep breath, and looked out over the congregation. Sure enough, God spoke to him. And God said very clearly, "YOU ARE NOT PREPARED."

I think all of us know the importance of preparation. As the Chief Executive Officer of a State, you must be prepared to handle problems ranging from sewage treatment to criminal justice. I personally identify more with you Governors than with any other Government officials. First, of course, I was a Governor myself.

But beyond that, as the Chief Executive of the Federal Government, I continue to have much in common with you. We are both elected to represent the general good of the State and country and to watch out for the interest of all the people. We must both maneuver with members of a legislative body who represent a variety of interests and a legislative body that has the final say on budget matters.

Many of you have some effective tools, as I did, which are not available to me in my current job. One is the line-item veto, which prevents pork-barrel projects from being added onto needed legislation. The second is the constitutional requirement in many States that the budget be balanced.

I would like to see these two tools, which you use so well at the State level, put to use in maintaining responsible Government at the Federal level. In fact, if there is one resolution you could pass during your meeting that would demonstrate your concern over budget matters, it would be to offer your support for the specific reform, a reform which would make a tangible difference in the fight to keep Federal spending under control.

Last night I suggested that many of our country's ills can be traced to the centralization of power in Washington. Well, the budget problems, especially the deficit, underscore that observation. It is a product of looking to Washington for the solution to every problem.

The stagnation and inflation that gripped our country in the latter half of the 1970's, and from which we are just now emerging, resulted from Government spending too much and taxing too much. If we go back to the same taxing and spending patterns, there is no reason to believe it will not knock the legs out from under the recovery and put us right back in a quagmire of inflation and stagnation. That is why I've resisted, and will continue to resist, the call for taking the easy way out of the deficit problem by raising taxes. It isn't an easy way out. In fact, it isn't a way out period. If recovery falters, the deficit will skyrocket, and no increase in taxes will be able to keep up with it.

Some of you who have been fighting budget battles at the State level understand that there is a wellspring of public support for reducing the cost of Government. Others have experienced the wrath of the voters for trying to raise taxes on already overburdened taxpayers. The people will be no less upset by an increase in Federal taxes than they are by boosts in State taxes.

Vice President Bush has reported to me on the fine workshop session you had on Saturday. You covered a variety of areas, including crime, natural resources, education, international

trade, and health care. But, clearly, the Federal budget challenge is a top priority. It is a challenge, not just for those of us in the Federal Government, but for elected officials at all levels of government.

I'd like your help in mustering bipartisan cooperation. Knowing such cooperation in developing a long-range comprehensive program is unlikely in an election year, I've suggested we try, at least, to make a beginning, a first step. This could be in the form of a downpayment on the deficit, which I suggest should be in the range of \$100 billion. It won't solve the problem, but it will be measurable progress. It is also more realistic than working on the assumption that we must solve the whole deficit problem or do nothing at all.

Here again, I could use your support in calling for bipartisan cooperation in order to make at least a downpayment on the deficit. Excessive partisanship, non-constructive criticism, or negative comments without offering positive alternatives will not change a thing. If your voice is heard in support of a positive and bipartisan effort, you will have made a real contribution.

But let me close by emphasizing, the economic growth taking place today is the greatest asset we have. It just didn't happen by itself. It isn't some uncontrolled cycle. I believe if all of us work together -- Republicans and Democrats, representatives of the Federal, State, and local governments -- we can and will deal with the deficit problem, and in a way that does not jeopardize the recovery. Now if you have any questions.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 24, 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS *JGR*
SUBJECT: Draft Presidential Address: American
Legion Women's Auxiliary Convention
(2/23 -- 5:00 p.m. Draft)

Richard Darman has asked that comments on the above-referenced remarks be sent directly to Ben Elliott by close of business today. The remarks review the Administration's record, discussing the economic recovery, the improvement in our defenses, and our new anti-crime initiatives. The remarks then criticize the positions of "those who are out of step with the American public" on tax cuts, a balanced budget amendment, school prayer, tuition tax credits, crime legislation, and adequate defense spending. I have alerted the Speechwriter's Office to an error in the last paragraph on page 4 -- the organized crime commission has already held its first set of hearings -- and have no other objections.

Sherrie is concerned that the remarks may shade into the "political" category, and has advised Ben Elliott that our office will have detailed suggestions on that score in the near future. Accordingly, no memorandum to Elliott for your signature is attached; Sherrie will raise her concerns with you directly.

Attachment

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMING

Date Correspondence

Received (YY/MM/DD) 1 1Name of Correspondent: Richard G. Harman☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Draft Presidential Address: American
Union Women's Auxiliary Convention
(2/23 - 5:00 pm draft)

ROUTE TO:**ACTION****DISPOSITION**

Office/Agency	(Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CU Holland</u>		ORIGINATOR	<u>84/102/24</u>			<u>1 1</u>
<u>WRT 17</u>		Referral Note:	<u>84/102/24</u>		<u>S</u>	<u>84/102/24</u>
<u>LUAT 17</u>		Referral Note:	<u>84/102/24</u>		<u>COE</u>	<u>1 1</u>
		Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
		Referral Note:	<u>1 1</u>			<u>1 1</u>
		Referral Note:				

ACTION CODES:

A - Appropriate Action
 C - Comment/Recommendation
 D - Draft Response
 F - Furnish Fact Sheet
 to be used as Enclosure

I - Info Copy Only/No Action Necessary
 R - Direct Reply w/Copy
 S - For Signature
 X - Interim Reply

DISPOSITION CODES:

A - Answered
 B - Non-Special Referral
 C - Completed
 S - Suspended

FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

Type of Response = Initials of Signer
 Code = "A"
 Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: _____

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.

Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).

Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.

Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUMDATE: 2/22/84 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: c.o.b. FRIDAY, 2/24SUBJECT: DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: AMERICAN LEGION WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
CONVENTION (2/23 - 5:00 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	☐	☐	McFARLANE	☒	☐
MEESE	☐	☒	McMANUS	☐	☒
BAKER	☐	☒	MURPHY	☒	☐
DEAVER	☐	☒	OGLESBY	☒	☐
STOCKMAN	☒	☐	ROGERS	☐	☐
DARMAN	☐	☒	SPEAKES	☐	☒
FELDSTEIN	☒	☐	SVAHN	☒	☐
FIELDING →	☒	☐	VERSTANDIG	☒	☐
FULLER	☒	☐	WHITTLESEY	☒	☐
HERRINGTON	☐	☐	TUTWILER	☒	☐
HICKEY	☐	☐	WIRTHLIN	☒	☐
JENKINS	☐	☐	HENKEL	☐	☒
			ELLIOTT		☒
			FISCHER		☒

REMARKS:

Please provide comments directly to Ben Elliott, with a copy to my office, by close of business tomorrow, Friday, February 24. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

Richard G. Darman
Assistant to the President
Ext. 2702

1984 FEB 24 AM 7:40

(Dolan)
February 23, 1984
5:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: AMERICAN LEGION WOMEN'S
AUXILIARY CONVENTION
THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1984

It's wonderful to be here today and to see so many of you from the heartland in Washington. I'm sorry the city isn't looking its best for you, but it's just too chilly for the cherry blossoms -- most of the hot air that's normally around here has moved out to the primary trail.

One good thing about a political year, though, is the chance to meet with so many of you who are not part of the permanent Washington establishment. And you should be commended for being part of the American Legion Auxiliary's awareness program and participating in the briefings you'll be getting this week from Government officials. But I do hope you'll keep in mind something that I've learned in the past few years: The conventional wisdom in this town isn't always on target.

[In fact, I remember one informal survey taken at almost exactly this time 4 years ago during the height of the presidential primary season. Some of the savants and seers at the Washington Press Club were asked to predict who would be the President of the United States in 1981. One candidate -- not to mention any names -- got 197 votes, another got 65 votes, and two others 19 apiece. I hope you'll forgive me for mentioning this, but there was one fella left out -- his vote total was so insignificant, it wasn't reported. Guess who?]

Yes, a funny thing did happen to me on the way to the polling booth; and the Washington pundits and procrastinators

were proved wrong once again. But that's one reason why, when we came to Washington 3 years ago, we weren't afraid to challenge the conventional wisdom, and to show that campaign promises could be kept. We wanted to challenge the Washington buddy system, not give in to it. We wanted to reverse a domestic policy of "tax and tax, spend and spend," and end a foreign policy of watching the chances for peace with freedom, democracy, and dignity steadily retreat.

One by one, we dealt with the critical problems that faced our people: First it was inflation, once at 12.4 percent, now down to 3.8 percent, the lowest rate in over a decade; then Federal spending growth, cut more than in half -- they said it couldn't be done; then high interest rates, 21.5 percent, the highest since the Civil War, cut nearly in half to 11 percent; and then unemployment -- this one really shocked Washington's doomsayers -- it's been dropping faster than during any recovery in the last 30 years.

And on the foreign front, America is restoring her strength in words and in deeds. The decay in our military -- ships that couldn't leave port, aircraft that couldn't take off, a rapid deployment force that was neither rapid, deployable, nor much of a force -- all of that's behind us now.

That same uniform so many of you -- so many of your fathers, brothers, sons and daughters -- brought such honor to, today, millions of young Americans are again wearing that uniform with pride. All of you know far better than most how important it is that those young men and women, poised and ready, are equipped

with the best we can give them. Their readiness and resolve are the greatest guarantee we have that our young people will never again see the face of battle or bear the burden of war that so many Legionnaires had to bear in the past.

We're seeing to it that America stands proud again, that American citizens -- whether they're Navy pilots in the Gulf of Sidra or medical students in Grenada -- can no longer be attacked or their lives endangered with impunity. And about that Grenada rescue mission: Wasn't it nice for a change to see graffiti on foreign walls that did not say "Yankee go Home" but "God Bless America?"

Across the globe, Soviet expansionism, once unchecked, has now been blunted. And, for the first time in a long while, an American administration is levelling with the American people and the rest of the world about the crucial nature of the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism. Yet even as we have been candid about our adversaries, we have pushed forward a series of negotiating initiatives which I believe will eventually lead to not just arms control but arms reductions. And we must continue working until that day arrives when nuclear weapons have been banished from the face of the Earth.

In 3 years then, the direction of our domestic and foreign policies has been fundamentally changed; yet even as this Administration dealt with the pressing problems of our economy and national security, the problem of crime and the career criminal has remained among our top priorities. The 8-point

program I announced over a year ago is beginning to show gratifying results.

Drug-related arrests are averaging 1,000 a month and convictions 800 a month, and Federal law enforcement has taken out of circulation 2-3/4 million pounds of illicit drugs and 20 million doses of prescription drugs. Organized crime convictions are up from 515 in fiscal 1981 to 1,331 in 1983. After years of decline in our investigative forces, more than 1,000 new investigators and 200 new prosecutors are joining the fight this year against crime.

We've improved State and local cooperation through local law enforcement coordinating committees and the Justice Department's Governors Project. We've added prison space and improved training opportunities for local and State police. We've brought the F.B.I. in on major drug cases. Our 12 new regional drug task forces are beginning to bring in the big cases against major drug traffickers. And we've stepped up our educational efforts so we can take potential drug customers away from the dealers because just reducing the supply of drugs isn't good enough. You can't solve the problem until you turn off the customers.

Our organized crime commission, which will begin this month, will put the menace of organized crime where it belongs: front and center on the American agenda. Our goal is a frontal assault on criminal syndicates in America. We mean to cripple the mobsters' organization, dry up their profits, and put their members behind bars where they belong.

*a new round of
beverage*

In all these things, we are doing our best to deliver on our promises and keep faith with the American people. We've shown that America's problem wasn't a great national malaise at all, but a failure of leadership in Washington.

Yet, even all this progress -- progress we have won together -- hasn't satisfied some of the doomcriers who even now are saying our country is on the wrong course. I just wish those who are so pessimistic about America's future would remember the record of the last 3 years. You know, if you'll forgive one of my little stories here, some of these professional pessimists remind me of a tale told about an agent in the entertainment business who agreed one day to audition a young actor. The actor walked up on the stage of the old Roxy Theatre and then took off, flew up in the air and all around the balcony, landed back on the stage and looked down expectantly at the agent. The agent just sat there for a moment, looked up at him and then said, "Well, okay kid, but can you do anything besides bird imitations?"

We have come a long way, success is in sight. The 3-year record of this Administration shows how dramatically we broke with the legacy of an awful, immediate past. Yes, this Administration has a strong record, a hopeful record; it's open to scrutiny, we welcome it. But make no mistake: That record is not the real issue before the American people this year.

You know, there's an old rule in politics -- and I pay attention to it because President Dewey himself once reminded me of it -- that says the people don't want to hear so much about

where we've been, but about where we're going; not so much about what's been done, but what needs to be done.

And the issue this year before the American people is the issue of the future. Will America return to the days of malaise and confusion -- will we go back to double-digit inflation, skyrocketing interest rates, and economic stagnation and decline? Will we return to self-delusion about our adversaries and retreat in the face of provocation and aggression, to the days of decaying defenses and shattered prestige?

Or will we get on with the unfinished agenda of the eighties? This is the real issue before us. Will we continue America's progress towards a strong economic recovery at home, a strong defense abroad, a return to discipline and excellence in our schools, a crackdown on criminal elements in our society, and a renaissance of traditional values?

Now I'm sure you've heard those who are out of step with the American public on all these issues try to use words like fairness and compassion to avoid explaining themselves to the electorate. And I just think it's time for the experts on fairness and compassion to answer a few questions themselves.

Shouldn't these fairness experts explain to working Americans why it is "fair" to oppose tax cuts and tax indexing, and why, even now, they want to take those tax breaks away from the American people?

Will somebody get them to explain why, when the overwhelming majority of Americans favor a balanced budget amendment, they think it's "fair" to so bitterly oppose it?

And on another important constitutional amendment favored overwhelmingly by the American people, will somebody get them to tell us why it's compassionate to deny schoolchildren a right even Congressmen have: to open each day with a simple prayer?

Can they explain why they're so bitterly opposed to tuition tax credits, why they think it's fair for parochial or private school parents to be forced to pay twice for their children's education?

And why have the fairness experts and the compassion crusaders bottled up anti-crime legislation on Capitol Hill for 2 years in a row? Where's the compassion in forgetting the victims of crime? What is fair about holding up urgently-needed reform of our bail and parole systems, about refusing to revise the exclusionary rule or reinstitute the death penalty?

I believe those who are so quick to find fault with what this Administration and the American people have achieved together during the past 3 years owe an accounting to the American people.

Let them explain how under the guise of compassion and fairness a great political party -- a party that once stood for the working man -- has now divorced itself from the concerns of everyday Americans and turned itself over to the trendy politics of the glitter set and the special interest groups. Let them explain why they are opposed to tax cuts, to the balanced budget amendment, to the prayer amendment, to tuition tax credits, to anti-crime legislation, to adequate defense spending.

I think the political debate now getting underway in America is an especially important one; that these days are momentous ones for our country, that the choice we make this year will have much to do with the fate of freedom and prosperity for the rest of this century and beyond.

And I've often thought that the worst legacy of those grim years at the end of the seventies was the loss of self-confidence by our leaders in our institutions and in our people. More than a few of those leaders openly blamed their inadequacies on our system of Government and our people as a whole.

The last 3 years have shown just how wrong they were, just how resourceful the American people still are, and just how resilient our system is, and how willing the heart of America remains. Those of you here today from the heartland know what I'm talking about. Your organization and the dedication you bring to it is one of many examples of America's enduring vitality and energy.

You know, during the days of World War I, not long before the American Legion was founded in Paris, some of the allied commanders doubted whether the green American troops were really up to the job. And then during a great offensive in the Argonne Forest, the allies and the enemy found out very quickly just what these young Americans were made of.

Some of you may remember the story of "the lost battalion," a group of American soldiers trapped behind enemy lines who joined together and fought for days with incredible gallantry against overwhelming odds. And when the surrender demand finally

came they hurled even more defiance shouting: "Come over and get us." The enemy came but got nothing except defeat.

Twenty-six years later, not far away from that World War I battlefield, another group of American soldiers would hurl similar defiance at an overwhelmingly superior enemy when they answered a surrender demand with one immortal word: "nuts."

In both instances, the challenge then before Americans was to win a war. But, today, the challenge now before Americans is to prevent war. You know far better than most how important this work is, how high the price of war really is, and how great the heartbreak it brings.

But you also know that an America strong at home and strong abroad will never again pay that price or know that heartbreak. Only the strong are free. Peace comes only through strength. With your continued support and help, we can keep America strong, free, prosperous, and at peace. America is moving forward again. Let's keep her there.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless America.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 26, 1984

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AND GOVERNOR THOMPSON OF ILLINOIS
IN AN EXCHANGE OF TOASTS
AT DINNER FOR GOVERNORS

THE STATE DINING ROOM

9:50 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Nancy and I are delighted to welcome you to the White House. We're pleased and honored to have all of you here tonight.

This room is often used for state dinners honoring visiting heads of state, and it's fitting that we, too, share this room in recognition that you are also heads of sovereign states. Our federal system of sovereign states is today as vital to the preservation of freedom as it was in the time of Jefferson, Adams, and those other far-sighted individuals we revere as our Founding Fathers.

They envisioned a system that would secure the greatest degree of liberty while, at the same time, be functional and efficient. They knew well that if too much power and authority were vested in the central government, even if intended for a noble purpose, not only would liberty be threatened but it just wouldn't work.

Jefferson warned, "Were we directed from Washington when to sow and when to reap, we should soon want for bread." (Laughter. Applause.) I think during the last decade and before, we've gotten a taste of just what it was that Jefferson was warning us about. So much power is centralized in Washington that frustration and stagnation ruled the day.

The federal government taxed away the available revenue and set up a confusing web of regulations and bureaucratic controls to be complied with in order to get these resources back. Furthermore, the rules and restrictions, to a large degree, were coming from far away, unelected officials. This neither worked, nor was it consistent with principles of American freedom.

Over the last three years, we put a stop to this ever-increasing centralization of power. Through our block grant programs, through our efforts to get control of federal spending and taxing, we've halted what I consider to be a very ominous trend. People are no longer looking to Washington to solve every problem. As a result, we're seeing a renaissance of direct involvement, whether in the local schools or in neighborhood watch programs and the re-emergence of state and local government as significant forces in determining the future of our country and the quality of life of our people.

This has been accomplished with close consultation and cooperation with you and with other state and local officials. I want each of you to know I deeply appreciate the responsible and, in most cases, non-partisan way that we have worked together to ensure progress in the area of federalism. There's still much to be done and I hope we can build on the working relationship that we've already established.

Technology today is opening up new opportunities at the state and local level. State government has some of the most competent and hardworking employees to be found in government at any level. And in the last few years, we've seen creativity and innovation as never before in the state houses throughout the country. Today, that vision of our Founding Fathers of a federal system of states is as viable, if not more so, than at any time in our history.

MORE

So let us continue working together to keep faith with that dream. And now, would you please join me as I toast you, the governors of the states of the Union, and you can toast each other. And we can toast also to our freedom and to strong and efficient state government.

(The toast is offered.) (Applause.)

GOVERNOR THOMPSON: Mr. President, Mrs. Reagan, the members of your Cabinet and staff, my fellow governors and their spouses -- we are honored to be in this home this evening.

A year ago when we were here and my wife was able to be with me, on the way in the door, I kind of nudged her and said, "Hey, not bad for two kids from the west side of Chicago." (Laughter.)

I think probably all of us here tonight, despite the fact that we are called "Governor" and no matter how far we may have travelled nor no matter what we may have done or accomplished or hope yet to do, feel a rare sense of privilege at being within these walls and being with each other and being with you and Mrs. Reagan.

Tonight, party, philosophy, region and interest are irrelevant. We are all very proud Americans. This is our house. Every time that I come to Washington and see the lines of tourists stretched around the building with fathers and mothers, particularly young fathers and mothers holding the hands of the children, I know they're saying, "Be patient; once inside, you'll see something extraordinary and you'll remember it. You'll tell the class. You'll tell your brother and sister. You'll tell your grandmother, grandfather." This is an American privilege.

Our session went very long today, Mr. President. Tomorrow, we'll report to you formally on what we have accomplished thus far in our meeting, though we have much to do. We expended many passions today, especially in our committee -- issues involving the budget and the deficit, acid rain and all those controversies which swirl around us in public office -- in your office, in ours, at the other end of the avenue in the legislative branch and sometimes in the judicial branch.

Those passions have dissipated tonight. Because we're good at our jobs, they'll be back tomorrow morning full steam. And when you see us in the East Room tomorrow morning, we'll probably have some pretty tough questions for you and for the members of your staff and your Cabinet; that's why we're here. But tonight we join you as brother.

You were a governor -- a good governor, a proud

MORE

governor. And you share with us many common experiences.

Now, you hold the position that we elected you to. And though you are formally now engaged in a contest to retain that office, we still look upon you as brother. And we're glad of the opportunity to come with you once a year in this formal setting. And I must say, in my experience and perhaps in the experience of every governor in this room, you have extended the hospitality, the warmth and, most importantly, the interest of your office to us, your brothers, on so many more occasions, whether in the Oval Office or in our states, than we might reasonably expect for we know you have to deal with mayors -- (laughter) -- and legislators, county executives, business people and labor people and just all sorts of people that it's somewhat remarkable how much time you spend with governors. I think perhaps there's a bias there. At least, we hope so.

The issues which concern us, Mr. President, and about which even we differ among ourselves and within our states are only as good as the men and women who enliven them. There is justice or no justice depending upon the passions and the caring of men and women, not just on the pages of a book or in the words on those pages.

There will be a better education for our children than we had for ourselves, not only because that is important but because it is necessary but only achievable if we care to make it so and invest the time and the resources to achieve it. And whether it's the infrastructure of our country -- our roads, our highways, our bridges, our dams, our buildings, sewer systems, our water systems. For it's our responsibility for the safety and well-being of our fellow citizens through law enforcement, for public health, care for abused or neglected children, or infant mortality rates. Words are words, pages are pages, and laws are laws unless we, the governors, infuse them with our care.

We know how hard it is to be President and the First Lady because all of us in this room have experienced at least a portion of that which you live. We know there are many nights where you must feel frustrated, tired, mad. But many more where you feel satisfied, glad, challenged. We do, too, or we would not be with you tonight. When we leave this city and go back to our states and try and infuse our political, governmental, and personal lives with renewed vigor and caring, in part because we were here, we will remember you and Mrs. Reagan and wish for you the same. And we know it will be achieved.

And so tonight, Mr. President, from your brothers, and I am pleased to say, from one sister who has now joined the ranks -- on behalf of the governors, I propose a toast to the lady who guides you, sustains you, passionately loves you, and to the President of the United States.

(The toast is offered.) (Applause.)

END

10:03 P.M. EST