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(Elliott/Gamble/Gibson/Buchanan/Fitzwater/KK edit)

January 21, 1986

Presidential Remarks: Alfalfa Club Dinner

Saturday, January 21, 1986

Well, thank you for that wonderful introduction, Senator Hollings. I never thought I'd end up congratulating a Democrat named Fritz for becoming President -- but tonight I'm only too happy to make an exception.

You don't know what a pleasure it is for me to belong to this organization. Just look at it. It meets infrequently. Has no dues and no set rules. It makes a joke of everything and keeps the bar open after midnight. (sigh) All the benefits of Congress without having to run for office.

I've really been scratching my head as to what might be appropriate to say tonight. I asked Neary if she had any ideas, she said no but may I suggest your remarks whatever they are should be in crisp, short, declarative sentences -- nothing with a colon in it.

You know we're moving into the most crucial period for the admin. - The St. of the Union address. Release of the budget & Publication of Dave Stockman's book.

The Alfalfa Club meets this year at a momentous time for the Republic. We've just completed the summit meeting with the Soviet Union. We're jointly facing up to the rigors of the Gramm-Rudman Act. There's always swirling controversy around members of our Administration -- so many new and exciting things to keep our attention.

~~Let's~~ Take Gramm-Rudman. I would have been here earlier, but under Gramm-Rudman, my limo only goes as far as the Hay-Adams.

Incidentally, I remember when it was called the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act. Fritz -- looks like you're the first cut.

So many things will be happening. The Pentagon will become a triangle.

~~There will be a lot of changes in govt. For one thing we'll do a lot of privatizing. We can start by selling the Treasury dept. to a Maryland savings & loan.~~

~~Tomorrow's Super Bowl will only be three quarters.~~

Just the other evening, I turned to Nancy and said: "If this Gramm-Rudman thing doesn't work, we'll need a miracle, and I'm calling in Graham. Nancy said: "The Senator, Phil?" And I ~~said~~ replied: "No, the Reverend, Billy."

Incidentally there's been some talk about how much access to the White House our official Historian Edmund Morris has been given. Frankly I hadn't given it much thought until the other night, when Nancy sneezed in her sleep and I heard Edmund say ~~Reagan~~ Regevah.

In June While the General Secretary is here, ~~he~~ I'm sure he'll want to see our leaders in action, to witness firsthand how democracy works, to visit where the great issues are debated ... and more than debated ... where the great issues are resolved. So naturally, the first place I'll take him is to the Washington Post. ✓

Reducing the deficit is ~~truly~~ one of the toughest things we've had to do. ~~I'll tell you one thing - I do a lot of~~  
~~praying about it.~~ Every night, I get down on my knees and ask ~~THE LORD~~ ~~God~~ to help us do it right. One night I was so desperate, I went over ~~His~~ ~~God's~~ head and prayed ~~directly~~ to Henry Kissinger.

Henry would have appreciated the hot line message I got the other day ~~it was~~ from ~~Mr.~~ Gorbachev. He complained about this aggressive new defensive plan: ~~He~~ said it would disrupt the peace and charged it would create mayhem. He even called it a serious threat to human lives.

*I asked if he was*  
~~I flashed back a single question: "Are you referring to our~~  
Strategic Defense Initiative?" He ~~answered~~: "No, the Chicago Bears."

~~By the way~~, We've had a request from the Kremlin for the Gorbachevs to spend at least one night in the home of a typical American couple, and Bob and Elizabeth Dole have graciously volunteered to take them in.

*we had with the summit had to do with*  
 One of the problems ~~when heads of state meet~~ is the exchange of gifts. I mean, what do you give a man like Gorbachev -- especially within the \$2,000 budget we set? Finally, I decided that some replica of the Hammer and Sickle would be appropriate, so I called in the experts. The fellow from Pentagon Procurement said \$2,000 ~~wouldn't cover the sickle~~, ~~but~~ it might buy a nice hammer ~~but it wouldn't cover the sickle~~.

Most of you who saw pictures of the summit must have thought it was symbolized by the photo of Gorbachev and me sitting by the fire. But let me tell you -- and this is the first time I've told anyone -- there was ~~a~~ <sup>ANOTHER</sup> private meeting which created the most dramatic moment at Geneva.

It was behind closed doors. No other aides were present. You could cut the tension with a knife. I never heard such earthy language from a diplomatic source. He was hot and getting hotter.

*HAD JUST LEARNED*  
 And ~~that was just~~ George Shultz ~~learning~~ about the polygraph tests.

Of course you have since heard that Secretary Shultz said he wouldn't take his polygraph test. We had to settle for taking his pulse . . . yes, he has one.

This is not the first time we've had to deal with this issue. A lot's transpired since that Russian spy ~~Yevetshenko~~ <sup>YURCHENKO</sup> went back to the Soviet Union. For one thing, Bill Casey sent his polygraph back to Radio Shack.

WE'LL CLOSER TO HOME -

Now ~~I know that~~ there's been all that talk about Don taking over the White House; being President 80 percent of the time.

~~Don't you believe it.~~  
Well, ~~that's ridiculous.~~ Just last week ~~I read~~ <sup>he said & was an</sup> in the Washington Times ~~where~~ Don praised me ~~as~~ an important, effective member of the White House team.

I know you've all seen those crazy news stories calling him Prime Minister. The other day I asked him what he'd rather be called. He said "your eminence" will do.

*INSIDE* You all remember that picture at the Summit where Don was leaning over the couch between me and Gorbachev. *Some COMMENTATORS TRIED TO MAKE SOMETHING OUT OF THAT* *HE WANTS TO KNOW WHERE THE MEN'S ROOM WAS.* "Where's the Men's room?" (pause) I told him: Not the door marked "throw weight."

One little piece of advice -- sometimes you can be fooled when you tune in right in the middle of a show. Like a couple of weeks ago, I turned on the TV and the announcer was saying (use sportscaster's voice): ". . . this guy can fake to the left and charge to the right. He dominates the play and overshadows the other players; he throws himself forward with abandon and knocks out everyone in sight."

Finally, to my relief, I discovered he was talking about Refrigerator Perry -- not Don Regan.

For those of you interested, NASA has received over 1600 applications from journalists hoping to fly aboard the space shuttle next fall. From that 1600 NASA will select one journalist to be sent into outer space. I don't understand what the big deal is . . . from what I've read, most of them are already there.

NASA asked me the other day if I wanted to come over to see Halley's Comet. I said: "I'm a little busy; I'll catch it the next time it comes around."

~~They~~ told me that the comet was named after British astronomer Edmund Halley in 1705. Not fair. I saw it first. ~~Well, History is a little inaccurate.~~  
~~It was a Roman comet, I tried to convince Halley it wasn't a Roman comet.~~

I hate to admit it, but that reminds me I'll be having another birthday soon. ~~It will be the 37<sup>th</sup> time I've been 39.~~  
~~Seems like I have one every week.~~

~~Anyway, Nancy is just hoping I'll never need a transplant . . .~~  
~~I've got body parts they don't even make anymore.~~

~~I thought it was clever the way you made sure Vice President Bush would be here tonight -- he thought it was a special testimonial for Bill Loeb and Jerry Falwell.~~

Well, my fellow Alfalfans, that's about all I have to say. I'm going to exercise my executive powers and declare that we should play by the rules of the Alfalfa Club many more times this year. There will be moments of great debate and even great heat in this historic capital. But let's always find a moment to break the tension. We should always take our politics seriously, but never ourselves.

It was an honor to break bread with you tonight. Nancy and I always consider you our friends. May you suffer neither sadness nor sorrow. May all of your nights be calm and peaceful. May your day be filled with love and freedom -- in those familiar and beautiful words -- from dawn's early light to twilight's last gleaming.

God bless you all. And God bless America.

ROBINSON/ELLIOTT

The President has seen 1/27

JANUARY 27, 1986

36755255

DROPBY BUDGET BRIEFING

MCO 03

GOOD MORNING AND WELCOME TO THE WHITE  
HOUSE. I'M VERY GLAD YOU COULD COME BY TO  
SEE US AND TO HEAR OUR VIEWS ON THE ISSUES  
THAT WILL SHAPE THE BUDGET DEBATE IN 1986.

THE FEDERAL DEFICIT IS AMONG THE LAST  
MAJOR OBSTACLES BLOCKING AMERICA'S PATH TO  
PERMANENT PROSPERITY. IN THESE PAST  
5 YEARS, WE'VE CUT TAX RATES BY NEARLY  
25 PERCENT AND THEN INDEXED THE BRACKETS TO  
PROTECT PEOPLE FROM BEING BUMPED BY  
INFLATION INTO HIGHER BRACKETS.

WE'VE SEEN INFLATION ITSELF DROP BY  
TWO-THIRDS, INTEREST RATES TUMBLE BY MORE  
THAN HALF, AND WE'VE SEEN MORE THAN  
9 MILLION AMERICANS FIND JOBS DURING  
3 STRAIGHT YEARS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH.

AMERICANS ARE BELIEVERS AGAIN.

BUT THERE'S ONE AREA WHERE NO ONE BELIEVES  
THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS DOING A GOOD  
ENOUGH JOB /- AND THAT'S GETTING FEDERAL  
SPENDING UNDER CONTROL. ] EVEN THOUGH TAX  
REVENUES HAVE BEEN GROWING, SPENDING HAS  
BEEN SHOOTING UP EVEN FASTER. ] AND SO THE  
CONGRESS PASSED THE GRAMM-RUDMAN-HOLLINGS  
AMENDMENT THAT MANDATES STEADILY DECLINING  
DEFICITS UNTIL WE REACH A BALANCED BUDGET IN  
FISCAL YEAR 1991.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT THE BUDGET  
WE SUBMIT IN A WEEK WILL MEET THE DEFICIT  
TARGETS SET BY THAT LEGISLATION. ] AND IT  
WILL DO SO, WHILE PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY  
AND THE SAFETY NET / WHILE GOING FORWARD WITH  
THE BARE MINIMUM THAT WE NEED IN DEFENSE  
SPENDING GROWTH / AND WITHOUT INCREASING  
TAXES.

WE'VE GOT TO GET GOVERNMENT IN SHAPE  
FOR THE 21ST CENTURY. ONE OF THE WAYS WE  
PLAN TO DO THAT IS BY GETTING GOVERNMENT OUT  
OF ACTIVITIES IT CAN NO LONGER AFFORD/OR  
SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN DOING IN THE FIRST  
PLACE. TO NAME JUST ONE CASE IN POINT,  
WE'RE DETERMINED TO SELL CONRAIL AND GET THE  
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OUT OF THE RAILROAD  
BUSINESS.

NOW LET ME ADDRESS ANOTHER ISSUE /-  
DEFENSE.

I KNOW THERE ARE SOME WHO CLAIM THAT  
WE'RE SPENDING TOO MUCH ON DEFENSE /  
THAT DEFENSE IS SOMEHOW BEING ALLOWED TO  
ESCAPE THE HARSH SCRUTINY OF THE BUDGET  
PROCESS. FORGIVE ME, BUT THE MODEST DEFENSE  
GROWTH WE'RE CALLING FOR ALREADY REPRESENTS  
A MAJOR COMPROMISE WITH THE CONGRESS.

INDEED, WHILE DOING OUR BEST TO IMPROVE THE NATION's DEFENSES, WE'VE COMPROMISED WITH THE CONGRESS ON EVERY DEFENSE BUDGET SINCE SEPTEMBER 1981. WE'VE COMPROMISED SO MUCH THAT THIS YEAR, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN A DECADE, THE DEFENSE BUDGET HAS ACTUALLY FALLEN BELLOW WHAT IT WAS THE YEAR BEFORE.

BUT BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT POINT IS THIS: OF ALL THE ITEMS IN THE BUDGET, DEFENSE IS THE ONLY ONE WHICH MUST BE DECIDED WITH REFERENCE, NOT ONLY TO AMERICAN POLICY, BUT TO THE POLICIES OF FOREIGN POWERS WHO WOULD ATTEMPT TO TERRORIZE, INTIMIDATE, OR THREATEN US AND OUR ALLIES.

WHILE OUR DEFENSES FELL INTO DISREPAIR DURING THE 1970's, THE SOVIETS RACED AHEAD WITH THE BIGGEST MILITARY BUILD-UP IN HISTORY. THAT BUILD-UP CONTINUES.

- 5 -

THE SOVIETS ARE ENGAGED IN SPACE WEAPONS  
RESEARCH, ARE CONSTANTLY ADDING TO THEIR  
NUCLEAR ARSENAL, AND ARE TIRELESSLY BUILDING  
UP THEIR CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES,  
ESPECIALLY THEIR NAVY.

TO GUT THE DEFENSE BUDGET NOW WOULD BE  
TO PUT AT RISK THE DEVELOPING NATIONS OF THE  
THIRD WORLD, INCLUDING GROWING DEMOCRACIES  
LIKE EL SALVADOR AND ECUADOR, AND TO  
ENDANGER THE DEFENSE OF WESTERN EUROPE.

IT WOULD CRIPPLE OUR HOPES FOR SUCCESSFUL  
ARMS TALKS WITH THE SOVIETS. WE CANNOT  
PERMIT THIS.

OF COURSE, THERE ARE SOME IN THIS TOWN  
WHO WILL UNDERESTIMATE THIS BUDGET AND MY  
INTENTION TO SUPPORT IT. THAT'S ALL  
RIGHT — I GOT USED TO BEING UNDERESTIMATED  
ALL THE WAY BACK IN 1966 WHEN I FIRST RAN  
FOR GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA.

WHEN JACK WARNER, HEAD OF WARNER BROTHERS,  
HEARD ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN, HE SAID, "NO, NO,  
JIMMY STEWART FOR GOVERNOR.] REAGAN FOR BEST  
FRIEND." ] WELL, THE DOUBTERS HAD BETTER GET  
READY, BECAUSE WE INTEND TO GET THAT BUDGET  
PASSED AND BUILD A PROSPERITY THAT LASTS FOR  
ALL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.

THE FIRST STEP TO CUTTING THE FEDERAL  
DEFICIT IS CUTTING THE HOT PARTISAN  
RHETORIC.] IF WE WORK TOGETHER, THE AMERICAN  
PEOPLE WILL BE WINNERS BECAUSE CONTROLLING  
SPENDING WILL INCREASE ECONOMIC GROWTH.

THERE'S NO QUESTION THAT GRAMM-RUDMAN-  
HOLLINGS IS GOING TO DEMAND SOME HARD  
CHOICES.] BUT I'M CONFIDENT THAT OUR BUDGET  
MAKES THE RIGHT CHOICES ↗ AND THAT IT  
DESERVES YOUR SUPPORT.] SO PLEASE, LET YOUR  
VOICES BE HEARD ↗ BOTH AT HOME AND RIGHT  
HERE IN WASHINGTON.] YOU DO THAT, AND  
CAPITOL HILL WILL GET THE IDEA.

MY FRIENDS, THANK YOU FOR ALL THE  
SUPPORT YOU'VE ALREADY GIVEN US. TOGETHER,  
WE'RE PARTICIPATING IN HISTORY, SHAPING  
AMERICA'S FUTURE. THE BUDGET BATTLE  
PROMISES TO BE LONG AND HARD. BUT THE  
REWARDS WILL BE GREAT. FOR ONCE WE BRING  
DEFICIT SPENDING TO AN END, OUR NATION WILL  
ENTER AN ERA OF UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY AND  
GROWTH.

THANK YOU, AND GOD BLESS YOU.

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# # #

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 24, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: BEN ELLIOTT *De*  
SUBJECT: Monday Budget Briefing

We expect to add a paragraph on Monday morning to reflect the progress of the tax conference over the weekend. This paragraph will represent hard news -- the portion of the remarks on which we want the media to focus.

OK

(Robinson/Elliott)  
January 24, 1986  
7:30 p.m.

PL

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: DROPBY BUDGET BRIEFING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 1986

Good morning and welcome to the White House. I'm very glad you could come by to see us and to hear our views on the issues that will shape the budget debate in 1986.

The Federal deficit is among the last major obstacles blocking America's path to permanent prosperity. In these past 5 years, we've cut tax rates by nearly 25 percent and then indexed the rates to protect people from being bumped by inflation into higher brackets. We've seen inflation itself drop by two-thirds, interest rates tumble by more than half, and we've seen more than 9 million Americans find jobs during 3 straight years of economic growth.

Americans are believers again. But there's one area where no one believes the Federal Government is doing a good enough job -- and that's getting Federal spending under control. Even though tax revenues have been growing, spending has been shooting up even faster. And so the Congress passed the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings amendment that mandates steadily declining deficits until we reach a balanced budget in fiscal year 1991.

I want you to know that the budget we submit in a week will meet the deficit targets set by that legislation. And it will do so, while protecting Social Security and the Safety Net, while going forward with the bare minimum that we need in defense spending growth, and without increasing taxes.

We've got to get Government in shape for the 21st century. One of the ways we plan to do that is by getting Government out

of activities it can no longer afford or shouldn't have been doing in the first place. To name just one case in point, we're determined to sell Conrail and get the Federal Government out of the railroad business.

Now let me address another issue -- defense.

I know there are some who claim that we're spending too much on defense -- that defense is somehow being allowed to escape the harsh scrutiny of the budget process. Forgive me, but the modest defense growth we're calling for already represents a major compromise with the Congress. Indeed, while doing our best to improve the Nation's defenses, we've compromised with the Congress on every defense budget since September 1981. We've compromised so much that this year -- for the first time in more than a decade -- the defense budget has actually fallen below what it was the year before.

But by far the most important point is this: of all the items in the budget, defense is the only one which must be decided with reference, not only to American policy, but to the policies of foreign powers who would attempt to terrorize, intimidate, or threaten us and our allies.

While our defenses fell into disrepair during the 1970's, the Soviets raced ahead with the biggest military build-up in history. That build-up continues. The Soviets are engaged in space weapons research, are constantly adding to their nuclear arsenal, and are tirelessly building up their conventional armed forces, especially their navy.

To gut the defense budget now would be to put at risk the developing nations of the Third World -- including growing

democracies like El Salvador and Ecuador -- and to endanger the defense of Western Europe. It would cripple our hopes for successful arms talks with the Soviets. We cannot permit this.

Of course, there are some in this town who will underestimate this budget and my intention to support it. That's all right -- I got used to being underestimated all the way back in 1966 when I first ran for Governor of California. When Jack Warner, head of Warner Brothers, heard about the campaign, he said, "No, no. Jimmy Stewart for Governor. Reagan for best friend." Well, the doubters had better get ready, because we intend to get that budget passed and build a prosperity that lasts for all the American people.

There's no question that Gramm-Rudman-Hollings is going to demand some hard choices. But I'm confident that our budget makes the right choices -- and that it deserves your support. So please, let your voices be heard -- both at home and right here in Washington. You do that, and Capitol Hill will get the idea.

My friends, thank you for all the support you've already given us. Together, we're participating in history, shaping America's future. The budget battle promises to be long and hard. But the rewards will be great. For once we bring deficit spending to an end, our Nation will enter an era of unparalleled opportunity and growth.

Thank you, and God bless you.

(Noonan)  
January 28, 1986  
3:30 p.m.

36756655  
SP1029

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: DEATH OF SPACE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER CREW  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1986

Ladies and gentlemen, I had planned to speak to you tonight to report on the State of the Union, but the events of earlier today have led me to change those plans. Today is a day for mourning, and remembering.

Nancy and I are pained to the core by the tragedy of the Shuttle Challenger. We know we share this pain with all of the people of our country. This is truly a national loss.

Nineteen years ago almost to the day, we lost three astronauts in a terrible accident on the ground. But we have never lost an astronaut in flight. We have never had a tragedy like this. And perhaps we have forgotten the courage it took for the crew of the shuttle. But they, the Magnificent Seven, were aware of the dangers -- and overcame them and did their jobs brilliantly.

We mourn seven heroes -- Michael Smith, Dick Scobee, Judith Resnik, Ronald McNair, Ellison Onizuka [oh-nih-ZOO-kuh], Gregory Jarvis, and Christa McAuliffe. We mourn their loss as a Nation, together.

To the families of the Seven: We cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this tragedy -- but we feel the loss, and we are thinking about you so very much. Your loved ones were daring and brave and they had that special grace, that special spirit that says: Give me a challenge and I'll meet it with joy. They

had a hunger to explore the universe and discover its truths. They wished to serve and they did -- they served all of us.

We have grown used to wonders in this century -- it's hard to dazzle us. But for 25 years the United States space program has been doing just that. We have grown used to the idea of space, and perhaps we forget that we've only just begun, we're still pioneers -- they, the members of the Challenger crew, were pioneers.

And I want to say something to the school children of America who were watching the live coverage of the shuttle's takeoff. I know it's hard to understand but sometimes painful things like this happen -- it's all part of the process of exploration and discovery -- it's all part of taking a chance and expanding man's horizons. The future doesn't belong to the faint-hearted -- it belongs to the brave. The Challenger crew was pulling us into the future -- and we'll continue to follow them.

I've always had great faith in and respect for our space program -- and what happened today does nothing to diminish it. We don't hide our space program, we don't keep secrets and cover things up, we do it all up front and in public. That's the way freedom is, and we wouldn't change it for a minute.

We'll continue our quest in space. There will be more flights shuttle and more shuttle crews and, yes, more volunteers, more civilians, more teachers, in space. Nothing ends here -- our hopes and our journeys continue.

I want to add that I wish I could talk to every man and woman who works for NASA or who worked on this mission and tell them: your dedication and professionalism have moved and impressed us for decades, and we know of your anguish. We share it.

There's a coincidence today. On this day 390 years ago, the great explorer Sir Francis Drake died aboard ship off the coast of Panama. In his lifetime the great frontiers were the oceans. And a historian later said, "He lived by the sea, died on it, and was buried in it." Today we can say of the Challenger Crew: their dedication was, like Drake's, complete.

The crew of the space shuttle Challenger honored us by the manner in which they lived their lives. We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them -- this morning, as they prepared for their journey, and waved goodbye, and "slipped the surly bonds of earth" to "touch the face of God."

Thank you.

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

January 28, 1986

MR. PRESIDENT:

Attached is the draft for your brief televised address from the Oval Office. The speech will be on a teleprompter. The remarks have been reviewed and approved by your Senior Staff.

Please return the draft to the Usher's Office after you are finished with your edits.

  
David Chew

(NOONAN)

JANUARY 28, 1986

36756055

PRESIDENT'S BACKUP COPY  
ADDRESS TO THE NATION:  
DEATH OF SPACE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER CREW

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I HAD PLANNED TO SPEAK TO YOU TONIGHT TO REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE UNION, BUT THE EVENTS OF EARLIER TODAY HAVE LED ME TO CHANGE THOSE PLANS. TODAY IS A DAY FOR MOURNING, AND REMEMBERING.

NANCY AND I ARE PAINED TO THE CORE BY THE TRAGEDY OF THE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER. WE KNOW WE SHARE THIS PAIN WITH ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF OUR COUNTRY. THIS IS TRULY A NATIONAL LOSS.

NINETEEN YEARS AGO ALMOST TO THE DAY, WE LOST THREE ASTRONAUTS IN A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT ON THE GROUND. BUT WE HAVE NEVER LOST AN ASTRONAUT IN FLIGHT. WE HAVE NEVER HAD A TRAGEDY LIKE THIS. AND PERHAPS WE HAVE FORGOTTEN THE COURAGE IT TOOK FOR THE CREW OF THE SHUTTLE. BUT THEY, THE CHALLENGER SEVEN, WERE AWARE OF THE DANGERS -- AND OVERCAME THEM AND DID THEIR JOBS BRILLIANTLY.

WE MOURN SEVEN HEROES -- MICHAEL SMITH, DICK SCOBEE, JUDITH RESNIK, RONALD McNAIR, ELLISON (OH-NIH-ZOO-KUH), GREGORY JARVIS, AND CHRISTA McAULIFFE. WE MOURN THEIR LOSS AS A NATION, TOGETHER.

TO THE FAMILIES OF THE SEVEN: WE CANNOT BEAR,  
AS YOU DO, THE FULL IMPACT OF THIS TRAGEDY -- BUT WE  
FEEL THE LOSS, AND WE ARE THINKING ABOUT YOU SO VERY  
MUCH. YOUR LOVED ONES WERE DARING AND BRAVE AND THEY  
HAD THAT SPECIAL GRACE, THAT SPECIAL SPIRIT THAT SAYS:  
GIVE ME A CHALLENGE AND I'LL MEET IT WITH JOY. THEY  
HAD A HUNGER TO EXPLORE THE UNIVERSE AND DISCOVER ITS  
TRUTHS. THEY WISHED TO SERVE AND THEY DID --  
THEY SERVED ALL OF US.

WE HAVE GROWN USED TO WONDERS IN THIS CENTURY --  
IT'S HARD TO DAZZLE US. BUT FOR 25 YEARS THE UNITED  
STATES SPACE PROGRAM HAS BEEN DOING JUST THAT. WE HAVE  
GROWN USED TO THE IDEA OF SPACE, AND PERHAPS WE FORGET  
THAT WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN, WE'RE STILL PIONEERS --  
THEY, THE MEMBERS OF THE CHALLENGER CREW,  
WERE PIONEERS.

AND I WANT TO SAY SOMETHING TO THE SCHOOL CHILDREN  
OF AMERICA WHO WERE WATCHING THE LIVE COVERAGE OF THE  
SHUTTLE'S TAKEOFF. I KNOW IT'S HARD TO UNDERSTAND BUT  
SOMETIMES PAINFUL THINGS LIKE THIS HAPPEN — IT'S ALL  
PART OF THE PROCESS OF EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY —  
IT'S ALL PART OF TAKING A CHANCE AND EXPANDING MAN'S  
HORIZONS. THE FUTURE DOESN'T BELONG TO THE  
FAINT-HEARTED — IT BELONGS TO THE BRAVE.  
THE CHALLENGER CREW WAS PULLING US INTO THE FUTURE —  
AND WE'LL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THEM.

I'VE ALWAYS HAD GREAT FAITH IN AND RESPECT FOR OUR SPACE PROGRAM — AND WHAT HAPPENED TODAY DOES NOTHING TO DIMINISH IT. ] WE DON'T HIDE OUR SPACE PROGRAM, WE DON'T KEEP SECRETS AND COVER THINGS UP, WE DO IT ALL UP FRONT AND IN PUBLIC. ] THAT'S THE WAY FREEDOM IS, AND WE WOULDN'T CHANGE IT FOR A MINUTE.

WE'LL CONTINUE OUR QUEST IN SPACE. ] THERE WILL BE MORE SHUTTLE FLIGHTS AND MORE SHUTTLE CREWS AND, YES, MORE VOLUNTEERS, MORE CIVILIANS, MORE TEACHERS, IN SPACE. ] NOTHING ENDS HERE — OUR HOPES AND OUR JOURNEYS CONTINUE.

I WANT TO ADD THAT I WISH I COULD TALK TO EVERY MAN AND WOMAN WHO WORKS FOR NASA OR WHO WORKED ON THIS MISSION AND TELL THEM: YOUR DEDICATION AND PROFESSIONALISM HAVE MOVED AND IMPRESSED US FOR DECADES, AND WE KNOW OF YOUR ANGUISH. ] WE SHARE IT.

THERE'S A COINCIDENCE TODAY. ] ON THIS DAY 390 YEARS AGO, THE GREAT EXPLORER SIR FRANCIS DRAKE DIED ABOARD SHIP OFF THE COAST OF PANAMA. ] IN HIS LIFETIME THE GREAT FRONTIERS WERE THE OCEANS. ] AND A HISTORIAN LATER SAID, "HE LIVED BY THE SEA, DIED ON IT, AND WAS BURIED IN IT." ] TODAY WE CAN SAY OF THE CHALLENGER CREW: THEIR DEDICATION WAS, LIKE DRAKE'S, COMPLETE.

THE CREW OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER HONORED  
US BY THE MANNER IN WHICH THEY LIVED THEIR LIVES.  
WE WILL NEVER FORGET THEM, NOR THE LAST TIME WE SAW  
THEM -- THIS MORNING, AS THEY PREPARED FOR THEIR  
JOURNEY, AND WAVED GOODBYE, AND "SLIPPED THE SURLY  
BONDS OF EARTH" TO "TOUCH THE FACE OF GOD."

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THANK YOU.

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