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REMARKS FOR THE PRIDE CONFERENCE
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 1988

-- THANK YOU. IT FEELS SO GOOD TO BE BACK AT PRIDE. THIS IS THE FIFTH PRIDE CONFERENCE THAT I'VE ATTENDED, AND IT'S THE LAST ONE THAT I'LL ATTEND AS FIRST LADY. SO I'VE COME TODAY TO SAY MY GOODBYE AND TO TELL YOU HOW MUCH YOU'VE MEANT TO ME.

-- I AM SO PROUD OF YOU ALL.

-- I KNOW IN MY HEART THAT IT'S THE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WILL SOLVE THE DRUG CRISIS IN THIS COUNTRY. WE COULD HAVE PARENTS FOLLOWING THEIR CHILDREN'S EVERY MOVE. WE COULD HAVE DRUG AGENTS

2

ON EVERY CORNER, TREATMENT CENTERS ON EVERY BLOCK, JAILS IN EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD, AND STILL THERE WOULD BE THE DEMAND FOR DRUGS. WHAT WILL WIN THE BATTLE AGAINST DRUGS IS A CHANGE IN ATTITUDES. AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE ACCOMPLISHING.

-- YOU KNOW IN THE PAPER THE OTHER DAY, A WOMAN SAID NANCY REAGAN'S "JUST SAY NO" APPROACH WAS SIMPLISTIC BECAUSE IT DID NOTHING TO HELP THOSE WHO WERE ALREADY HOOKED ON DRUGS. WELL, BRILLIANT DEDUCTION, LADY. OBVIOUSLY, JUST SAYING NO ISN'T THE

ANSWER FOR ADDICTS WHO NEED TREATMENT. BUT IF WE CAN GET MORE AND MORE YOUNG PEOPLE TO SAY NO, WE WON'T NEED TREATMENT CENTERS. SOMEWHERE WE MUST BEGIN TO SAY NO, AND THAT PLACE IS IN THE SCHOOLS AMONG THE YOUNG PEOPLE. AND THAT IS WHERE YOU ARE HAVING SUCH AN IMPACT.

-- FINALLY, AFTER YEARS AND YEARS, THE TREND IS AWAY FROM DRUGS, NOT TOWARD THEM. CERTAINLY FOR THOSE WHO USE DRUGS, THE DRUG CRISIS IS WORSE THAN EVER. AND WE NEED NEW WAYS TO REACH

THE YOUNG IN THE INNER CITY WHERE THE DRUG PRESSURES ARE TREMENDOUS, BUT, NEVERTHELESS, WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS, REAL PROGRESS, AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE WHO'VE NEVER BEEN INVOLVED WITH DRUGS.

-- AND YOU DESERVE THE CREDIT. YOU'VE SHOWN COURAGE AND COMMITMENT IN TAKING A STAND AGAINST DRUGS.

-- YOU MIGHT NOT REALIZE IT, BUT YOU'RE A THREAT TO THE DEALERS AND TRAFFICKERS. YOU'RE A DANGER TO THE CASUAL USER. YOU'VE BEGUN TO DEFEAT THE NOTION THAT DRUGS ARE OK. YOUNG PEOPLE

HAVE MORE POWER TO STOP DRUGS THAN OUR DRUG AGENTS AND OUR POLICE AND OUR MILITARY COMBINED.

-- AND BECAUSE YOU ARE SUCH A THREAT TO THE DRUG CULTURE, YOU HAVE TO EXPECT TO BE CRITICIZED, EVEN RIDICULED. I KNOW IT'S SOMETIMES NOT EASY, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE IN JUNIOR HIGH OR HIGH SCHOOL AS MOST OF YOU ARE. YOU MAY BE TOLD TO MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS. YOU MAY BE CALLED A GOODY TWO-SHOES. YOU MAY BE CALLED UP-TIGHT. THE REASON FOR SUCH PUT DOWNS IS BECAUSE YOU'RE A DANGER; YOU'RE A

DANGER TO THE DRUG ATTITUDES THAT HAVE RULED THIS COUNTRY FOR THE PAST TWO DECADES.

-- DR. GLEATON TOLD ME RECENTLY SOME OF THE CREATIVE WAYS YOU'RE FIGHTING DRUGS. HE TOLD ME OF TWO BUDDIES WHO MAKE A DEAL BEFORE THEY GO TO A PARTY NOT TO DRINK OR TAKE DRUGS. HE TOLD ME OF FIVE KIDS WHO TOOK A POLAROID CAMERA WITH THEM TO A BEER BASH IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THERE'S NO WAY I CAN SAY THIS THAT ISN'T GRAPHIC, BUT THEY TOOK A PICTURE OF A GUY GETTING SICK. A FEW

DAYS LATER AT SCHOOL, THEY GAVE HIM THIS ABSOLUTELY HORRIBLE PICTURE OF HIMSELF AND SAID, "WHY DON'T YOU GO WITH US THIS WEEKEND? WE'RE NOT GETTING INTO THAT."

-- I HAVE TO TELL YOU, IT WOULDN'T HAVE OCCURRED TO ME TO TAKE A PICTURE OF SOMEONE GETTING SICK. IT IS A VERY CREATIVE APPROACH. IN WHATEVER WAY YOU'RE FIGHTING DRUGS, I'M PROUD OF YOU.

-- AND I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WHILE I WON'T BE ABLE TO

COME HERE EVERY YEAR AS I HAVE IN THE PAST, I WILL BE WITH YOU IN SPIRIT. I WILL ALWAYS BE INVOLVED WITH THE ANTI-DRUG MOVEMENT. I AM NOT ABOUT TO GIVE UP THIS CAUSE SIMPLY BECAUSE MY HUSBAND IS NO LONGER PRESIDENT. THESE PAST EIGHT YEARS OF WORK AGAINST DRUGS HAVE BROUGHT NEW MEANING TO MY LIFE AND I WILL NOT ABANDON WHAT WE ARE ACCOMPLISHING.

-- WE'VE BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH TOGETHER OVER THE YEARS THAT SAYING GOODBYE TO YOU IS LIKE SAYING GOODBYE TO FAMILY. BUT THE

TIME HAS COME. THANK YOU FOR YOUR FRIENDSHIP AND AFFECTION,
THANK YOU FOR STANDING WITH ME, AND SO TO EACH OF YOU, A VERY
GRATEFUL AND HEARTFELT GOODBYE.

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