

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

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

Collection: Speechwriting, White House Office
of: Speech Drafts
Folder Title: Nancy Reagan: Woman of the Year
Award. Sept. 29, 1982
Box: 436

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/>

(Parvin)

USO INSERT

--Just as the Frenchwoman brightened my day, the USO has brightened the days of our service people since World War II. The USO is the equivalent of a big warm hug to our men and women in uniform. Around the world, the USO center is a home away from home to the lonesome kid from Topeka or Tacoma. In many airports, the USO is the next best thing to family to the serviceman who's had his wallet ~~stolen~~ stolen or his accommodations cancelled. In foreign lands, the USO is a reassuring presence to the young military wife confused by her new surroundings. You do so very much. I am honored to receive this award and I am especially honored to receive it from the USO. Thank you again.

(Parvin/AB)
September 24, 1982
11:00 a.m.

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

-- Thank you, Barbara. Last Thanksgiving Barbara came out to the ranch for an interview. One thing I admire about Barbara is that she's a perfectionist. She even had the make-up man do Ronnie's horse.

-- But I am delighted to be here today. You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. I wasn't exactly what you would call a seasoned professional jaded by public acclaim. I was so excited by the letter I pinned it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.

-- I am genuinely grateful to the USO for this award and for all you're doing for our people in uniform and their families. In thinking about all the wonderful moments you've brought to our men and women in the service, I remembered one of my own most cherished moments.

-- Along with millions of other Americans, Ronnie and I sat in front of the TV and watched -- tears streaming down our cheeks -- the first of the flights bringing the POW's home. I think every American wanted to put his or her arms around the men and give them a big, heartfelt welcome-home hug.

Since Ronnie was Governor at the time, we had the chance to do just that by holding a series of dinners. The first dinner was, well, the only word is dramatic. Children and neighbors heard about the dinner and lined up on both sides of the walk waiting for these heroes to appear. When Commander Charles Southwick arrived, he said he had something for me. The something was the tin spoon from which he'd eaten for 7 years in captivity. I dissolved, of course, and that spoon is still one of my proudest possessions.

-- The men told harrowing stories of their experiences. And they told of communicating from cell to cell by tapping in code. And then, there in our living room, we saw two men meet, hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other in warm embrace. They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face. Their friendship had been formed during years of captivity and hardship when they occupied adjoining cells.

-- Friendship also is the heart of the USO. Since World War II, you have been a friend to our people in uniform, and now you are a supportive friend of their families as well. The USO is the equivalent of a big warm hug to our men and women in service. So I am very honored to receive this award and I am especially honored to receive it from the USO.

(Parvin/AB)
September 24, 1982
9:00 a.m.

MRS. REAGAN: GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON DRUG AWARENESS
SEPTEMBER 27, 1982

-- Thank you for your welcome. Before I say anything else, I want to commend Governor James for calling this conference -- the first of its kind in Alabama. And I also want to compliment Mayor Folmar for his battle here in Montgomery against the drug epidemic.

-- As I was thinking over what to say today, I remembered that Helen Keller grew up in Alabama. Here was a girl whose young life was a void of silence and darkness, a void most of us cannot even comprehend. Yet there are children in this State today who are just as removed from the world, except that the void is inside them. Drugs have killed their hope, their promise, their spirit, their love. And though they may not realize it, drugs have turned them against their friends and families and toward a world of pain and isolation. This conference is about preventing that darkness from enveloping any more of our children.

-- You know being a parent is the great^{est} challenge we have in life and the one for which we have no training at all. Owen Spann is a San Francisco who lost a son to drugs said, "When you become a parent, you find yourself in a series of peaks and valleys, highs and lows, moments when you wonder if your

children will ever amount to anything and other moments of complete pride and joy."

-- Another father once wrote of his son, "No man can possibly know what life means, what the world means, until he has a child and loves it. And then the whole universe changes and nothing will ever seem exactly as "it seemed before." Well, neither does anything seem the same once a child develops a drug problem. It destroys a family. I believe drug abuse, which crosses all lines, is one of our country's greatest problems. We're talking about our next generation and what will happen to them.

-- You will hear other stories of heartbreak at this conference, but in spite of everything I remain optimistic. I am encouraged because people finally are coming together to face up to the problem of drug abuse. Parents are becoming more involved, more knowledgeable, and I think professionals now feel that something can be done.



Let me say in closing, I'm told that your State motto is "We Dare Defend Our Rights." Well, what this conference is saying is we dare to defend our children. And as long as drug abuse is a threat, as long as our kids are endangered, I know there will be people like you there to defend them.

Thank you, Governor, for allowing me to be part of your conference, and thank you all for what you're doing.

(Parvin/AR)
September 24, 1982
9:00 a.m.

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

But I am delighted to be here today
-- ~~Thank you.~~ You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. I wasn't exactly what you would call a seasoned professional jaded by public acclaim. I was so excited by the letter I pinned it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.

I am genuinely grateful to the USO for this award and for all you are doing for our people in uniform and their families. In thinking about all the wonderful moments you've brought to our men and people in uniform and their families. As far as I am concerned, we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces, and I'll explain that by way of a true story.
-- ~~And the award means that much more to me since it comes from the USO. All Americans know what the USO does for our people in uniform and their families. As far as I am concerned, we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces, and I'll explain that by way of a true story.~~

-- Along with millions of other Americans, Ronnie and I sat in front of the TV and watched -- tears streaming down our cheeks -- the first of the flights bringing the POW's home. I think every American wanted to put his or her arms around the men and give them a big, heartfelt welcome-home hug. Since Ronnie was Governor at the time, we had the chance to do just that by holding a series of dinners. The first dinner was, *well,* the only word is dramatic. Children and neighbors heard about the dinner and lined up on both sides of the walk waiting for *these heroes to appear* ~~them to come~~. When Commander Charles Southwick ~~arrived~~ *arrived*, he said he had something for me.

stet ↑

The something was the tin spoon from which he'd eaten for 7 years in captivity. I dissolved, of course, and that spoon is still one of my proudest possessions.

-- The men told harrowing stories of their experiences. And they told of communicating from cell to cell by tapping in code. And then, there in our living room, we saw two men meet, hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other in warm embrace. They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face. Their friendship had been formed during years of captivity and hardship when they occupied adjoining cells.

-- Friendship also is the heart of the USO. Since World War II, you have been a friend to our people in uniform, and now you are a supportive friend of their families as well. The USO is the equivalent of a big warm hug to our men and women in service. So I am very honored to receive this award and I am especially honored to receive it from the USO.

Insert Top Pg. 1

-- Thank you Barbara. Last ~~Thursday~~ ^{Thursday} Berdon came out to the ranch
for an interview. One thing I admire about Berdon is that she's a
perfectionist. She even had the make-up woman do Bonnie's hair.

--

(Parvin/AB)
September 22, 1982
4:00 p.m.

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

- Thank you. You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. I wasn't exactly what you would call a seasoned professional jaded by public acclaim. I was so excited by the letter I pinned it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.
- And the award means that much more to me since it comes from the USO. All Americans know what the USO does for our people in uniform and their families. As far as I am concerned we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces, and I'll explain that by way of a true story.
- A very touching incident occurred when my husband was Governor of California. Like all Americans, we were moved by the courage and patriotism of the returning POW's. We wanted to show our deep appreciation and respect so we held a series of dinners for them in our home. I wanted to have the parties in the warmth of a home and not in a hotel ballroom. The first of those dinners will remain forever vivid to me. The men had returned to the United States only a few days before and their emotions, of course, were still very intense; their pains still very recent. These men told stories that were so wrenching all our eyes were filled with

tears. I glanced at Ronnie and he looked at me and we were both fighting to keep control. They told of the torment and the tortures. And they told of devising ways to communicate by tapping in code from one cell to the next. And there, in our living room, we saw two men meet, hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other in the most sincere and moving embrace you can imagine. They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face. Their friendship had been formed during years of captivity and hardship when they occupied adjoining cells.

-- Those are the kind of men and women who are serving in our Nation's military. And I am proud, deeply proud, to be associated with bettering their welfare in any way I can. That is why I want to thank the USO not only for this award, but for all it's doing to serve those soldiers who are so nobly serving us.

(Parvin/AB)
September 22, 1982
4:00 p.m.

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

-- Thank you. You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. I wasn't exactly what you would call a seasoned professional jaded by public acclaim. I was so excited by the letter I pinned it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.

-- And the award means that much more to me since it comes from the USO. All Americans know what the USO does for our people in uniform and their families. As far as I am concerned we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces, and I'll explain that by way of a true story.

-- A very touching incident occurred when my husband was Governor of California. Like all Americans, we were moved by their courage and patriotism of the returning POW's. ~~we~~ wanted to show our deep appreciation and respect ~~of~~ ^{for the returning POW's and} we held a series of dinners ~~for them~~ ^{So we decided to hold} in our home. I wanted to have the parties in the warmth of a home and not in a hotel ballroom. The first of those dinners will remain forever vivid to me. The men had returned to the United States only a few days before and their emotions, of course, were still very intense; their pain ^{was} still very recent. ~~The~~ ^{They} men told stories that were so wrenching all our eyes were filled with

This is a true story but someone does not sound like we-

to get their hands on

L.A. doc -

It is to add the part about the spoon

tears. I glanced at Ronnie and he looked at me and we were both fighting to keep control. They told of the torment and the tortures. And they told of ~~devising ways to communicating~~ ^{then} ~~from one cell to the next.~~ ^{from cell to cell} And there in our living room we saw two men meet, hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other, ~~in the most~~ ^{in warm and moving embrace.} ~~sincere and moving embrace you can imagine.~~ They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face. Their friendship had been formed during years of captivity and hardship when they occupied adjoining cells.

-- ~~Those are the kind of men and women who are serving in our Nation's military. And I am proud, deeply proud, to be associated with bettering their welfare in any way I can. That is why I want to thank the USO not only for this award, but for all it's doing to serve those soldiers who are so nobly serving us.~~

Can we think of another ending?

-- Along with millions of other Americans, ~~my~~ ^{Bonnie} and I sat in front of the TV and watched -- tears streaming down our cheeks -- the first of the flights bringing the POWs home. I think every ~~one~~ ^{American} wanted to put his or her arms around these men and give them a big, heartfelt welcome home hug. Since Bonnie was governor at the time we had the chance to do just that by holding a series of dinners. The first dinner was ~~private~~ -- the only word is private. Children + neighbors heard about the dinner and lined up on both sides of the walk waiting for them to come. When Commander Charles Southwick arrived he said he had something for me. The something was the tin spoon from which he'd eaten for 7 years in captivity. I dissolved, of course, and that spoon is still one of my proudest possessions.

-- The men told harrowing stories of their experiences. And they told of camaraderie...

-- Friendship also is the heart of the USO. Since World War II, ~~the~~ ^{you have} been a friend to our people: uniform, and now ~~you are~~ ^{you are} a supportive friend of their families as well. So I am very honored to receive this award and I am especially honored to receive it from ~~the USO~~ ^{the USO}.

The USO is the equivalent of a big warm hug to our men and women in service.

100000- You
can probably clean this
up for me I've no writer!

(Parvin/AB)
September 22, 1982
10:30 a.m.

MRS. REAGAN: GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON DRUG AWARENESS
SEPTEMBER 27, 1982

-- Thank you for your welcome. Before I say anything else, I want to commend Governor James for calling this conference -- the first of its kind in Alabama. And I also want to compliment Mayor Folmar for his battle here in Montgomery against the drug epidemic.

-- As I was thinking over what to say today, I remembered that Helen Keller grew up in Alabama. Here was a girl whose young life was a void of silence and darkness, a void most of us cannot even comprehend. Yet there are children in this State today who are just as removed from the world, except that the void is inside them. Drugs have killed their hope, their promise, their spirit, their love. ^{(And though they may not realize it, drugs} have turned them against their friends and families and left ^{into a} ~~them alone and isolated~~ ^{world of pain & isolation.} This conference is about preventing that darkness from enveloping any more of our children.

* Insert A here →

-- I've heard from so many people since I started speaking about drug abuse among our youth. A man whose son had died of an overdose wrote that a person can anticipate the loss of a parent, even a spouse, but one cannot accept the loss of a son or daughter. It simply is not the way life was

You know being a parent is the greatest challenge we face in life & the one for which we have no training at all. So I want to do the best I can. I was in San Francisco, who for a poe to drop said "When you become a parent you

meant to be. And there are other kinds of losses that drugs cause -- losses of a child's personality and identity.

-- Let me read to you part of a letter I received: "I am the grandmother of a grandson who began taking drugs at age 13. We had no idea he was doing it. His personality changed and where he had been a good boy, he became entirely different. At 20 he was caught holding up a grocery store. He had been stealing from his parents, too. He was given five years in prison. He has given us so many heartaches."

*Don't let
have a
better letter?
thought
e-remembered
read it up
near whole me
puzzle"*

-- I know this conference will hear other stories of heartache: *which we can't escape*
~~Yet in spite of the harsh realities of drugs, I am~~
~~optimistic.~~ I am encouraged because people finally are *face up to the problem of drug abuse*
coming together to ~~fight drug abuse~~ and are making progress. *Parents are becoming more involved & more knowledgeable & I*
As I travel around, I can feel a confidence returning to *not feel that*
~~parents and professionals that~~ something can be done. ~~And~~ I
am delighted you here in Alabama are feeling that
confidence, too.

think R

-- ~~Just~~ let me say in closing, I'm told that your State motto is "We Dare Defend Our Rights." Well, what this conference is saying is we dare to defend our children. And as long as drug abuse is a threat, as long as our kids are endangered, I know there will be people like you there to defend them. Thank you, Governor, for allowing me to be part of your conference, and thank you all for what you're doing.

** across all lines - we're talking about our
next generation & what will happen to them. I know*

Inset A

-- You know being a parent is the greatest challenge we have in life and the one for which we have no training at all. Owen Spann ~~1966~~ ^{who} is San Francisco ^{lost} a son to drugs said, "When you become a parent you find yourself in a series of peaks and valleys, highs and lows, moments when you wonder if your children will ever amount to anything and other moments of complete pride and joy."

-- Another father once wrote of his son, "No man can possibly know what life means, what the world means, until he has a child and loves it. And then the whole universe changes and nothing will ever seem exactly as it seemed before." Well, neither does anything ~~seem~~ ^{the same} ~~it seemed before~~ ^{once} a child ^{develops} a drug problem. It destroys a family. →

~ I believe drug abuse, ^{which crosses all lines,} is one of our country's greatest problems. ~~which crosses all lines~~ We're talking about our next generation and what will ~~be~~ happen to them. ~~I know you will hear stories~~

-- You will hear other stories of heartbreak at this conference, but in spite of everything I remain optimistic. I am encouraged because people finally are coming together to face up to the problem of drug abuse. Parents are becoming more involved ~~and~~ more knowledgeable, and I think professionals now feel that something can be done.

(Parvin) ~~AB~~
September 22, 1982
~~3:30 p.m.~~

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

- Thank you. You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. I wasn't exactly what you would call a seasoned professional jaded by public acclaim. I was so excited by the letter I pinned it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.
- And the award means that much more to me since it comes from the USO. All Americans know what the USO does for our people in uniform and their families. As far as I am concerned we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces and I'll explain that by way of a true story.
- A very touching incident occurred when my husband was Governor of California. Like all Americans, we were moved by the courage and patriotism of the returning POW's. We wanted to show our deep appreciation and respect so we held a series of dinners for them in our home. I wanted to have the parties in the warmth of a home and not in a hotel ballroom. The first ~~dinner~~ of those dinners will remain forever vivid to me. The men had returned to the United States only a few days before and their emotions, of course, were still very intense; their pains still very recent. These men told stories that were so wrenching all our eyes

were filled with tears. I glanced at Ronnie and he looked at me and we were both fighting to keep control. ~~But~~ they told of the torment and the tortures. And they told of devising ways to communicate by tapping in code from one cell to the next. And there, in our living room, we saw two men meet, hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other in the most sincere and moving embrace you can imagine. They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face. Their friendship had been formed during years of captivity and hardship when they occupied adjoining cells.

-- Those are the kind of men and women who are serving in our Nation's military. And I am proud, deeply proud, to be associated with bettering their welfare in any way. ^{I came} That is why I want to thank the USO ~~X~~ not only for this award, but for all it's doing to serve those soldiers and ~~their families~~ who are so nobly serving us.

(Parvin)
September 22, 1982
3:30 p.m.

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

- Thank you. You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. I wasn't exactly what you would call a seasoned professional jaded by public acclaim. I was so excited by the letter I pinned it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.
- And the award means that much more to me since it comes from the USO. All Americans know what the USO does for our people in uniform and their families. As far as I am concerned we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces and I'll explain that by way of a true story.
- A very touching incident occurred when my husband was Governor of California. Like all Americans, we were moved by the courage and patriotism of the returning POW's. We wanted to show our deep appreciation and respect so we held a series of dinners for them in our home. I wanted to have the parties in the warmth of a home and not in a hotel ballroom. The first dinner of those dinners will remain forever vivid to me. The men had returned to the United States only a few days before and their emotions, of course, were still very intense; their pains still very recent. These men told stories that were so wrenching all our eyes

were filled with tears. I glanced at Ronnie and he looked at me and we were both fighting to keep control. But they told of the torment and the tortures. And they told of devising ways to communicate by tapping in code from one cell to the next. And there, in our living room, we saw two men meet, hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other in the most sincere and moving embrace you can imagine. They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face. Their friendship had been formed during years of captivity and hardship when they occupied adjoining cells.

-- Those are the kind of men and women who are serving in our Nation's military. And I am proud, deeply proud, to be associated with bettering their welfare in any way. That is why I want to thank the USO, not only for this award, but for all it's doing to serve those soldiers and their families who are so nobly serving us.

(Parvin)

MRS. REAGAN: WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD
METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON USO
SEPTEMBER 29, 1982

--Thank you. You know I can remember getting my very first fan letter when I was in Hollywood. ^{I think I may have grown away that I was just a seasoned professional aided by public acclaim} I was so excited when they ^{by the letter} gave it to me that I pinned ^{it to the letter} it to the front of my dress and wore it around the studio. Well, I feel about that proud getting this Woman of the Year award.

--And the award means that much more to me since it comes from the USO. All Americans know what the USO does for our ^{people} men and women in uniform and their families. And as far as I am concerned

we cannot do enough for those who serve in our armed forces. ^{And I explain that by way of a story.}

^{a very touching incident occurred} --Let me tell you about a very moving incident that happened ^{like all Americans, we were moved by the courage and patriotism of the returning} when my husband was ~~still~~ Governor of California. We wanted to

show our deep appreciation and respect ^{for the returning POWs} for the returning POWs so

we held in our home a series of ~~four~~ dinners for them. ^{I wanted to have} But it is

The first dinner ^{those dinner} that will forever remain vivid to me. And I

can see it today as clearly as ^{it is} I did back then. The men had ^{returned} been

^{to} home to the United States only a few days ^{before} and their emotions, of

course, were still very intense, ^{their pains still very recent.} at being home after all those years

of hardship. These men told stories that were so wrenching all

^{I glanced at Parvin and he looked at me and} our eyes were filled with tears. ^{they were both trying to keep control} They told of the torment and

the tortures. And they told of devising ~~complicated~~ ways to

communicate ^{in code} by tapping from one cell to the next. And there,

in our living room, we saw two men meet, ~~two men who had experience~~

hear each others names and then throw their arms around each other in

^{the most sincere and moving embrace} the most sincere and moving embrace ^{you can imagine.} you can imagine.

They were the closest friends yet they had never met face to face.

POW's. the pattern is the sound of a heart that is a united ballroom

Their friendship had been ^{formed} ~~formed~~ during years of captivity ^{and hardship} when they occupied adjoining ^{ing} cells.

-- Those are the kind of men and women who are serving ⁱⁿ our Nations' ^{military.} And I am proud, deeply proud, to be associated with bettering their welfare in any way. That ~~is~~ why I want to thank the USO, not only for this award, but for ^{all it's doing to serve those soldiers} ~~its contributions to our people~~ ^{and their families} who are so nobly serving us. ~~in the military.~~