

Draft of the
President's Address to the
National Association of Evangelicals
March 8, 1983



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If this comes out short - two short
maybe we can put
back the "crime section"
RR
(Dolan/AB)
March 5, 1983
Noon

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EVANGELICALS
ORLANDO, FLORIDA
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 1983

Nancy and I ^{AM} ~~are~~ delighted to be here today. Those of you in the National Association of Evangelicals are known for your spiritual and humanitarian work -- and I would be especially remiss if I did not discharge right now one personal debt of gratitude.

Thank you for your prayers. Nancy and I have felt their presence many times in many ways. Believe me, for us they have made all the difference. The other day in the East Room ^{OF THE WHITE HOUSE} someone asked me whether I was aware of all the people out there praying for the President. ^{YES I AM - BECAUSE I'VE FELT IT & I BELIEVE IN INTERCESSORY PRAYER} I was touched, of course, but I'll tell you ~~But I couldn't help but say to that questioner that if someone's what I told him: Thank you, but please keep it up. And when~~ ^{when he was possible got} you're at it, if you get a busy signal sometimes, keep trying.

^{was me} It just means I'm in there ahead of ^{them} you. I feel as Abe Lincoln felt when he said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had no one else to go." From the joy and good feeling of this conference ~~we leave I go~~ ^{I don't know why that}

^{to} for the hurly burly of a political reception ^{for the Florida GOP}. Scheduling reminds me of a story but it does. You can see it's a day of contrasts; ~~(it reminds me of a story)~~

~~may just tell the folks over at that reception. It seems this~~

^{arrived at} An evangelical minister and politician ~~both died and went to~~ Heavens gate together. St. Peter took them in hand to show them their new quarters. He

took the minister to a small room with just a bed ^(a single chair) and table. ~~So~~ naturally when ^{was a little} the politician saw the modest quarters of this

~~holy man he was pretty~~ worried about what was in store for him. ~~And he~~ ^{couldn't believe it when} ~~Much to his surprise~~, St. Peter ^{stopped before} ~~took him to~~ a great mansion,

with beautiful grounds and many servants and told him all this

The politician said
would be his. ~~So naturally, the politician said:~~ "But how can you give me this mansion ^{while that good & holy man only gets a single room.} ~~and only a small place to that good minister?"~~

said, "You have to understand how things are up here, we've got thousands & thousands of clergy - we've got plenty of them up here. But you're the first politician we've ever had."

Now I don't want to contribute to a stereotype. I tell you truly there are a great many God fearing, dedicated, noble men & women in pub. life. You need to be reminded that our fast-paced existence can sometimes be an

~~obstacle to quiet reflection and deep commitment, that we can easily forget the ideas and principles that brought us into the public arena in the first place. The basis of those ideals and principles is a commitment to freedom and personal liberty, a commitment that itself is grounded in the much deeper realization: that freedom prospers only where the blessings of God are avidly sought and humbly acknowledged.~~

The American experiment in democracy rests on this insight; its discovery was the great triumph of our Founding Fathers *voiced by*

Wm. Penn: "Men who will not be ruled by God will be ruled by tyrants," ~~William Penn said.~~ (Explaining the inalienable rights of men, Jefferson ^{said} ~~remarked~~, "The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time." And it was George Washington who said that "of all the disposition and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports."

And finally, that shrewdest of all observers of American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, put it eloquently ^{after he had gone on a search for the secret of America's greatness & genius.} ~~"I sought for the greatness and genius of America in fertile fields and boundless forests, it was not there. I sought for it in her free schools and her institutions of learning; it was not there. I sought~~

~~for it in her matchless Constitution and democratic congress; it was not there. Not until I went to the churches of America and found them aflame with~~ HEARD HER PULPITS A FLAME
 WITH righteousness did I understand the greatness and genius of America. America is great because America is good.
 AND IF → ~~When America~~^{EVER} ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.")

That is why I am ~~so~~ ^{you} pleased to be here today with ~~the people~~ who are ~~in the business of~~ keeping America great by keeping her good. Only through your work and prayers and those of millions of others can we hope to survive this perilous century and keep alive this experiment in liberty, this last best hope of man-
~~called America.~~

I want you to know this Administration is motivated by a political philosophy that sees the greatness of America in you, her people, and in your families, churches, neighborhoods, communities -- the institutions that foster and nourish values like concern for others and respect for the rule of law under God.

Now I don't have to tell you that ~~our pursuit of this philosophy~~ ^{OR AT LEAST OUT OF STEP WITH A} puts us in opposition to ~~the~~ prevailing attitude of ~~who have turned to a modern day secularism, discarding many of these in government, educational foundations and the tried & true tested values upon which our very civilization is based, institutions, and significant sectors of the media. The views of such groups, however well intentioned, are deeply secularist and decidedly liberal;~~ ^{No matter how} their value system is radically different from that of most Americans. ^{And while they proclaim they are freeing us from superstitions of the past} ~~wanton and unwise,~~ they have taken upon themselves the job of ^{as by govt. rule & regulation,} ~~regulating, overseeing and~~ superintending ~~the people from~~ Washington.

Well, ~~I say~~ ^{and going to} We fight our battle in the courts. ~~I say the~~
~~rule stays.~~ And I say ~~The~~ rights of parents and the rights of
family take precedence over those of Washington-based bureaucrats
and social engineers.

But parental notification is really only one example of many
attempts to water down traditional values and even abrogate the
original terms of American democracy. ~~As I mentioned before,~~
~~nothing could be more deeply engrained into the American~~
~~political consensus than the realization that~~ Freedom prospers
when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God
acknowledged. When our Founding Fathers passed the first
amendment they sought to protect churches from Government
interference. They never meant to construct a wall of hostility
between Government and the concept of religious belief itself.

The evidence of this permeates our history and our
government: The Declaration of Independence mentions the Supreme
Being no less than four times; "In God We Trust" is engraved on
our coinage; the Supreme Court opens its proceedings with a
"religious" invocation; and the Members of Congress open their
sessions with a prayer. I just happen to believe the school
children of the United States are entitled to the same privileges
as Supreme Court Justices and Congressmen. Last year, I sent the
Congress a constitutional amendment to restore prayer to public
schools. This week I am resubmitting that amendment and calling
on the Congress to act speedily to pass it. Let our children
pray.

(But in the controversy over the prayer amendment, we see once again that will to power that has characterized so much of the ^{new secularism,} ~~liberal social philosophy that dominated American intellectual life in the fifties and sixties.~~ Many ^a Advocates of ~~liberal and~~ so-called progressive education hoped that the schools would become laboratories where school children could be removed from traditional influences and taught instead the wonders of value-free science and moral relativism.

~~Now we know that what happened to American education as it increasingly fell under the influence of this "social science mentality.~~ [↓] ~~But~~ As influence of parents and teachers declined, so did excellence and discipline -- and ^{we found our} ~~America's school~~ children ^{learning} ~~learned~~ less and less.

As you all know, there has been a rebellion among parents and teachers against these lax educational standards and once again basic learning is being increasingly stressed in our schools.

Similarly, the attempt to prohibit the acknowledgement of God in the classroom has come under heavy fire. By overwhelming margins, the American people want prayer returned to the classroom and have been voting for candidates who support that amendment.

Unfortunately, however, this hasn't discouraged the small group of elitists on the left who still want to ^{impose} ~~impose~~ their value system on the vast majority of Americans.) Perhaps some of you read recently about the Lubbock school case where a judge actually ruled that it was unconstitutional for a school district

to give equal treatment to religious and nonreligious student groups, even when the group meetings were ^{held} during the students' own time. ~~You can see, can't you, how the first amendment has been stood on its head, how~~ A constitutional provision designed to promote religious expression has been used to stifle that expression. ~~And you can see, can't you, the irony of those who call themselves "liberals" using their position of power~~ to deny to millions the time-honored right of religious expression in public places.

~~I think you should know that both~~ Senators Denton and Hatfield have proposed legislation in the Congress on the whole question of prohibiting discrimination against religious forms of student speech. I strongly support that legislation, and, with your help, I think it's possible we could also get the constitutional amendment through the Congress this year.

~~And let me add here that, like you, I have been deeply concerned about recent controversies in several States between religious schools and State educational authorities. No one questions the right of the individual States to have a voice in establishing certain minimum standards for the education of our children. But, on the other hand, religious schools are entitled to make basic decisions about their curriculum and not be forced to march in lockstep to the directives of State bureaucrats.~~

~~Now in discussing these instances of the arbitrary imposition of liberal views, we would be remiss not to mention a Supreme Court decision more than a decade ago that, quite literally, wiped off the books the statutes of 50 States~~

More than a decade ago a Supreme Ct. decision
Page 9 ~~literally wiped off~~ all the books of 50 states, statutes

protecting the rights of unborn children. "Abortion on demand"
~~is a great moral evil that~~ ^{now} takes the lives of 1½ million unborn
children a year. Human life legislation ending this tragedy will
someday pass the Congress -- and you and I must never rest until
it does. ^{Unless + until} ~~it can be proven that the unborn child is not a living~~
~~entity~~ ^{entity} then its right to life, liberty & the pursuit of happiness must be protected.

You may remember that when abortion on demand began many, indeed,
~~I'm~~ ^{sure many of you} ~~religious leaders~~ warned that the practice would lead to a
decline in respect for human life, that the philosophical
premises used to justify abortion on demand would ultimately be
used to justify other attacks on the sacredness of human life,
~~even~~ infanticide or mercy killing. ~~When these warnings were~~
~~first spoken, many of those in the intelligensia and the glitter~~
~~set scoffed at them.~~ ^{THOSE WARNINGS} But, Tragically enough, ~~they~~ proved all too
true: only last year a court ~~in Indiana issued an order~~
^{permitted} ~~permitting~~ the death by starvation of a handicapped infant.

~~When that baby's death came to light,~~ ^{HAVE} I've directed the Health
and Human Services Department to make clear to every health care
facility in the United States that the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
protects all handicapped persons against discrimination based on
handicaps, including infants. And we have taken the further step
of requiring that each and every recipient of Federal funds who
provides health care services must post and keep posted in a
conspicuous place a notice stating that "discriminatory failure
to feed and care for handicapped infants in this facility is
prohibited by Federal law."

In addition, recent legislation introduced in the Congress
by Representative Henry Hyde not only increases restrictions on

publicly-financed abortions, it also addresses this whole problem of infanticide. I urge the Congress to begin hearings ~~soon on~~ ^{and} ~~this legislation, to address the problems of infanticide, to~~ ^(LIFE TO) adopt legislation that will protect the right of all children, including the disabled or handicapped, ~~to the right to life.~~

~~Now in surveying the effect of several decades of liberal, secularist philosophy -- the wreckage, for example, left by the decisions like those on abortion and school prayer -- it is easy to grow discouraged. But we must never forget that we now stand at a turning point, a time when the old liberalism -- decadent and dying -- is being replaced by a new political consensus, a consensus that wants Government to perform its legitimate duties, such as maintaining domestic peace and our national security, but otherwise to leave the people alone.~~

I'm sure you must get discouraged at times but
Along with this return to limited Government, there is a great spiritual awakening in America, ~~and~~ a renewal of the traditional values that have been the bedrock of America's goodness and greatness.

(One recent survey ~~of thousands of Americans~~ by a Washington based research council concluded that Americans were far more religious than the people of other nations; 95 percent of those surveyed expressed a belief in God and a huge majority believed the Ten Commandments had real meaning for their lives.

Another study ^{has found that an overwhelming majority} ~~of 2,000 Americans by Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance found that -- in contrast to the views of the elitists I mentioned earlier -- the following practices were found wrong by large majorities of average Americans: adultery, 85 percent;~~

of Americans disapprove of adultery, ~~and~~ teen age sex, pornography, abortion + hard drugs.

~~hard drugs, 84 percent; homosexuality, 71 percent; sex before 16, 71 percent; abortion, 65 percent; and pornography, 68 percent.~~

And this same study showed a deep reverence for the importance of family ties and religious belief.)

~~So~~ I think the items we have discussed ^{here} today are the political agenda of the future. ~~Remember,~~ For the first time the Congress is openly and seriously debating and dealing with the prayer and abortion issues -- that's enormous progress right there. I repeat: America is in the midst of a spiritual awakening and a moral renewal. With your biblical keynote, I say today let "justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never failing stream."

Now, obviously, much of this new political and social consensus I have talked about is based on a positive view of American history, one that takes pride in our country's accomplishments and record. But we must never forget ~~an~~ ~~important distinction between our moral philosophy and that of the liberal secularists.~~ Unlike them, we know that no Government schemes are going to perfect man; we know that living in this world means dealing with what philosophers would call the phenomenology of evil or, as ~~the~~ theologians would put it, the doctrine of sin.

There is sin, ~~there is~~ ^{and} evil in ~~this~~ ^{the} world, and we are enjoined by scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might. ~~And that is why in talking about America we must never forget that, like any other human entity,~~ Our Nation, too, has a legacy of evil with which it must deal.

~~Now,~~ The glory of this land has been its capacity for transcending the moral evils of our past. For example, the long struggle of minority citizens for equal rights, once a source of disunity and civil war, is now a point of pride for all Americans. We must never go back. There is no room for racism, anti-semitism or other forms of ethnic and racial hatred in this country. I know you have been horrified, as have I, by the resurgence of some hate groups preaching bigotry and prejudice.

~~Today I urge you:~~ Use the mighty voice of your pulpits and the powerful standing of your churches to denounce and isolate these hate groups in our midst. *The commandment given us is clear & simple —*

~~We are to love our neighbors as~~ "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself"

~~(And I want to mention today another dark legacy of our past -- one that we are also now attempting to address in Washington. For many years in America we tolerated the existence of powerful syndicates of organized crime. As the years went by, these national syndicates increased in power, influence, and sophistication. Recently, in the enormous growth of the illegal drug trade, we have seen the tragic results of this permissiveness and the climate of professional lawlessness it fostered. Only a short time ago, this trade was spreading murder and mayhem throughout South Florida. Today, through the South Florida Task Force headed by Vice President Bush, we have a handle on it. We've cracked down on this drug trade in Florida, and now we're bringing on 200 new prosecutors and 1,260 new investigators to extend that task force model to 12 other regions throughout the United States.)~~

Yes, we are going after the drug cartels. But we're not going to stop there. Through a new presidential commission and several other initiatives, we intend to expose and prosecute the infrastructure of organized crime itself. We mean to cripple their enterprises, dry up their profits, and put their leaders behind bars where they belong.)

But whatever sad episodes exist in our past, any objective observer must hold a positive view of American history, a history that has been the story of hopes fulfilled and dreams made into reality. Especially in this century, America has kept alight the torch of freedom -- not just for ourselves but for millions of others around the world. And this brings me to my final point today, and, by the way, it's another illustration of the gulf between the views of the professional elitists and those of everyday Americans.

in answer to a direct question
During my first press conference as President, I pointed out that as good Marxists-Leninists the Soviet leaders have "openly and publicly declared that the only morality they recognize is that ^{which is world revolution.} ~~which~~ will further their cause, ~~meaning they reserve unto~~ ^{And I quoted statements by previous leaders in which they were specific as to themselves the right to commit any crime, to lie, to cheat, and that is moral, not immoral.} ~~the things we would consider criminal or immoral but which would be justified if done to further socialism.~~" I said that we

would do well to keep this in mind during our negotiations with them. Somehow this was translated to be accusations by some rather than a quote of their own words.

Well, once again this caused a stir. I saw several accounts that truncated my remarks and suggested they were nothing more than name-calling. Other accounts suggested that it was a breach of diplomacy to be that candid about the Soviets.

This misrepresentation is frequently repeated accompanied
Page 14 by a charge that my harsh & intemperate accusations
are making it impossible for us to have any kind of
understanding with the Soviet leadership.

Now -- putting aside for the moment the fact that ~~the~~ some
pundits and opinion makers are rarely upset when the Soviets say
much worse about us everyday in their press -- I think I should
point out I was only quoting Lenin, ~~a~~ ^{THEIR} ~~guide,~~ a guiding spirit ~~to~~
~~the Soviet leadership~~, who wrote in 1920: "We repudiate all
(their term for our religion)
morality that proceeds from supernatural ideas or ideas that are
outside class conceptions. (Morality is entirely subordinate to
the interests of class war. Everything is moral that is
necessary for the annihilation of the old exploiting social order
and for uniting the proleteriat.")

I think the refusal of many influential people to accept
this elementary ~~insight into~~ ^{FACT OF} Soviet ~~behavior~~ ^{DOCTRINE} illustrates an
historical reluctance to see totalitarian powers for what they
are. We saw this phenomenon in the 1930's; we see it too often
today, as in many aspects of the nuclear freeze movement. ~~This does not~~
~~mean we should isolate ourselves and refuse to seek an understanding with them.~~
I intend to do everything I can to persuade them of our peaceful intent; to remind them
~~self-deception of the 1930's, future historians, looking back at~~
~~our time, will be shocked by the naivete and moral blindness of~~
~~the unilateral disarmors. (Surely, they will note the real~~
~~proportions of the threat to peace, that it was the West that~~
refused to use its nuclear monopoly in the forties and fifties
for territorial gain and which now proposes 50-percent cuts in
strategic ballistic missiles and the elimination of an entire
class of land-based, intermediate-range nuclear missiles.-- and
that it was not the West that intervened by military proxy in
Angola, in Ethiopia, in South Yemen or Central America; that it
was not the West that invaded Afghanistan, suppressed Polish

At the same time however they must be made to understand
we will never compromise our principles & standards. We will never
give away our freedom. We will never ~~abandon~~ ^{abandon} our belief in God.
~~We will at times pay the price that one day they will have to pay for their~~

your discussions of the nuclear freeze proposals, I urge you to beware the temptation of pride -- the temptation to blithely declare yourselves above it all and label both sides equally at fault, to ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire, to simply call the arms race a giant misunderstanding and thereby remove yourself from the struggle between right and wrong, good and evil.

I ask you to resist the attempts of those who would have you ~~bargain away, for the sake of a few glowing minutes on the nightly news and a little cooing from the glitter set, your vital~~ ^{hold your} support for this Administration's efforts to keep America strong and free, ~~and to~~ ^{while we} negotiate real and verifiable reductions in the world's nuclear arsenals ^{and one day with God help their total elimination}

While America's military strength is important, let me add here that I have always maintained that the struggle now going on for the world will never be decided by bombs or rockets, by armies or military might. ~~For~~ The real crisis we face today is a spiritual one; at root, it is a test of moral will and faith.

(Whittaker Chambers, the man whose own religious conversion made him a "witness" to one of the terrible traumas of our age, the Hiss Chambers case, wrote that the crisis of the Western world exists to the degree in which the West is indifferent to God, the degree to which it collaborates in Communism's attempt to make man stand alone without God. For Marxism-Leninism is actually the second oldest faith, he said, first proclaimed in the Garden of Eden with the words of temptation: "Ye shall be as gods.")

The Western world can answer this challenge, he wrote, "but only provided that its faith in God and the freedom he enjoins is as great as Communism's faith in man.")

I believe we shall rise to this challenge; I believe that Communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written. I believe this because the source of our strength in the quest for human freedom is not material but spiritual, and, because it knows no limitation, it must terrify and ultimately triumph over those who would enslave their fellow man. For, in the words of Isaiah:

"He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, He increased their strength . . . but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength . . . they shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary . . ."

Thank you and God bless you.