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(DOLAN)

JANUARY 30, 1986

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PRESIDENT'S BACKUP COPY

ADDRESS TO CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL ACTION CONFERENCE

LET ME BEGIN BY SAYING HOW APPROPRIATE IT IS THAT WE HONOR TONIGHT THE SHUTTLE SEVEN; ALL OF THEM WERE HEROES. EACH OF US IS IN THEIR DEBT. WE KNOW NOW THAT GOD HOLDS THEM CLOSE; AND WE PRAY HE WILL COMFORT THEIR GRIEVING LOVED ONES. AND WE ARE AWARE TOO OF OUR OWN DUTY — TO THEM AND TO THEIR MEMORY. WE MUST CONTINUE. OTHER BRAVE AMERICANS MUST GO NOW WHERE THEY SO VALIANTLY TRIED TO LEAD, A FITTING PLACE, I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT, FOR AMERICANS: "THE STARS AND BEYOND."

IN SOME CLOSED SOCIETIES A TRAGEDY OF THIS SORT WOULD BE PERMANENTLY DISHEARTENING, A FATAL SETBACK TO ANY SUCH PROGRAM — FOLLOWED NOT BY MOURNING AND NATIONAL RECOMMITMENT BUT BY ATTEMPTS TO EVADE RESPONSIBILITY. NOT SO IN A DEMOCRACY, NOT SO IN AMERICA. JOHN GLENN SAID THE OTHER DAY THAT AFTER THE PAD FIRE THAT KILLED THREE ASTRONAUTS IN 1967, SUPPORT FOR THE SPACE PROGRAM SKYROCKETED AMONG THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THAT'S BECAUSE HERE THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT RULE THE PEOPLE: IT IS THE PEOPLE. AND ULTIMATELY WHAT HAPPENS TO PROGRAMS OF THIS SORT — AND WHAT FOLLOWS TRAGEDIES OF THIS KIND — ARE DECISIONS THAT BELONG NOT TO GOVERNMENT BUT TO THE PEOPLE. THE TRAGEDY OF THE SHUTTLE SEVEN WILL ONLY SERVE TO STRENGTHEN THE RESOLVE OF AMERICA TO PURSUE THEIR DREAM OF "THE STARS AND BEYOND."

ANYONE WHO DOUBTS THIS -- DOES NOT KNOW THE HISTORY OF
OUR LAND, / THE WONDER OF AMERICA AND HER FREE PEOPLE, / OR
THE MEANING OF THE WORDS: "THE RIGHT STUFF."

I AM DELIGHTED TO BE HERE TONIGHT AND I WANT TO
EXTEND MY HEARTFELT THANKS TO THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE
UNION, ALONG WITH HUMAN EVENTS / NATIONAL REVIEW AND
YOUNG AMERICANS FOR FREEDOM / FOR PUTTING ON THIS
CONFERENCE AND FOR EXTENDING THIS INVITATION.

TONIGHT MY THOUGHTS CANNOT HELP BUT DRIFT BACK TO
ANOTHER CONSERVATIVE AUDIENCE OF MORE THAN 20 YEARS AGO
AND A PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN THAT THE PUNDITS AND
OPINIONMAKERS SAID THEN WAS THE DEATH KNEEL FOR OUR
MOVEMENT.] BUT JUST AS THE OPINION LEADERS HAD BEEN
STUNNED BY BARRY GOLDWATER'S NOMINATION, SO TOO THEY
WOULD BE SHOCKED BY THE RESILIENCY OF HIS CAUSE AND THE
POLITICAL DRAMA TO UNFOLD AROUND IT: THE RISE OF THE
NEW RIGHT AND THE RELIGIOUS REVIVAL OF THE MID-70's,
AND THE FINAL, TRIUMPHANT MARCH TO WASHINGTON IN 1980
BY CONSERVATIVES.

AND, YOU KNOW, THAT LAST EVENT REALLY DID COME AS
A SHOCK OF SEISMIC PROPORTIONS TO THIS CITY. I CAN
REMEMBER READING ABOUT A POLL TAKEN AT A WASHINGTON
NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON IN JANUARY OF 1980, ON THE
EVE OF THE PRIMARY SEASON. THOSE IN ATTENDANCE WERE
ASKED WHO WOULD BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
STATES. JIMMY CARTER GOT A LARGE NUMBER OF VOTES, SO
DID TEDDY KENNEDY. BUT THERE WAS ONE CANDIDATE ON THE
REPUBLICAN SIDE WHO GOT SO FEW VOTES FROM THE WISE MEN
OF WASHINGTON THAT IT WASN'T EVEN REPORTED IN THE LINE
UP. I THINK IT HAD TO DO WITH HIS CONSERVATIVE
LEANINGS. WELL I HOPE THEY KNOW — I'M NOT ABOUT TO
CHANGE.

BUT WHILE OFFICIAL WASHINGTON ALWAYS
UNDERESTIMATED OUR CAUSE, SOME OF THE SHREWER
JOURNALISTS DID OVER THE YEARS SENSE SOMETHING ASTIR IN
AMERICA. THEODORE WHITE SAID OPENLY JUST AFTER BARRY
GOLDWATER'S CAMPAIGN: "SOME SEE THIS AS A LAST
ADVENTURE IN THE POLITICS OF NOSTALGIA. OTHERS SEE
THIS ARIZONAN AS A SYMBOL, CAST UP BY THE FIRST CREST
OF AN EARLY TIDE, THROWN BACK THIS ONCE, BUT BOUND TO
COME AGAIN IN GREATER STRENGTH."

AND YOU KNOW, TO BE HERE TONIGHT AND BE PART OF THIS HISTORIC CONFERENCE — YOUR BIGGEST ATTENTION GETTER — TO LOOK AT YOUR PROGRAM FOR THE NEXT 2 DAYS AND ALL THE IMPORTANT PEOPLE AND DISCUSSIONS, TO STAND HERE NOW WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL SEAL ON THIS PODIUM, TO FEEL THE ENERGY, THE ALMOST FESTIVE AIR OF THIS AUDIENCE. I THINK YOU'VE PROVIDED AN ANSWER TO TEDDY WHITE'S IMPLICIT QUESTION ABOUT THE FATE OF OUR MOVEMENT, THE STATE OF OUR CAUSE. FELLOW CONSERVATIVES, IT TOOK US MORE THAN 20 YEARS — BUT WHO CAN DENY IT — WE'RE ROCKIN', AND WE'RE ROLLIN'.

NOW I KNOW A FEW LIBERAL OBSERVERS WILL TRY TO DOWNPLAY ALL THIS — BUT DON'T YOU THINK THEY'RE GOING TO SOUND A BIT LIKE YOGI BERRA ON THAT FAMOUS OCCASION WHEN HE SAID OF A RESTAURANT: "IT'S SO CROWDED NOBODY GOES THERE ANYMORE." AND, AS FOR THOSE LIBERALS WHO FINALLY ARE CATCHING ON TO THE IDEA THAT THERE IS A CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT, THEY REMIND ME OF A COWBOY WHO WAS OUT HIKING IN THE DESERT ONE DAY AND CAME ACROSS THE GRAND CANYON. HE SAID, "WOW, SOMETHING SURE HAPPENED HERE."

WELL, SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED IN AMERICA; IN 5 SHORT YEARS WE HAVE SEEN THE KIND OF POLITICAL CHANGE RARELY SEEN IN A GENERATION. ON NEARLY EVERY ISSUE — FEDERAL SPENDING/TAX CUTS/DEREGULATION/THE FIGHT AGAINST CAREER CRIMINALS AND FOR TOUGH JUDGES/MILITARY READINESS/RESISTANCE TO SOVIET EXPANSIONISM AND THE NEED FOR CANDOR ABOUT THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN FREEDOM AND TOTALITARIANISM / THE OLD TABOOS AND SUPERSTITIONS OF LIBERALISM HAVE COLLAPSED AND BEEN ALL BUT BLOWN AWAY, TO BE REPLACED BY A ROBUST AND ENLIGHTENED CONSERVATISM, A CONSERVATISM THAT BRINGS WITH IT ECONOMIC PROSPERITY/PERSONAL OPPORTUNITY/AND A SHINING HOPE THAT SOMEDAY ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD / FROM AFGHANISTAN TO NICARAGUA TO POLAND AND, YES, TO ANGOLA / WILL KNOW THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY AND LIVE IN THE LIGHT OF FREEDOM.

THOSE IN THIS ROOM KNOW HOW OFTEN WE WERE TOLD THE ODDS OF ACCOMPLISHING EVEN A SMALL PART OF THIS WERE ALL AGAINST US. I REMEMBER MY OWN FIRST VISIT UP TO THE HILL AFTER THE 1980 ELECTION WHEN ISSUES LIKE THE TAX CUTS CAME UP. I MET A CONGRESSMAN THERE — A KIND OF BIG FELLA AS I RECALL, LOTS OF WHITE HAIR, FROM THE BOSTON AREA, I THINK / MAYBE YOU KNOW HIM / HE SMILED VERY INDULGENTLY AND TOLD ME NOT TO EXPECT TOO MUCH BECAUSE I WAS, TO USE HIS WORDS, "IN THE BIG LEAGUES NOW."

BUT, YOU KNOW, AS A CONSERVATIVE, I HAD AN
ADVANTAGE. BACK IN THE HARD YEARS, THE LEAN YEARS,
WHEN WE WERE FORMING OUR POLITICAL PAC'S, SENDING OUT
OUR FUNDRAISING LETTERS AND WORKING FOR CANDIDATE AFTER
CANDIDATE IN CAMPAIGN AFTER CAMPAIGN, ALL OF US LEARNED
SOMETHING VITAL, SOMETHING IMPORTANT ABOUT OUR COUNTRY.
SOMETHING BECAME AN ARTICLE OF FAITH, A FAITH THAT
SUSTAINED US THROUGH ALL THE SETBACKS AND THE
HEARTACHE. YOU SEE, WE KNEW THEN WHAT WE KNOW NOW:
THAT THE REAL BIG LEAGUERS AREN'T HERE IN WASHINGTON AT
ALL BUT OUT THERE IN THE HEARTLAND — OUT IN THE REAL
AMERICA / WHERE FOLKS GO TO WORK EVERY DAY AND CHURCH
EVERY WEEK / WHERE THEY RAISE THEIR FAMILIES AND HELP
THEIR NEIGHBORS / WHERE THEY BUILD AMERICA AND INCREASE
HER BOUNTY AND PASS ON TO EACH SUCCEEDING GENERATION
HER GOODNESS AND HER SPLENDOR. AND WE KNEW SOMETHING
ELSE TOO: THAT THE FOLKS OUT THERE IN REAL AMERICA
PRETTY MUCH SEE THINGS OUR WAY AND THAT ALL WE EVER
HAVE TO DO TO GET THEM INVOLVED IS: BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO
TRUST THEM WITH THE TRUTH AND BOLD ENOUGH TO ASK FOR
THEIR HELP.

AND IT'S HERE WE FIND THE EXPLANATION FOR THE
 SUCCESSES OF THE LAST 5 YEARS, THE REASON WHY ON ISSUE
 AFTER ISSUE THE LIBERALS IN THIS TOWN HAVE LOST AND ARE
 STILL LOSING. THEY'VE FORGOTTEN WHO'S IN CHARGE, WHO
 THE BIG LEAGUERS REALLY ARE. REMINDS ME OF A FAVORITE
 LITTLE STORY OF MINE ABOUT A CAREER NAVAL OFFICER WHO
 FINALLY GOT HIS FOUR STRIPES, BECAME A CAPTAIN AND TOOK
 OVER COMMAND OF A GIANT BATTLESHIP. AND ONE NIGHT HE
 WAS OUT STEAMING AROUND THE ATLANTIC WHEN HE WAS CALLED
 FROM HIS QUARTERS TO THE BRIDGE AND TOLD ABOUT A SIGNAL
 LIGHT IN THE DISTANCE. THE CAPTAIN TOLD THE SIGNALMAN,
 "SIGNAL THEM TO BEAR STARBOARD." BACK CAME THE SIGNAL
 FROM AHEAD SAYING, "YOU BEAR STARBOARD." WELL, AS I
 SAY, THIS CAPTAIN WAS VERY AWARE HE WAS COMMANDER OF A
 BATTLESHIP, THE BIGGEST THING AFLOAT, THE PRIDE OF THE
 FLEET. AND HE SAID, "SIGNAL THAT LIGHT AGAIN TO 'BEAR
 STARBOARD NOW.'" AND ONCE AGAIN, BACK CAME THE ANSWER,
 "BEAR STARBOARD YOURSELF." THE CAPTAIN DECIDED TO GIVE
 HIS UNKNOWN COUNTERPART A LESSON IN SEA-GOING HUMILITY,
 SO HE SAID, "SIGNAL AGAIN AND TELL THEM 'BEAR
 STARBOARD, I AM A BATTLESHIP.'" AND BACK CAME THE
 SIGNAL, "BEAR STARBOARD YOURSELF, I AM A LIGHTHOUSE."

WELL, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE TURNED OUT TO BE JUST WHAT THE FOREFATHERS THOUGHT THEY WOULD BE WHEN THEY MADE THEM THE FINAL ARBITER OF POLITICAL POWER, A Lighthouse TO THE SHIP OF STATE — A SOURCE OF GOOD JUDGEMENT AND COMMON SENSE SIGNALLING A COURSE TO STARBOARD. BUT I COME HERE TONIGHT NOT JUST TO CELEBRATE THESE SUCCESSES OF OUR PAST BUT ALSO TO STRIKE A SERIOUS, EVEN SOMBER NOTE / TO REMIND EACH OF YOU NOT ONLY OF HOW FAR WE HAVE COME TOGETHER BUT HOW TRAGIC IT WOULD BE IF WE SUDDENLY CAST ASIDE / IN A MOMENT OF DREADFUL FOLLY / ALL OUR HOPES FOR A SAFE AMERICA AND A FREER WORLD. MY FELLOW CONSERVATIVES, I WANT TO SPEAK TO YOU TONIGHT ABOUT OUR MOVEMENT AND A GREAT DANGER THAT LIES AHEAD.

NOW SOME OF YOU MAY THINK I AM REACTING HERE TO CLAIMS THAT 1985 WAS A DISAPPOINTING OR, AT BEST, MEDIOCRE YEAR FOR CONSERVATIVES. IN FACT, I WANT TO TAKE SHARP ISSUE WITH THIS AND SUGGEST TO YOU THAT THOSE CLAIMS THEMSELVES ARE EVIDENCE OF THE BROADER PROBLEM I'M TALKING ABOUT: THE DANGER OF GROWING SOFT WITH VICTORY / OF LOSING PERSPECTIVE WHEN THINGS GO OUR WAY TOO OFTEN / OF FAILING TO APPRECIATE SUCCESS WHEN IT OCCURS OR SEEING DANGER WHEN IT LOOMS.

FIRST, LET'S TALK ABOUT 1985 AND THREE LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES WHOSE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE WERE BOTH ENORMOUS AND LARGELY OVERLOOKED. NOW, SOME OF YOU WHO GO BACK WITH ME TO THAT CAMPAIGN IN 1964 CAN REMEMBER HOW EASILY THE LIBERALS DISMISSED OUR WARNINGS THEN ABOUT THE DANGERS OF DEFICIT SPENDING — WE WERE TOLD IT WOULD BRING PROSPERITY. OTHERS OF YOU KNOW HOW PASSIONATELY THE LIBERALS BELIEVED IN THE USE OF HIGH AND PUNITIVE TAX RATES TO REDISTRIBUTE INCOME. AND, FINALLY, ALL OF US CAN REMEMBER HOW LIBERALS FOUND IN THE POST-VIETNAM SYNDROME A FORM OF RELIGIOUS EXERCISE, A KIND OF SPIRITUAL ECSTASY, HOWEVER MUCH THAT SYNDROME PARALYZED AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY AND JEOPARDIZED FREEDOM.

NOW, LET ME ASK YOU: IF SOMEONE HAD COME UP TO YOU EVEN AS LATE AS A FEW YEARS AGO AND TOLD YOU THAT BY 1985 ALL OF THESE CHERISHED DOCTRINES — A BELIEF IN DEFICIT SPENDING, THE POLITICS OF ENVY VIA HIGH TAX RATES, AND THE REFUSAL TO HELP THOSE RESISTING COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP — WOULD BE FORMALLY AND PUBLICLY REJECTED IN A SINGLE 12-MONTH PERIOD BY THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS THEMSELVES, WOULDN'T YOU HAVE THOUGHT THAT PERSON PRONE TO ACUTE SHORTAGES OF OXYGEN IN THE CEREBRAL HEMISPHERES?

BUT CONSIDER 1985: WE SAW A DE FACTO BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT PASSED BY BOTH HOUSES OF THE CONGRESS, WE SAW A HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES UNDER LIBERAL LEADERSHIP AGREE TO CUT THE TOP MARGINAL TAX RATE TO THE 35 TO 38 PERCENT RANGE, AND WE EVEN SAW THAT SAME HOUSE NOT ONLY APPROVE FUNDS FOR AN INSURGENCY AGAINST A COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT BUT SPONTANEOUSLY REPEAL THAT SYMBOL OF LIBERAL ISOLATIONISM, THE CLARK AMENDMENT.

SO, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS, SALUTE HALLEY'S COMET, SALUTE THAT SPACESHOT TO URANUS / I'M TOO OLD-FASHIONED TO CALL IT URRRANOUS / JUST REMEMBER POLITICS IN 1985 WAS ^{ALSO A} ~~THE~~ CELESTIAL PHENOMENON ~~OF THE~~ ~~DECADE~~ / STEVEN SPIELBERG ALL THE WAY.

ACTUALLY, THE REMARKABLE YEAR OF 1985 AT HOME WAS A REFLECTION OF A BROADER, EVEN BRIGHTER STRATEGIC PICTURE. IN EUROPE AND ASIA, STATISM AND SOCIALISM ARE DYING AND THE FREE MARKET IS GROWING. AND ALL ACROSS THE WORLD THE MARCH OF DEMOCRACY CONTINUES. YET, EVEN AS I THINK THE TIDE OF HISTORY IS ALL BUT IRREVERSIBLY TURNED OUR WAY AND THIS STRATEGIC PICTURE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE, WE MUST GUARD AT ALL COSTS AGAINST AN UNNECESSARY BUT COSTLY TACTICAL DEFEAT AHEAD. I AM TALKING, OF COURSE, ABOUT THE ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER.

~~WSE~~ - 11 -

NOW THIS ISN'T GOING TO HAPPEN, AS LONG AS WE CONSERVATIVES WILL SHOULDER THE BURDEN OF OUR RECENT SUCCESSES / IF WE'LL REALIZE HOW MUCH IS AT STAKE THIS NOVEMBER / FORGET FOR THE MOMENT THE FLOWERS AND THE SUNSHINE AND SUMMON ONCE AGAIN THOSE DEEP RESERVES OF WILL AND STAMINA THAT WON FOR US OUR FIRST VICTORIES.

AND BEAR IN MIND: THIS WILL REQUIRE A SUPREME EFFORT / OUR JOB IS GOING TO BE EVEN TOUGHER THIS YEAR. THE VERY YEARS OF PROSPERITY AND PEACE THAT CONSERVATIVE PROGRAMS HAVE GIVEN AMERICA MAY IN A STRANGE WAY ACTUALLY HELP THOSE WHO FOUGHT THE HARDEST AGAINST THEM.] GOOD TIMES, AFTER ALL, TEND TO FAVOR INCUMBENTS AND FORTIFY THE STATUS QUO.

YET, YOU AND I KNOW HOW UNACCEPTABLE THAT STATUS QUO IS, HOW MUCH — ON EVERYTHING FROM RIGHT TO LIFE / PRAYER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS / ENTERPRISE ZONES, AID TO ANTI-COMMUNIST INSURGENTS / STILL WAITS TO BE DONE.

SO WE MUST GO TO THE RECORD, GET THE FACTS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE HAS ALREADY INDICATED A TAX INCREASE IS THE SOLUTION TO OUR PROBLEMS AND RECENTLY ANOTHER IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE HOUSE LEADERSHIP ECHOED HIS SENTIMENTS. NOT MUCH HAS CHANGED ON FEDERAL SPENDING EITHER. SURE, THE LIBERALS ARE ANGRY ABOUT GRAMM-RUDMAN, BUT THEY AREN'T LOOKING REALISTICALLY AT OUR BLOATED EXPENDITURES/ ONLY TALKING NONSENSE ABOUT SHUTTING DOWN THE F.B.I. AND THE I.R.S. — THOUGH I DO ADMIT THAT IN MENTIONING THAT LAST POINT THEY MAY BE TEMPTING ME BEYOND MY STRENGTH. AND AS FOR DEFENSE — LET ME ASSURE YOU THE LIBERALS HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT — THEY ARE STILL LOOKING AT AMERICA'S DEFENSE BUDGET WITH LUST IN THEIR HEARTS. A LUST TO STRIP IT BARE AND USE THE FUNDS FOR MORE OF THEIR SOCIAL EXPERIMENTS.

YES, THIS YEAR WE HAVE TO WORK EVEN HARDER AT SUMMONING THE VIGOR TO TELL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THE TRUTH AND THE VIGOR TO ASK THEIR HELP/ TO REMIND THEM THAT WHAT THEY DO THIS NOVEMBER WILL DECIDE WHETHER THE DAYS OF HIGH TAXES AND HIGHER SPENDING/ THE DAYS OF ECONOMIC STAGNATION AND SKYROCKETING INFLATION/ THE DAYS OF NATIONAL MALAISE AND INTERNATIONAL HUMILIATION/ THE DAYS OF "BLAME AMERICA FIRST" AND "INORDINATE FEAR OF COMMUNISM," WILL ALL COME ROARING BACK AT US ONCE AGAIN.

MORE THAN THAT, WE MUST TELL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT THE PROGRESS WE MADE THUS FAR IS NOT ENOUGH, THAT IT WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH UNTIL THE CONSERVATIVE AGENDA IS ENACTED AND THAT MEANS ENTERPRISE ZONES, PRAYER IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, AND PROTECTION OF THE UNBORN. AND THAT'S WHY, MY FELLOW CONSERVATIVES, WE HAVE TO STOP LIMITING OURSELVES TO TALKING ABOUT HOLDING ON TO OUR STRENGTH IN THE SENATE AND START TALKING ABOUT CONSERVATIVE CONTROL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, WHICH HAS BEEN IN THE HANDS OF OUR OPPONENTS FOR VIRTUALLY HALF A CENTURY.

NEVER FORGET THAT FOR THOSE NEARLY 50 YEARS THE LIBERALS HAD IT ALL THEIR OWN WAY IN THIS CITY, AND THAT THE LOSS OF SUCH GREAT POWER IS RARELY ACCOMPANIED WITH GRACEFUL ACQUIESCENCE.

WELL, THE LIBERALS ARE FEELING PRETTY SORRY FOR THEMSELVES AND THAT'S WHY THEY'RE ANXIOUS ABOUT THIS ELECTION. THEY KNOW THAT UNLESS THEY DELIVER A TELLING BLOW THIS YEAR TO CONSERVATISM, THE 1988 CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL ACTION CONFERENCE WILL SEE EVERY MAJOR PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE FROM BOTH PARTIES DEMANDING A CHANCE TO APPEAR HERE AND CLAIM THE MANTLE OF CONSERVATISM. SO, THIS YEAR IS BREAKPOINT, OUR OPPONENTS ARE PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS.

AND, YOU KNOW, I THINK IT'S GOING TO BE WORTHWHILE REMINDING THE AMERICAN PEOPLE OF HOW DESPERATE THE LIBERALS ARE, HOW SO MUCH OF THEIR STRENGTH IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES — AS MANY AS 18 TO 23 SEATS — IS DUE TO GERRYMANDERING ON A SCALE UNPRECEDENTED IN MODERN HISTORY. AND THIS IS NOT TO MENTION THE OUTRAGEOUS EPISODE IN WHICH A LEGITIMATELY ELECTED MEMBER OF THE CONGRESS AND THE PEOPLE OF INDIANA'S 8TH DISTRICT WERE DISENFRANCHISED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

BUT THERE'S ANOTHER ISSUE THAT I ALSO BELIEVE VIVIDLY ILLUSTRATES HOW SERIOUSLY OUT OF TOUCH THE LIBERALS ARE WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. WE SOMETIMES FORGET THAT NO ONE IS MORE REALISTIC ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE THREAT TO OUR FREEDOM THAN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES. IN FACT, THEIR INTUITIVE REALISM IS WHY THAT BEAR IN THE WOODS AD SOME OF YOU CAN REMEMBER FROM 1984'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN WAS SO SUCCESSFUL. YES, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT AN ADMINISTRATION THAT PURSUES EVERY PATH TO PEACE, BUT THEY ALSO WANT AN ADMINISTRATION THAT IS REALISTIC ABOUT SOVIET EXPANSIONISM, COMMITTED TO RESISTING IT AND DETERMINED TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD.

NOW, WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN ADMINISTRATION THAT HAS ILLUSIONS ABOUT THE SOVIETS TAKES OVER. FIRST THERE ARE THE ILLUSIONS, THEN THE SURPRISE AND ANGER WHEN THE SOVIETS DO SOMETHING LIKE INVADE AFGHANISTAN. ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, IT HEIGHTENS TENSION AND THE PROSPECTS FOR CONFLICT. IN FACT, THE LIBERAL CONDUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY REMINDS ME A LITTLE OF A GAME NOTRE DAME PLAYED AGAINST ARMY IN 1946. WHEN NOTRE DAME PLAYER BOB LIVINGSTONE MISSED A TACKLE, HIS TEAMMATE JOHNNY LUJACK SCREAMED, "LIVINGSTONE, YOU, SO AND SO, YOU, SUCH AND SUCH." AND JUST THEN COACH FRANK LEAHY SAID, "ANOTHER SACRILEGE LIKE THAT, JONATHON LUJACK, AND YOU WILL BE DISASSOCIATED FROM OUR FINE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY." WELL, ON THE VERY NEXT PLAY, LIVINGSTONE MISSED ANOTHER TACKLE AND COACH LEAHY TURNED TO HIS BENCH AND SAID: "LADS, JONATHON LUJACK WAS RIGHT ABOUT ROBERT LIVINGSTONE."

AND THAT'S WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO GO TO THE RECORD.
I REMEMBER A LITTLE BOOKLET THAT CAME OUT A FEW YEARS
BACK. [ALTHOUGH IT WAS BY THE REPUBLICAN STUDY
COMMITTEE AND TITLED "WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH DEMOCRATIC
FOREIGN POLICY," IT WAS REALLY ABOUT A SHRINKING GROUP
OF FOREIGN POLICY LIBERALS HERE IN WASHINGTON.] AND I
JUST THINK IF WE WERE ABLE TO GET SOME OF THOSE CHOICE
QUOTATIONS ON ISSUES LIKE VIETNAM, GRENADA AND CENTRAL
AMERICA BEFORE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THEY WERE ABLE
TO SEE WHAT THE WASHINGTON LIBERALS REALLY BELIEVE
ABOUT FOREIGN POLICY / THE NAIVETE AND CONFUSION OF
MIND / I BELIEVE WE WOULD SHOCK THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
INTO REPUDIATING THESE VIEWS ONCE AND FOR ALL.

AND LET ME INTERJECT HERE TWO POINTS THAT I THINK
CAN BE IMPORTANT THIS YEAR. [FIRST, THE QUESTION OF
DEFENSE SPENDING.] DURING THE LAST FEW WEEKS, THERE
HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF COLUMNS, EDITORIALS OR SPEECHES
CALLING FOR A SLASH IN THE MILITARY BUDGET AND QUOTING
PRESIDENT EISENHOWER AS JUSTIFICATION. [PRESIDENT
EISENHOWER DID WARN ABOUT LARGE CONCENTRATIONS OF POWER
LIKE THE MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, BUT WHAT'S BEING
LEFT OUT IS THE CONTEXT OF THAT QUOTE.

IN HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, YES, HE DID WARN US ABOUT THE DANGER OF AN ALL POWERFUL MILITARY INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, BUT HE ALSO REMINDED US AMERICA MUST ALWAYS BE VIGILANT BECAUSE, "WE FACE A HOSTILE IDEOLOGY — GLOBAL IN SCOPE, /ATHEISTIC IN CHARACTER, /RUTHLESS IN PURPOSE, /AND INSIDIOUS IN METHOD." [THE PUNDITS HAVEN'T BEEN QUOTING THAT PART OF HIS SPEECH.

I KNOW THERE'S BEEN A GREAT DEAL OF TALK IN THE MEDIA RECENTLY ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTHWEST AFRICA AND ESPECIALLY ANGOLA. [AND I ALSO KNOW YOU WILL BE HAVING A SPECIAL GUEST HERE TOMORROW EVENING, AS I DID THIS MORNING IN THE OVAL OFFICE.] WELL, LET ME JUST SAY NOW IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR ME AS PRESIDENT TO GET TOO SPECIFIC TONIGHT. [BUT I DO WANT TO MAKE A COMMENT HERE ON SOME RECENT HISTORY AND LET YOU DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS.

LAST SEPTEMBER, AT THE LOMBA RIVER IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA, WHEN A FORCE OF UNITA REBELS MET AN OVERWHELMINGLY SUPERIOR FORCE OF GOVERNMENT TROOPS DIRECTLY SUPPORTED BY THE SOVIET BLOC, THE UNITA FORCES DEFEATED THE GOVERNMENT TROOPS AND DROVE THEM AND THEIR COMMUNIST ALLIES FROM THE FIELD. IN THE HISTORY OF REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLES, OF MOVEMENTS FOR TRUE "NATIONAL LIBERATION," THERE IS OFTEN A VICTORY LIKE THIS THAT ELECTRIFIES THE WORLD AND BRINGS GREAT SYMPATHY AND ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER NATIONS TO THOSE STRUGGLING FOR FREEDOM. PAST AMERICAN PRESIDENTS, PAST AMERICAN CONGRESSES, AND ALWAYS, OF COURSE, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE HAVE OFFERED HELP TO OTHERS FIGHTING IN THE FREEDOM CAUSE WE BEGAN. SO, TONIGHT EACH OF US JOINS IN SALUTING THE HEROES OF THE LOMBA RIVER — AND THEIR LEADER, THE HOPE OF ANGOLA, JONAS SAVIMBI.

SO, YOU SEE, LIKE THE PANAMA CANAL IN 1976, FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES LIKE DEFENSE SPENDING AND AID TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS MAY PROVE THE SLEEPER ISSUES OF THE YEAR.

SO LET ME URGE YOU ALL TO RETURN TO YOUR ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES, AND TO TELL YOUR VOLUNTEERS AND YOUR CONTRIBUTORS THAT THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT THEY ARE NEEDED NOW AS NEVER BEFORE / THAT THE CRUCIAL HOUR IS APPROACHING / THAT THE CHOICE BEFORE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THIS YEAR IS OF OVERWHELMING IMPORTANCE / WHETHER TO HAND THE GOVERNMENT BACK TO THE LIBERALS OR MOVE FORWARD WITH THE CONSERVATIVE AGENDA INTO THE 1990's.

MY FELLOW CONSERVATIVES, LET'S GET THE MESSAGE OUT LOUD AND CLEAR. THE WASHINGTON LIBERALS AND THE SAN FRANCISCO DEMOCRATS AREN'T EXTINCT. THEY'RE JUST IN HIDING, WAITING FOR ANOTHER TRY. LET US MAKE IT CLEAR TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, THEY MUST CHOOSE THIS YEAR BETWEEN THOSE WHO ARE ENEMIES OF BIG GOVERNMENT AND THE FRIENDS OF THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS AND / ON THE OTHER HAND / THOSE WHO ARE ADVOCATES OF FEDERAL POWER AND A FOREIGN POLICY OF ILLUSION. SO LET THE CHOICE BE CLEAR. WILL IT BE "BLAME AMERICA FIRST"? OR WILL IT BE "ON TO DEMOCRACY" AND "FORWARD FOR FREEDOM"?

AND FREEDOM IS THE ISSUE. THE STAKES ARE THAT HIGH. YOU KNOW, RECENTLY NANCY AND I SAW TOGETHER A MOVING NEW FILM, ^{True} THE STORY OF ELENI / A WOMAN AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II CAUGHT IN THE GREEK CIVIL WAR / A MOTHER WHO, BECAUSE SHE SMUGGLED HER CHILDREN OUT TO SAFETY / EVENTUALLY TO AMERICA, WAS TRIED / TORTURED AND SHOT BY THE GREEK COMMUNISTS.

IT IS ALSO THE STORY OF HER SON, NICHOLAS GAGE, WHO GREW UP TO BECOME AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER WITH THE NEW YORK TIMES AND WHO, WHEN HE RETURNED TO GREECE, SECRETLY VOWED TO TAKE VENGEANCE ON THE MAN WHO HAD SENT HIS MOTHER TO HER DEATH. BUT AT THE DRAMATIC END OF THE STORY, NICK GAGE FINDS HE CANNOT EXTRACT THE VENGEANCE HE HAS PROMISED HIMSELF. TO DO SO, MR. GAGE WRITES, WOULD HAVE RELIEVED THE PAIN THAT HAD FILLED HIM FOR SO MANY YEARS BUT IT WOULD ALSO HAVE BROKEN THE ONE BRIDGE STILL CONNECTING HIM TO HIS MOTHER AND THE PART OF HIM MOST LIKE HER. AS HE TELLS IT: "...HER FINAL CRY, BEFORE THE BULLETS OF THE FIRING SQUAD TORE INTO HER, WAS NOT A CURSE ON HER KILLERS BUT AN INVOCATION OF WHAT SHE DIED FOR, A DECLARATION OF LOVE: 'MY CHILDREN!'

HOW THAT CRY HAS ECHOED ACROSS THE CENTURIES, A CRY FOR ALL THE CHILDREN OF THE WORLD, A HOPE THAT ALL OF THEM MAY SOMEDAY LIVE IN PEACE AND FREEDOM. AND HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I HEARD IT IN THE OVAL OFFICE WHILE TRYING TO COMFORT THOSE WHO HAVE LOST A SON IN THE SERVICE OF OUR NATION AND THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM.

"HE DIDN'T WANT TO DIE," THE WIFE OF MAJOR NICHOLSON SAID AT FORT BELVOIR LAST YEAR ABOUT HER HUSBAND, "AND WE DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE HIM, BUT HE WOULD GLADLY LAY DOWN HIS LIFE AGAIN FOR AMERICA."

SO WE OWE SOMETHING TO THEM, YOU AND I. TO THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE / MAJOR NICHOLSON / ELENI / THE HEROES AT THE LOMBA RIVER / AND TO THE LIVING AS WELL / TO ANDRE SAKHAROV / LECH WALESIA / ADOLFO CALERO / AND JONAS SAVIMBI / THEIR HOPES RESIDE IN US, AS DO OURS IN THEM.

SOME 20 YEARS AGO I TOLD YOU, MY FELLOW CONSERVATIVES, THAT "YOU AND I HAVE A RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY." AND TONIGHT THAT RENDEZVOUS IS UPON US. OUR DESTINY IS NOW. OUR CAUSE IS STILL, AS IT WAS THEN, THE CAUSE OF HUMAN FREEDOM.

LET US BE PROUD THAT WE SERVE TOGETHER, AND BRAVE IN OUR RESOLVE TO PUSH ON NOW TOWARDS THAT FINAL VICTORY SO LONG SOUGHT BY THE HEROES OF OUR PAST AND PRESENT, AND NOW SO NEAR AT HAND.

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(GILDER)

JANUARY 31, 1986

The President has seen 2/11

SP 1031

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE CHALLENGER CREW
HOUSTON, TEXAS

WE COME TOGETHER TODAY TO MOURN THE
LOSS OF SEVEN BRAVE AMERICANS, / TO SHARE THE
GRIEF WE ALL FEEL / AND, PERHAPS, IN THAT
SHARING TO FIND THE STRENGTH TO BEAR OUR
SORROW / AND THE COURAGE TO LOOK FOR THE SEEDS
OF HOPE.

OUR NATION'S LOSS IS FIRST A PROFOUND
PERSONAL LOSS TO THE FAMILY / FRIENDS /
AND LOVED ONES OF OUR SHUTTLE ASTRONAUTS.

TO THOSE THEY HAVE LEFT BEHIND / - THE
MOTHERS, THE FATHERS, THE HUSBANDS AND
WIVES, BROTHERS AND SISTERS, AND, YES
ESPECIALLY THE CHILDREN / - ALL OF AMERICA
STANDS BESIDE YOU IN YOUR TIME OF SORROW.

WHAT WE SAY TODAY IS ONLY AN INADEQUATE
EXPRESSION OF WHAT WE CARRY IN OUR HEARTS.

WORDS PALE IN THE SHADOW OF GRIEF / THEY SEEM
INSUFFICIENT EVEN TO MEASURE THE BRAVE
SACRIFICE OF THOSE YOU LOVED AND WE SO

ADMIRED. THEIR TRUEST TESTIMONY WILL NOT BE
IN THE WORDS WE SPEAK / BUT IN THE WAY THEY
LED THEIR LIVES AND IN THE WAY THEY LOST
THOSE LIVES /- WITH DEDICATION, HONOR,
AND AN UNQUENCHABLE DESIRE TO EXPLORE
THIS MYSTERIOUS AND BEAUTIFUL UNIVERSE.

THE BEST WE CAN DO IS REMEMBER OUR
SEVEN ASTRONAUTS /- OUR CHALLENGER SEVEN /-
REMEMBER THEM AS THEY LIVED / BRINGING LIFE
AND LOVE AND JOY TO THOSE WHO KNEW THEM /
AND PRIDE TO A NATION,

THEY CAME FROM ALL PARTS OF THIS VAST
COUNTRY /- FROM SOUTH CAROLINA TO WASHINGTON
STATE / OHIO TO MOHAWK, NEW YORK / HAWAII TO
NORTH CAROLINA TO CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE.

THEY WERE SO VERY DIFFERENT / YET IN THEIR
MISSION / THEIR QUEST / THEY HELD SO MUCH
IN COMMON.

WE REMEMBER DICK SCOBEE, THE COMMANDER WHO SPOKE THE LAST WORDS WE HEARD FROM THE SPACE SHUTTLE CHALLENGER. HE SERVED AS A FIGHTER PILOT IN VIETNAM EARNING MANY MEDALS FOR BRAVERY AND LATER AS A TEST PILOT OF ADVANCED AIRCRAFT BEFORE JOINING THE SPACE PROGRAM. DANGER WAS A FAMILIAR COMPANION TO COMMANDER SCOBEE.

WE REMEMBER MICHAEL SMITH WHO EARNED ENOUGH MEDALS AS A COMBAT PILOT TO COVER HIS CHEST INCLUDING THE NAVY DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS THREE AIR MEDALS AND THE VIETNAMESE CROSS OF GALLANTRY WITH SILVER STAR IN GRATITUDE FROM A NATION HE FOUGHT TO KEEP FREE.

WE REMEMBER JUDITH RESNIK KNOWN AS J.R. TO HER FRIENDS ALWAYS SMILING ALWAYS EAGER TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION FINDING BEAUTY IN THE MUSIC SHE PLAYED ON HER PIANO IN HER OFF-HOURS.

WE REMEMBER ELLISON ONIZUKA /WHO,
AS A CHILD RUNNING BAREFOOT THROUGH THE
COFFEE FIELDS AND MACADAMIA GROVES OF
HAWAII /DREAMED OF SOMEDAY TRAVELING TO THE
MOON. BEING AN EAGLE SCOUT, HE SAID,
HAD HELPED HIM SOAR TO THE IMPRESSIVE
ACHIEVEMENTS OF HIS CAREER.

WE REMEMBER RONALD McNAIR, WHO SAID HE
LEARNED PERSEVERANCE IN THE COTTON FIELDS OF
SOUTH CAROLINA. HIS DREAM WAS TO LIVE
ABOARD THE SPACE STATION /PERFORMING
EXPERIMENTS AND PLAYING HIS SAXOPHONE IN THE
WEIGHTLESSNESS OF SPACE. RON -- WE WILL
MISS YOUR SAXOPHONE; AND WE WILL BUILD YOUR
SPACE STATION.

WE REMEMBER GREGORY JARVIS. ON THAT
ILL-FATED FLIGHT HE WAS CARRYING WITH HIM
A FLAG OF HIS UNIVERSITY IN BUFFALO,
NEW YORK /-- A SMALL TOKEN, HE SAID,
TO THE PEOPLE WHO UNLOCKED HIS FUTURE.

WE REMEMBER CHRISTA MCAULIFFE/
WHO CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF THE ENTIRE
NATION/INSPIRING US WITH HER PLUCK,
HER RESTLESS SPIRIT OF DISCOVERY/A TEACHER,
NOT JUST TO HER STUDENTS/BUT TO AN ENTIRE
PEOPLE/INSTILLING US ALL WITH THE
EXCITEMENT OF THIS JOURNEY WE RIDE INTO
THE FUTURE.

WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THEM/
THESE SKILLED PROFESSIONALS/SCIENTISTS
AND ADVENTURERS/THESE ARTISTS AND TEACHERS
AND FAMILY MEN AND WOMEN/AND WE WILL
CHERISH EACH OF THEIR STORIES /- STORIES
OF TRIUMPH AND BRAVERY /STORIES OF TRUE
AMERICAN HEROES.

ON THE DAY OF THE DISASTER, OUR NATION
HELD A VIGIL BY OUR TELEVISION SETS.
IN ONE CRUEL MOMENT,/OUR EXHILARATION TURNED
TO HORROR/WE WAITED AND WATCHED AND TRIED
TO MAKE SENSE OF WHAT WE HAD SEEN.

THAT NIGHT, I LISTENED TO A CALL-IN PROGRAM
ON THE RADIO; PEOPLE OF EVERY AGE SPOKE OF
THEIR SADNESS AND THE PRIDE THEY FELT IN
"OUR ASTRONAUTS." ACROSS AMERICA, WE ARE
REACHING OUT, HOLDING HANDS, FINDING COMFORT
IN ONE ANOTHER.

THE SACRIFICE OF YOUR LOVED ONES HAS
STIRRED THE SOUL OF OUR NATION AND,
THROUGH THE PAIN, OUR HEARTS HAVE BEEN
OPENED TO A PROFOUND TRUTH - THE FUTURE IS
NOT FREE, THE STORY OF ALL HUMAN PROGRESS IS
ONE OF A STRUGGLE AGAINST ALL ODDS.
WE LEARNED AGAIN THAT THIS AMERICA, WHICH
ABRAHAM LINCOLN CALLED THE LAST BEST HOPE OF
MANKIND ON EARTH, WAS BUILT ON HEROISM AND
NOBLE SACRIFICE. IT WAS BUILT BY MEN AND
WOMEN LIKE OUR SEVEN STAR VOYAGERS,
WHO ANSWERED A CALL BEYOND DUTY, WHO GAVE
MORE THAN WAS EXPECTED OR REQUIRED,
AND WHO GAVE IT WITH LITTLE THOUGHT TO
WORLDLY REWARD.

WE THINK BACK TO THE PIONEERS OF AN
EARLIER CENTURY, / THE STURDY SOULS WHO TOOK
THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR BELONGINGS AND SET
OUT INTO THE FRONTIER OF THE AMERICAN WEST.
OFTEN, THEY MET WITH TERRIBLE HARDSHIP.

ALONG THE OREGON TRAIL YOU CAN STILL SEE THE
GRAVE MARKERS OF THOSE WHO FELL ON THE WAY.
BUT GRIEF ONLY STEELED THEM TO THE JOURNEY
AHEAD.

TODAY, THE FRONTIER IS SPACE AND THE
BOUNDARIES OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE. / SOMETIMES,
WHEN WE REACH FOR THE STARS, WE FALL SHORT.
BUT WE MUST PICK OURSELVES UP AGAIN AND
PRESS ON DESPITE THE PAIN. / OUR NATION IS
INDEED FORTUNATE THAT WE CAN STILL DRAW ON
IMMENSE RESERVOIRS OF COURAGE, / CHARACTER,
AND FORTITUDE /-- THAT WE ARE STILL BLESSED
WITH HEROES LIKE THOSE OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE
CHALLENGER.

DICK SCOBEE KNEW THAT EVERY LAUNCHING OF A SPACE SHUTTLE IS A TECHNOLOGICAL MIRACLE. AND HE SAID, IF SOMETHING EVER DOES GO WRONG, I HOPE THAT DOESN'T MEAN THE END TO THE SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM. EVERY FAMILY MEMBER I TALKED TO ASKED SPECIFICALLY THAT WE CONTINUE THE PROGRAM, THAT THAT IS WHAT THEIR DEPARTED LOVED ONE WOULD WANT ABOVE ALL ELSE. WE WILL NOT DISAPPOINT THEM.

TODAY, WE PROMISE DICK SCOBEE AND HIS CREW THAT THEIR DREAM LIVES ON; THAT THE FUTURE THEY WORKED SO HARD TO BUILD WILL BECOME REALITY. THE DEDICATED MEN AND WOMEN OF NASA HAVE LOST SEVEN MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILY. STILL, THEY, TOO, MUST FORGE AHEAD, WITH A SPACE PROGRAM THAT IS EFFECTIVE, SAFE, AND EFFICIENT, BUT BOLD AND COMMITTED.

MAN WILL CONTINUE HIS CONQUEST OF
SPACE. TO REACH OUT FOR NEW GOALS AND EVER
GREATER ACHIEVEMENTS /-- THAT IS THE WAY WE
SHALL COMMEMORATE OUR SEVEN CHALLENGER
HEROES.

DICK, MIKE, JUDY, EL, RON, GREG, AND
CHRISTA /-- YOUR FAMILIES AND YOUR COUNTRY
MOURN YOUR PASSING. WE BID YOU GOODBYE /
BUT WE WILL NEVER FORGET YOU. / FOR THOSE WHO
KNEW YOU WELL AND LOVED YOU / THE PAIN WILL
BE DEEP AND ENDURING. A NATION, TOO,
WILL LONG FEEL THE LOSS OF HER SEVEN SONS
AND DAUGHTERS / HER SEVEN GOOD FRIENDS.

WE CAN FIND CONSOLATION ONLY IN FAITH /
FOR WE KNOW IN OUR HEARTS THAT YOU WHO FLEW
SO HIGH AND SO PROUD NOW MAKE YOUR HOME
BEYOND THE STARS / SAFE IN GOD'S PROMISE OF
ETERNAL LIFE.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL AND GIVE YOU
COMFORT IN THIS DIFFICULT TIME.

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~~The President has seen~~

(Gilder/BE)
January 30, 1986
2:30 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE CHALLENGER CREW
HOUSTON, TEXAS
FRIDAY, JANUARY 31, 1986

We come together today to mourn the loss of seven brave Americans, to share the grief we all feel and, perhaps, in that sharing to find the strength to bear our sorrow and the courage to look for the seeds of hope.

Our Nation's loss is first a profound personal loss to the family, friends, and loved ones of our shuttle astronauts. To those they have left behind -- the mothers, the fathers, the husbands and wives, ~~the~~ ^{And} brothers ~~and~~ sisters, and, yes, especially the children -- all of America stands beside you in your time of sorrow.

What we say today is only an inadequate expression of what we carry in our hearts. Words pale in the shadow of grief; they seem insufficient even to measure the brave sacrifice of those you loved and we so admired. Their truest testimony will not be in the words we speak, but in the way they led their lives and in the way they lost those lives -- with dedication, honor, and an unquenchable desire to explore this mysterious and beautiful universe.

The best we can do is remember our seven astronauts -- our Challenger Seven -- remember them as they lived, bringing life and love and joy to those who knew them and pride to a Nation.

They came from all parts of this vast country -- from South Carolina to Washington State; Ohio to Mohawk, New York; Hawaii to North Carolina to Concord, New Hampshire. They were so very

different, yet in their mission, their quest, they held so much in common.

We remember Dick Scobee, the commander who spoke the last words we heard from the space shuttle Challenger. He served as a fighter pilot in Vietnam earning many medals for bravery, and later as a test pilot of advanced aircraft before joining the space program. Danger was a familiar companion to Commander Scobee.

We remember Michael Smith, who earned enough medals as a combat pilot to cover his chest, including the Navy Distinguished Flying Cross, three Air Medals -- and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, in gratitude from a Nation he fought to keep free.

We remember Judith Resnik, known as J.R. to her friends, always smiling, always eager to make a contribution, finding beauty in the music she played on her piano in her off-hours.

We remember Ellison Onizuka, who, as a child running barefoot through the coffee fields and macadamia groves of Hawaii, dreamed of someday traveling to the Moon. Being an Eagle Scout, he said, had helped him soar to the impressive achievements of his career.

We remember Ronald McNair, who said he learned perseverance in the cotton fields of South Carolina. His dream was to live aboard the space station, performing experiments and playing his saxophone in the weightlessness of space. Ron -- we will miss your saxophone; and we will build your space station.

We remember Gregory Jarvis. On that ill-fated flight he was carrying with him a flag of his university -- the University of Buffalo -- a small token, he said, to the people who unlocked his future.

We remember Christa McAuliffe, who captured the imagination of the entire Nation, inspiring us with her pluck, her restless spirit of discovery; a teacher, not just to her students, but to an entire people, instilling us all with the excitement of this journey we ride into the future.

We will always remember them, these skilled professionals, scientists and adventurers, these artists and teachers and family men and women, and we will cherish each of their stories -- stories of triumph and bravery, stories of true American heroes.

On the day of the disaster, our Nation held a vigil by our television sets. In one cruel moment, our exhilaration turned to horror; we waited and watched and tried to make sense of what we had seen. That night, I listened to a call-in program on the radio: people of every age spoke of their sadness and the pride they felt in "our astronauts." Across America, we are reaching out, holding hands, finding comfort in one another.

The sacrifice of your loved ones has stirred the soul of our Nation and, through the pain, our hearts have been opened to a profound truth -- the future is not free, the story of all human progress is one of a struggle against all odds. We learned again that this America, which Abraham Lincoln called the last best hope of mankind on Earth, was built on heroism and noble sacrifice. It was built by men and women like our seven star

voyagers, who answered a call beyond duty, who gave more than was expected or required, and who gave it with little thought to worldly reward.

We think back to the pioneers of an earlier century, the sturdy souls who took their families and their belongings and set out into the frontier of the American West. Often, they met with terrible hardship. Along the Oregon Trail you can still see the grave markers of those who fell on the way. But grief only steeled them to the journey ahead.

Today, the frontier is space and the boundaries of human knowledge. Sometimes, when we reach for the stars, we fall short. But we must pick ourselves up again and press on despite the pain. Our Nation is indeed fortunate that we can still draw on immense reservoirs of courage, character, and fortitude -- that we are still blessed with heroes like those of the space shuttle Challenger.

Dick Scobee knew that every launching of a space shuttle is a technological miracle. And he said, if something ever does go wrong, I hope that doesn't mean the end to the space shuttle

program. *Yesterday every family member I talked to asked specifically that we continue the program, that that is what their departed loved*

Today, we promise TO THEM & TO Dick Scobee and his crew that their dream lives on; that the future they worked so hard to build will become reality. The dedicated men and women of NASA have lost seven members of their family. Still, they, too, must forge ahead, with a space program that is effective, safe, and efficient, but bold and committed. That is what our seven astronauts would have wanted. We will not disappoint them.

one would want to keep the spirit

Man will continue his conquest of space. To reach out for new goals and ever greater achievements -- that is the way we shall commemorate our seven Challenger heroes.

Dick (Scobee); Mike (Smith); Judy (Resnik); El (Onizuka) [oh-nih-ZOO-kuh]; Ron (McNair); Greg (Jarvis); and Christa (McAuliffe) -- your families and your country mourn your passing. We bid you goodbye, but we will never forget you. For those who knew you well and loved you, the pain will be deep and enduring. A Nation, too, will long feel the loss of her seven sons and daughters, her seven good friends. We can find consolation only in faith, for we know in our hearts that you who flew so high and so proud have been gathered into God's loving arms, and that now you make your home beyond the stars *safe in God's promise of eternal life.*

May God bless you and give you comfort in this difficult time.