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VIETNAM VETERANS

THANK YOU JIMMY, OLD
FRIEND, AND THANKS TO ALL
OF YOU FOR INVITING ME TO
PARTICIPATE IN THIS
SALUTE TO VIETNAM
VETERANS. RECENT EVENTS
AGAIN DEMONSTRATED THAT
WE HAVE A RIGHT TO BE
VERY PROUD OF OUR ARMED
SERVICES, THOSE YOUNG MEN
AND WOMEN WHO, IN SERVING
THEIR COUNTRY VALIANTLY
AND WELL, ARE CARRYING ON
A GREAT MILITARY
TRADITION MORE THAN
200 YEARS OLD. AND, I
KNOW THAT PART OF THE
INSPIRATION FOR THOSE
YOUNG PEOPLE IS THE
INCREDIBLE DEVOTION AND
VALOR SO REPEATEDLY
DISPLAYED BY OUR ARMED
SERVICES IN THE VIETNAM
CONFLICT.

IT'S TRUE THERE WERE
NO BANDS TO GREET OUR
RETURNING SOLDIERS,
SAILORS, AIRMEN, AND
MARINES FROM VIETNAM, NO
WELCOMING SPEECHES OR
PARADES. BUT, I ALSO
KNOW THAT -- HAD THEY
EVER BEEN GIVEN THE
CHANCE -- THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE WOULD HAVE SAID
WHAT WAS ALWAYS IN THEIR
HEARTS, WHAT IS IN THEIR
HEARTS TODAY: THAT THEY
WERE PROUD OF THOSE WHO
SERVED IN VIETNAM, PROUD
OF HOW THEY ANSWERED
THEIR COUNTRY'S CALL, DID
THEIR DUTY AND MADE SO
MANY SACRIFICES FOR THE
CAUSE OF HUMAN FREEDOM.

THE WORK YOU ARE
DOING TO REMEMBER THE
CONTRIBUTIONS AND
DEDICATION OF OUR VIETNAM
VETERANS IS VERY
IMPORTANT TO ALL

AMERICANS. THE MEMORY OF
THOSE WHO CAME HOME AND
THOSE WHO DID NOT COME
BACK, THOSE IN OUR
VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
HOSPITALS AND THOSE STILL
MISSING IN ACTION MUST
NEVER BE ALLOWED TO FADE.
FOR THE WIVES, THE
WIDOWS, THE PARENTS, THE
CHILDREN OF ALL THOSE WHO
SERVED IN VIETNAM, WE
MEET TONIGHT TO HONOR
THEM AND CONVEY OUR
HEARTFELT THANKS.

I HAVE BEEN SAYING
FOR SOME TIME NOW THAT
THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD
ARE MOVING TOWARDS A
FUTURE OF FREEDOM, THAT
WE ARE NOW WRITING THE
LAST PAGES IN A SAD,
BIZARRE CHAPTER IN HUMAN
HISTORY KNOWN AS
COMMUNISM. AND, I FIRMLY
BELIEVE THAT WHEN THAT
HISTORY OF THOSE WHO

STRUGGLED AGAINST THE
EVIL OF TOTALITARIANISM
IS FINALLY WRITTEN, THOSE
WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM
WILL AT LAST HAVE THEIR
HONORED AND PROPER PLACE.
GOD BLESS YOU.

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(Dolan/BE)
October 27, 1983
5:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL TAPING: VIETNAM VETERANS
MONDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1983

Thank you Jimmy, old friend, and thanks to all of you for inviting me to participate in this salute to Vietnam Veterans. In recent days, we have had a right to feel very proud of our armed services, those young men and women who, in serving their country valiantly and well, are carrying on a great military tradition more than 200 years old. And, I know that part of the inspiration for those young people is the incredible devotion and valor so repeatedly displayed by our armed services in the Vietnam conflict.

It's true there were no bands to greet our returning soldiers, sailors, and Marines from Vietnam, no welcoming speeches or parades. But, I also know that -- had they ever been given the chance -- the American people would have said what was always in their hearts, what is in their hearts today: that they were proud of those who served in Vietnam, proud of how they answered their country's call, did their duty and made so many sacrifices for the cause of human freedom.

The work you are doing to remember the contributions and dedication of our Vietnam Veterans is very important to all Americans. The memory of those who came home and those who did not come back, those in Veterans' Hospitals and those still Missing in Action must never be allowed to fade. For the wives, the widows, the parents, the children of all those who served in

Vietnam we meet tonight to honor them and convey our heartfelt thanks.

I have been saying for some time now that the people of the world are moving towards a future of freedom, that we are now writing the last pages in a sad, bizarre chapter in human history known as communism. And, I firmly believe that when that history of those who struggled against the evil of totalitarianism is finally written, those who served in Vietnam will at last have their honored and proper place.

God bless You.