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BY ANNE V. HIGGINS
Folder Title: YA-88 – Support for the President’s Summit
(1987)
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RE: Support for The President's Summit (1987)

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

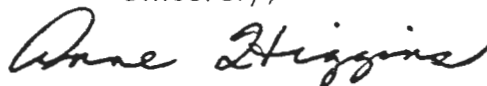
January 6, 1988 (XXXY88)

Dear Mr. Ortega:

On behalf of President Reagan, I would like to thank you for your message and for sharing your thoughts about his summit with General Secretary Gorbachev.

In his address to the nation on the last day of his meeting with the Soviet leader, the President outlined the summit's achievements and described the principles that will guide the United States in future dealings with the Soviet Union. As he noted in his speech, he intends to continue pressing the Soviets for progress on human rights issues, resolution of regional conflicts, elimination of the Eastern Bloc's advantage in conventional forces, and strategic arms reductions. A transcript of the President's remarks is enclosed. President Reagan continues to keep your generation and all future generations in mind as he takes steps to secure peace with freedom in a safer world.

Sincerely,



Anne Higgins
Special Assistant to the President
and Director of Correspondence

(1/6/88)

Mr. Michael A. Ortega
Evening Supervisor
Correspondence Analysis Section
Room 60
Old Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20500

Enclosure: 12/10/87 Address by the President

AVH/CAD/CGM/AVH

Support for
the President's ~~1987~~
Summit (1987)
AVHY88.871229 (New)

Support for the
Summit w/ Gorbachev
General Sec
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Adult letter Modified slightly for Children's Use

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

Embargoed for Release
12:06 P.M. EST
December 26, 1987

RADIO ADDRESS
BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

The Roosevelt Room

12:06 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: My fellow Americans, Nancy and I hope you and your family are enjoying this holiday season. This is a time of two religious observances which go to the heart of America's Judeo-Christian heritage -- Christmas and Hanukkah. This is also a traditional time of merriment and good cheer -- a time of family and home and of Christmas trees and gift-giving.

That spirit of generosity that is so evident during the holiday season is something we've tried to foster during the past seven years of this administration. Here at the White House, we call it the Private Sector Initiative Program. You probably think of it as good, old-fashioned Americanism -- neighbor helping neighbor.

One of the opportunities my current job affords me is having the access to information that gives me a broad picture of what is happening throughout our country. There is always much to improve. But I can assure you that the spirit of goodwill and benevolence -- an aspect of our national character recognized since the early days of our Republic -- remains a vibrant part of the American way of life.

You may be surprised to learn, for example, that since 1980, charitable giving in the United States has increased 77 percent from \$49.08 billion to \$87.22 billion in 1986. I don't think there's any better gauge for the soul of a nation or the essential goodness of a people than an accounting of their personal involvement in helping others, either through donations of money or time. And voluntarism is still a strong force in communities throughout our country.

The stories are as numerous as they are heartwarming. One of them is about an engineer from Vicksburg, Mississippi named Bob Carver. For five years straight, Bob spent the holiday season driving a truck to raise money for the Salvation Army. To date, he has raised over \$20,000, which has bought Christmas toys and food for the needy, sent children to summer camp and helped pay the utility bills for the elderly. Bob uses his annual leave to haul cargo for his tractor-trailer rig, which is affectionately known as "The Santa Express." The profits go to helping others. God bless you, Bob.

Then there's Ruth Heywood of Casa Grande, Arizona -- a single woman, 74 years old, living only on her pension benefits. Even though her own financial resources are limited, she overflows with love and is dedicated to helping others. Each year, she spearheads a local effort to provide the needy and the poor in spirit a festive Thanksgiving and Christmas celebration. Ruth provides the energy and the inspiration. As the holiday season approaches, she visits grocers all over town to solicit donations of food, plates, and utensils. She coordinates transportation and arranges meals to be delivered to the home-bound. She also handwrites hundreds of invitations and personally gives them to the less-fortunate citizens of her community. Every year, people who thought they were unloved and forgotten are shown that people do care. The people of Casa

MORE

Grande are proud of Ruth. We can all be proud of her.

I recently received a letter from David Rayl of Bald Knob, Arkansas, telling me about how, with hard work and private and corporate donations, he is able to play Santa to hundreds of needy families. His yearly project makes a lot of kids happy who otherwise might face a bleak holiday. David, who teaches at a local elementary school, added in his letter, "Perhaps you're not too interested in something this small, but small things add up to big things." Well, I happen to believe that it is the small things, the little acts of love and kindness happening every day across this country that make us a great nation. Yes, small things add up to big things. This country can be no greater than the goodness of its people.

Most of us know someone like Bob Carver, Ruth Heywood, or David Rayl. Down deep, who cannot but respect such heroes? I'd like to think there's a little of them in each and every American. Certainly, from our earliest days, we weren't waiting for the government, or depending on the bureaucracy, before we helped each other. President Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "I deem it the duty of every man to devote a certain portion of his income for charitable purposes, and that it is his further duty to see it so applied as to do the most good of which it is capable."

Helping others is just our way, part of our national character. Perhaps it reflects that we as a people not only enjoy this holiday every year as a time off from work, but also take to heart the spiritual meaning of Christmas and Hanukkah.

Finally, Nancy and I want to wish each of you our very best wishes for the New Year. Until next week, thanks for listening, and God bless you.

END

12:11 P.M. EST