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Folder Title: Speeches:
08/19/1976, “Will They Say We Kept Them Free?” Kansas
City Convention [“Shining City” quote]

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Molly called this in from Reagan archives. She got it off of a video tape. She has 2 copies of the tape. If you want a copy give her a call at home - 415/969-4790 and she'll give it to Marty Anderson to bring Monday.

"The cause goes on. It's just one battle in a long war and it will go on as long as we all live. Nancy and I, we aren't going to go back and sit in a rocking chair on the front porch and say that's all for us. You just stay in there and you stay in there with the same beliefs and same faith that made you do what you're doing here. The individuals on the stage may change -- the cause is there and the cause will prevail because it is right. Don't give up your ideals, don't compromise, don't turn to expediency and don't for heaven's sakes having seen the inner workings of the watch... somebody once described backstage politics as a little bit like looking at civilization with its pants down. No, don't get cynical, don't get cynical because look at yourselves and what you were willing to do and recognize that there are millions and millions of Americans out there who want what you want, who want it to be that way, who want it to be the shining city on the hill.

She's not sure that there shouldn't be "Don't get cynical" after the dots...

SS.

MAY, 1979

4:00.

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Original

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*Ronald Reagan,
August 19, 1976*

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When Ronald Reagan came down to give his “Farewell Address” on the evening of the Republican nomination, he came to the platform as a defeated candidate. When he finished speaking, Ronald Reagan was no longer a candidate, he was a hero and the leader of a greater cause.

Just as Patrick Henry inspired our colonial forefathers, so has Ronald Reagan given us all a challenge and the courage and determination to go out to meet it.

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There are cynics who say that a party platform is something that no one bothers to read and it doesn't very often amount to much. Whether it is different this time than it has ever been before, I believe the Republican party has a platform that is a banner of bold, unmistakable colors with no pale pastel shades.

We have just heard a call to arms, based on that platform.

And a call to us to really be successful in communicating and to reveal to the American people the difference between this platform and the platform of the opposing party which is nothing but a revamp and a reissue and a rerunning of a late, late show of the thing that we have been hearing from them for the last 40 years.

If I could just take a moment, I had an assignment the other day. Someone asked me to write a letter for a time capsule that is going to be opened in Los Angeles a hundred years from now, on our Tricentennial.

It sounded like an easy assignment. They suggested I write about the problems and issues of the day. And I set out to do so, riding down the coast in an automobile, looking at the blue Pacific out on one side and the Santa Inez Mountains on the other, and I couldn't help but wonder if it was going to be as beautiful a hundred years from now as it was on that summer day.

And then as I tried to write—let your own mind turn to that task. You're going to write for people a hundred years from

now who know all about us, we know nothing about them. We don't know what kind of a world they'll be living in. And suddenly I thought to myself, "If I write of the problems, they'll be the domestic problems of which the President spoke here tonight; the challenges confronting us, the erosion of freedom taking place under Democratic rule in this country, the invasion of private rights, the controls and restrictions on the vitality of the great free economy that we enjoy." These are our challenges that we must meet and then again there is that challenge of which he spoke that we live in a world in which the great powers have aimed and poised at each other horrible missiles of destruction, nuclear weapons that can in minutes arrive at each other's country and destroy virtually the civilized world we live in.

And suddenly it dawned on me; those who would read this letter a hundred years from now will know whether those missiles were fired.

They will know whether we met our challenge.

Whether they will have the freedom that we have known up until now will depend on what we do here. Will they look back with appreciation and say, "Thank God for those people in 1976 who headed off the loss of freedom? Who kept us now a hundred years later free? Who kept our world from nuclear destruction?"

And if we fail they probably won't get to read the letter at all because it spoke of individual freedom and they won't be allowed to talk of that or read of it.