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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 11, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS
TO THE NATION

The Oval Office

9:02 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: My fellow Americans, this is the 34th time I'll speak to you from the Oval Office, and the last. We've been together eight years now, and soon it'll be time for me to go. But before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts, some of which I have been saving for a long time.

It's been the honor of my life to be your President. So many of you have written the past few weeks to say thanks, but I could say as much to you. Nancy and I are grateful for the opportunity you gave us to serve.

One of the things about the presidency is that you're always somewhat apart. You spend a lot of time going by too fast in a car someone else is driving, and seeing the people through tinted glass -- the parents holding up a child, and the wave you saw too late and couldn't return. And so many times I wanted to stop, and reach out from behind the glass, and connect. Well, maybe I can do a little of that tonight.

People ask how I feel about leaving, and the fact is parting is "such sweet sorrow." The sweet part is California, and the ranch, and freedom. The sorrow? The goodbyes, of course, and leaving this beautiful place.

You know, down the hall and up the stairs from this office is the part of the White House where the President and his family live. There are a few favorite windows I have up there that I like to stand and look out of early in the morning. The view is over the grounds here to the Washington Monument, and then the Mall and the Jefferson Memorial. But on mornings when the humidity is low, you can see past the Jefferson to the river, the Potomac, and the Virginia shore. Someone said that's the view Lincoln had when he saw the smoke rising from the Battle of Bull Run. I see more prosaic things: the grass on the banks, the morning traffic as people make their way to work, now and then a sailboat on the river.

I've been thinking a bit at that window. I've been reflecting on what the past eight years have meant, and mean. And the image that comes to mind like a refrain is a nautical one -- a small story about a big ship, and a refugee, and a sailor.

It was back in the early eighties, at the height of the boat people, and the sailor was hard at work on the Carrier Midway, which was patrolling the South China Sea. The sailor, like most American servicemen, was young, smart, and fiercely observant. The crew spied on the horizon a leaky little boat -- and crammed inside were refugees from Indochina hoping to get to America. The Midway sent a small launch to bring them to the ship, and safety. As the refugees made their way through the choppy seas, one spied the sailor on deck, and stood up and called out to him. He yelled, "Hello American sailor -- hello freedom man."

A small moment with a big meaning, a moment the sailor,

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who wrote it in a letter, couldn't get out of his mind. And, when I saw it, neither could I.

Because that's what it was to be an American in the 1980's -- we stood, again, for freedom. I know we always have but in the past few years the world -- again, and in a way, we ourselves -- rediscovered it.

It's been quite a journey this decade, and we held together through some stormy seas. And at the end, together, we are reaching our destination.

The fact is, from Grenada to the Washington and Moscow summits, from the recession of '81 to '82 to the expansion that began in late '82 and continues to this day, we've made a difference.

The way I see it, there were two great triumphs, two things that I'm proudest of. One is the economic recovery, in which the people of America created -- and filled -- 19 million new jobs. The other is the recovery of our morale. America is respected again in the world, and looked to for leadership.

Something that happened to me a few years ago reflects some of this. It was back in 1981, and I was attending my first big economic summit, which was held that year in Canada. The meeting place rotates among the member countries. The opening meeting was a formal dinner for the heads of government of the seven industrialized nations. Now I sat there like the new kid in school and listened, and it was all Francois this and Helmut that. They dropped titles and spoke to one another on a first-name basis. Well, at one point I sort of leaned in and said, "My name's Ron."

Well, in that same year, we began the actions we felt would ignite an economic comeback -- cut taxes and regulation, started to cut spending, and soon the recovery began.

Two years later another economic summit, with pretty much the same cast. At the big opening meeting we all got together, and all of a sudden just for a moment I saw that everyone was just sitting there looking at me. And then one of them broke the silence. "Tell us about the American miracle," he said.

Well, back in 1980, when I was running for President, it was all so different. Some pundits said our programs would result in catastrophe. Our views on foreign affairs would cause war, our plans for the economy would cause inflation to soar and bring about economic collapse. I even remember one highly respected economist saying, back in 1982, that "The engines of economic growth have shut down here and they're likely to stay that way for years to come."

Well, he -- and the other opinion leaders -- were wrong. The fact is, what they called "radical" was really "right." What they called "dangerous" was just "desperately needed."

And in all of that time I won a nickname -- "The Great Communicator." But I never thought it was my style or the words I used that made a difference -- it was the content. I wasn't a great communicator but I communicated great things, and they didn't spring full bloom from my brow, they came from the heart of a great nation -- from our experience, our wisdom, and our belief in the principles that have guided us for two centuries.

They called it the Reagan Revolution. Well, I'll accept that, but for me it always seemed more like the Great Rediscovery -- a rediscovery of our values and our common sense.

Common sense told us that when you put a big tax on something, the people will produce less of it. So we cut the people's tax rates and the people produced more than ever before. The economy bloomed like a plant that had been cut back and could now

grow quicker and stronger. Our economic program brought about the longest peacetime expansion in our history: real family income up, the poverty rate down, entrepreneurship booming and an explosion in research and new technology. We're exporting more than ever because American industry became more competitive and at the same time, we summoned the national will to knock down protectionist walls abroad instead of erecting them at home.

Common sense also told us that to preserve the peace we'd have to become strong again after years of weakness and confusion. So we rebuilt our defenses -- and this New Year we toasted the new peacefulness around the globe. Not only have the superpowers actually begun to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons -- and hope for even more progress is bright -- but the regional conflicts that rack the globe are also beginning to cease. The Persian Gulf is no longer a war zone, the Soviets are leaving Afghanistan, the Vietnamese are preparing to pull out of Cambodia, and an American-mediated accord will soon send 50,000 Cuban troops home from Angola.

The lesson of all this was, of course, that because we're a great nation, our challenges seem complex. It will always be this way. But as long as we remember our first principles and believe in ourselves, the future will always be ours.

And something else we learned: Once you begin a great movement, there's no telling where it will end. We meant to change a nation, and instead, we changed a world.

Countries across the globe are turning to free markets and free speech -- and turning away from the ideologies of the past. For them, the Great Rediscovery of the 1980s has been that, lo and behold, the moral way of government is the practical way of government. Democracy, the profoundly good, is also the profoundly productive.

When you've got to the point where you can celebrate the anniversaries of your 39th birthday you can sit back sometimes, review your life and see it flowing before you. For me there was a fork in the river, and it was right in the middle of my life.

I never meant to go into politics; it wasn't my intention when I was young. But I was raised to believe you had to pay your way for the blessings bestowed on you. I was happy with my career in the entertainment world, but I ultimately went into politics because I wanted to protect something precious.

Ours was the first revolution in the history of mankind that truly reversed the course of government, and with three little words: "We the People."

"We the People" tell the government what to do, it doesn't tell us. "We the People" are the driver -- the government is the car. And we decide where it should go, and by what route, and how fast. Almost all the world's constitutions are documents in which governments tell the people what their privileges are. Our Constitution is a document in which "We the People" tell the government what it is allowed to do. "We the People" are free.

This belief has been the underlying basis for everything I've tried to do these past eight years.

But back in the 1960's when I began, it seemed to me that we'd begun reversing the order of things -- that through more and more rules and regulations and confiscatory taxes, the government was taking more of our money, more of our options, and more of our freedom. I went into politics in part to put up my hand and say, "Stop!" I was a citizen politician, and it seemed the right thing for a citizen to do.

I think we have stopped a lot of what needed stopping. And I hope we have once again reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited. There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics -- as government expands, liberty contracts.

Nothing is less free than pure communism, and yet we have, the past few years, forged a satisfying new closeness with the Soviet Union. I've been asked if this isn't a gamble and my answer is no, because we're basing our actions not on words, but deeds.

The detente of the 1970s was based not on actions, but promises. They'd promise to treat their own people and the people of the world better, but the gulag was still the gulag, and the state was still expansionist, and they still waged proxy wars in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Well, this time, so far, it's different. President Gorbachev has brought about some internal democratic reforms and begun the withdrawal from Afghanistan. He has also freed prisoners whose names I've given him every time we've met.

But life has a way of reminding you of big things through small incidents. Once, during the heady days of the Moscow summit, Nancy and I decided to break off from the entourage one afternoon to visit the shops on Arbat Street -- that's a little street just off Moscow's main shopping area. Even though our visit was a surprise, every Russian there immediately recognized us, and called out our names and reached for our hands. We were just about swept away by the warmth. You could almost feel the possibilities in all that joy. But within seconds a KGB detail pushed their way toward us and began pushing and shoving the people in the crowd. It was an interesting moment. It reminded me that while the man on the street in the Soviet Union yearns for peace, the government is communist. And those who run it are communists, and that means we and they view such issues as freedom and human rights very differently.

We must keep up our guard, but we must also continue to work together to lessen and eliminate tension and mistrust. My view is that President Gorbachev is different from previous Soviet leaders. I think he knows some of the things wrong with his society and is trying to fix them. We wish him well. And we'll continue to work to make sure that the Soviet Union that eventually emerges from this process is a less threatening one.

What it all boils down to is this. I want the new closeness to continue. And it will as long as we make it clear that we will continue to act in a certain way as long as they continue to act in a helpful manner. If and when they don't, at first pull your punches. If they persist, pull the plug.

It's still trust -- but verify. It's still play -- but cut the cards. It's still watch closely -- and don't be afraid to see what you see.

I've been asked if I have any regrets. Well, I do.

The deficit is one. I've been talking a great deal about that lately, but tonight isn't for arguments and I'm going to hold my tongue.

But an observation: I've had my share of victories in the Congress, but what few people noticed is that I never won anything you didn't win for me. They never saw my troops, they never saw Reagan's Regiments, the American people. You won every battle with every call you made and letter you wrote demanding action.

Well, action is still needed. If we're to finish the job, Reagan's Regiments will have to become the Bush Brigades. Soon he'll be the chief, and he'll need you every bit as much as I did.

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Finally, there is a great tradition of warnings in presidential farewells, and I've got one that's been on my mind for some time.

But oddly enough it starts with one of the things I'm proudest of in the past eight years: the resurgence of national pride that I called "the new patriotism." This national feeling is good, but it won't count for much and it won't last unless it's grounded in thoughtfulness and knowledge.

An informed patriotism is what we want. And are we doing a good enough job teaching our children what America is and what she represents in the long history of the world?

Those of us who are over 35 or so years of age grew up in a different America. We were taught, very directly, what it means to be an American, and we absorbed almost in the air a love of country and an appreciation of its institutions. If you didn't get these things from your family you got them from the neighborhood, from the father down the street who fought in Korea or the family who lost someone at Anzio. Or you could get a sense of patriotism from school. And if all else failed you could get a sense of patriotism from the popular culture. The movies celebrated democratic values and implicitly reinforced the idea that America was special. TV was like that too through the mid-sixties.

But now we're about to enter the nineties, and some things have changed. Younger parents aren't sure that an unambivalent appreciation of America is the right thing to teach modern children. And as for those who create the popular culture, well-grounded patriotism is no longer the style.

Our spirit is back, but we haven't reinstitutionalized it. We've got to do a better job of getting across that America is freedom -- freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of enterprise -- and freedom is special and rare. It's fragile; it needs protection*.

So we've got to teach history based not on what's in fashion but what's important: Why the pilgrims came here, who Jimmy Doolittle was, and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant. You know, four years ago on the 40th anniversary of D-Day I read a letter from a young woman writing to her late father, who'd fought on Omaha Beach. Her name was Lisa Zanatta Henn, and she said, we will always remember, we will never forget what the boys of Normandy did. Well, let's help her keep her word.

If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are. I'm warning of an eradication of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit.

Let's start with some basics -- more attention to American history and a greater emphasis on civic ritual. And let me offer lesson number one about America: All great change in America begins at the dinner table. So tomorrow night in the kitchen I hope the talking begins. And children, if your parents haven't been teaching you what it means to be an American -- let 'em know and nail 'em on it. That would be a very American thing to do.

And that's about all I have to say tonight. Except for one thing.

The past few days when I've been at that window upstairs I've thought a bit of the shining "city upon a hill." The phrase comes from John Winthrop, who wrote it to describe the America he imagined. What he imagined was important because he was an early pilgrim -- an early "Freedom Man." He journeyed here on what today

*protection

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we'd call a little wooden boat, and, like the other pilgrims, he was looking for a home that would be free.

I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace -- a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity, and if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here.

That's how I saw it, and see it still.

And how stands the city on this winter night? More prosperous, more secure and happier than it was eight years ago. But more than that. After 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true on the granite ridge, and her glow has held steady no matter what storm. And she's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home.

We've done our part. And as I "walk off into the city streets," a final word to the men and women of the Reagan Revolution -- the men and women across America who for eight years did the work that brought America back.

My friends, we did it. We weren't just marking time; we made a difference. We made the city stronger -- we made the city freer -- and we left her in good hands. All in all, not bad -- not bad at all.

And so, goodbye, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

END

9:23 P.M. EST

FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE NATION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1989

MY FELLOW AMERICANS,
THIS IS THE 34TH TIME
I'LL SPEAK TO YOU FROM
THE OVAL OFFICE, AND THE
LAST. WE HAVE BEEN
TOGETHER 8 YEARS NOW, AND
SOON IT WILL BE TIME FOR
ME TO GO. BUT BEFORE
I DO, I WANTED TO SHARE
SOME THOUGHTS, SOME OF
WHICH I HAVE BEEN SAVING
FOR A LONG TIME.

IT HAS BEEN THE
HONOR OF MY LIFE TO BE
YOUR PRESIDENT. SO MANY
OF YOU HAVE WRITTEN THE
PAST FEW WEEKS TO SAY
THANKS, BUT I COULD SAY

AS MUCH TO YOU. NANCY
AND I ARE GRATEFUL FOR
THE OPPORTUNITY YOU GAVE
US TO SERVE.

ONE OF THE THINGS
ABOUT THE PRESIDENCY IS
THAT YOU'RE ALWAYS
SOMEWHAT APART. YOU
SPEND A LOT OF TIME GOING
BY TOO FAST IN A CAR
SOMEONE ELSE IS DRIVING,
AND SEEING THE PEOPLE
THROUGH TINTED GLASS --
THE PARENTS HOLDING UP
A CHILD, AND THE WAVE YOU
SAW TOO LATE AND COULDN'T
RETURN. AND SO MANY
TIMES I WANTED TO STOP,
AND REACH OUT FROM BEHIND
THE GLASS, AND CONNECT.
AND MAYBE I CAN DO A
LITTLE OF THAT TONIGHT.

② PEOPLE ASK HOW
I FEEL ABOUT LEAVING, AND

THE FACT IS, PARTING IS
"SUCH SWEET SORROW."
THE SWEET PART IS
CALIFORNIA, AND THE
RANCH, AND FREEDOM.
THE SORROW? THE
GOODBYES, OF COURSE,
AND LEAVING THIS
BEAUTIFUL PLACE.

YOU KNOW, DOWN THE
HALL AND UP THE STAIRS
FROM THIS OFFICE IS THE
PART OF THE WHITE HOUSE
WHERE THE PRESIDENT AND
HIS FAMILY LIVE. THERE
ARE A FEW FAVORITE
WINDOWS I HAVE UP THERE
THAT I LIKE TO STAND AND
LOOK OUT OF EARLY IN THE
MORNING. THE VIEW IS
OVER THE GROUNDS HERE TO
THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT,
AND THEN THE MALL, AND
THE JEFFERSON MEMORIAL.

BUT ON MORNINGS WHEN THE
HUMIDITY IS LOW, YOU CAN
SEE PAST THE JEFFERSON TO
THE RIVER, THE POTOMAC,
AND THE VIRGINIA SHORE.
SOMEONE SAID THAT'S THE
VIEW LINCOLN HAD WHEN HE
SAW THE SMOKE RISING FROM
THE BATTLE OF BULL RUN.
I SEE MORE PROSAIC
THINGS: THE GRASS ON THE
BANKS, THE MORNING
TRAFFIC AS PEOPLE MAKE
THEIR WAY TO WORK,
NOW AND THEN A SAILBOAT
ON THE RIVER...

I HAVE BEEN THINKING
A BIT AT THAT WINDOW,
I'VE BEEN REFLECTING ON
WHAT THE PAST 8 YEARS
HAVE MEANT, AND MEAN.
AND THE IMAGE THAT COMES
TO MIND LIKE A REFRAIN IS
A NAUTICAL ONE -- A SMALL

STORY ABOUT A BIG SHIP,
AND A REFUGEE, AND
A SAILOR.

③ IT WAS BACK IN THE
EARLY EIGHTIES, AT THE
HEIGHT OF THE BOAT
PEOPLE, AND THE SAILOR
WAS HARD AT WORK ON THE
CARRIER MIDWAY, WHICH WAS
PATROLLING THE SOUTH
CHINA SEA. THE SAILOR,
LIKE MOST AMERICAN
SERVICEMEN, WAS YOUNG,
SMART, AND FIERCELY
OBSERVANT. THE CREW
SPIED ON THE HORIZON
A LEAKY LITTLE BOAT --
AND CRAMMED INSIDE WERE
REFUGEES FROM INDOCHINA
HOPING TO GET TO AMERICA.
THE MIDWAY SENT A SMALL
LAUNCH TO BRING THEM TO
THE SHIP, AND SAFETY.
AS THE REFUGEES MADE

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THEIR WAY THROUGH THE
CHOPPY SEAS, ONE SPIED
THE SAILOR ON DECK, AND
STOOD UP AND CALLED OUT
TO HIM. HE YELLED,
"HELLO AMERICAN SAILOR --
HELLO FREEDOM MAN."

A SMALL MOMENT WITH
A BIG MEANING, A MOMENT
THE SAILOR, WHO WROTE IT
IN A LETTER, COULDN'T GET
OUT OF HIS MIND. AND,
WHEN I SAW IT, NEITHER
COULD I.

BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT
IT WAS TO BE AN AMERICAN
IN THE 1980'S: WE STOOD,
AGAIN, FOR FREEDOM.
I KNOW WE ALWAYS HAVE,
BUT IN THE PAST FEW YEARS
THE WORLD -- AGAIN, AND
IN A WAY, WE OURSELVES --
REDISCOVERED IT.

IT HAS BEEN QUITE A

JOURNEY THIS DECADE, AND WE HELD TOGETHER THROUGH SOME STORMY SEAS. AND AT THE END, TOGETHER, WE ARE REACHING OUR DESTINATION.

④ THE FACT IS, FROM GRENADA TO THE WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW SUMMITS, FROM THE RECESSION OF '81 TO '82 TO THE EXPANSION THAT BEGAN IN LATE '82 AND CONTINUES TO THIS DAY, WE'VE MADE A DIFFERENCE.

THE WAY I SEE IT, THERE WERE TWO GREAT TRIUMPHS, TWO THINGS THAT I'M PROUDEST OF. ONE IS THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY, IN WHICH THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA CREATED -- AND FILLED -- 19 MILLION NEW JOBS. THE OTHER IS THE RECOVERY OF OUR

MORALE: AMERICA IS
RESPECTED AGAIN IN THE
WORLD, AND LOOKED TO FOR
LEADERSHIP.

SOMETHING THAT
HAPPENED TO ME A FEW
YEARS AGO REFLECTS SOME
OF THIS. IT WAS BACK IN
1981, AND I WAS ATTENDING
MY FIRST BIG ECONOMIC
SUMMIT, WHICH WAS HELD
THAT YEAR IN CANADA.
THE MEETING PLACE ROTATES
AMONG THE MEMBER
COUNTRIES. THE OPENING
MEETING WAS A FORMAL
DINNER FOR THE HEADS OF
GOVERNMENT OF THE SEVEN
INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS.
I SAT THERE LIKE THE NEW
KID IN SCHOOL AND
LISTENED, AND IT WAS ALL
FRANCOIS THIS AND HELMUT
THAT. THEY DROPPED

TITLES AND SPOKE TO ONE ANOTHER ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS. AT ONE POINT I SORT OF LEANED IN AND SAID, "MY NAME'S RON."

IN THAT SAME YEAR, WE BEGAN THE ACTIONS WE FELT WOULD IGNITE AN ECONOMIC COMEBACK: CUT TAXES AND REGULATION, STARTED TO CUT SPENDING. SOON THE RECOVERY BEGAN.

⑤ TWO YEARS LATER ANOTHER ECONOMIC SUMMIT, WITH PRETTY MUCH THE SAME CAST. AT THE BIG OPENING MEETING WE ALL GOT TOGETHER, AND ALL OF A SUDDEN JUST FOR A MOMENT I SAW THAT EVERYONE WAS LOOKING AT ME. THEN ONE OF THEM BROKE THE SILENCE. "TELL US ABOUT THE AMERICAN MIRACLE."

HE SAID.

BACK IN 1980, WHEN
I WAS RUNNING FOR
PRESIDENT, IT WAS ALL
SO DIFFERENT. SOME
PUNDITS SAID OUR PROGRAMS
WOULD RESULT IN
CATASTROPHE. OUR VIEWS
ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS WOULD
CAUSE WAR, OUR PLANS FOR
THE ECONOMY WOULD CAUSE
INFLATION TO SOAR AND
BRING ABOUT ECONOMIC
COLLAPSE. I EVEN
REMEMBER ONE HIGHLY
RESPECTED ECONOMIST
SAYING, BACK IN 1982,
THAT "THE ENGINES OF
ECONOMIC GROWTH HAVE SHUT
DOWN HERE AND ACROSS THE
GLOBE AND THEY ARE LIKELY
TO STAY THAT WAY FOR
YEARS TO COME..."

WELL, HE -- AND

//

THE OTHER "OPINION
LEADERS" -- WERE WRONG.
THE FACT IS, WHAT THEY
CALLED "RADICAL" WAS
REALLY "RIGHT;" WHAT THEY
CALLED "DANGEROUS" WAS
JUST "DESPERATELY
NEEDED."

⑥ AND IN ALL THAT TIME
I WON A NICKNAME --
"THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR."
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT IT
WAS MY STYLE OR THE WORDS
I USED THAT MADE A
DIFFERENCE -- IT WAS THE
CONTENT. I WASN'T A
GREAT COMMUNICATOR BUT
I COMMUNICATED GREAT
THINGS, AND THEY DIDN'T
SPRING FULL BLOWN FROM MY
BROW, THEY CAME FROM THE
HEART OF A GREAT
NATION -- FROM OUR
EXPERIENCE. OUR WISDOM.

AND OUR BELIEF IN THE
PRINCIPLES THAT HAVE
GUIDED US FOR TWO
CENTURIES.

THEY CALLED IT THE
REAGAN REVOLUTION,
AND I'LL ACCEPT THAT,
BUT FOR ME IT ALWAYS
SEEMED MORE LIKE THE
GREAT REDISCOVERY:
A REDISCOVERY OF OUR
VALUES AND OUR COMMON
SENSE.

COMMON SENSE TOLD US
THAT WHEN YOU PUT A
BIG TAX ON SOMETHING,
THE PEOPLE WILL PRODUCE
LESS OF IT. SO WE CUT
THE PEOPLE'S TAX RATES
AND THE PEOPLE PRODUCED
MORE THAN EVER BEFORE.
THE ECONOMY BLOOMED LIKE
A PLANT THAT HAD BEEN CUT
BACK AND COULD NOW GROW

**QUICKER AND STRONGER.
OUR ECONOMIC PROGRAM
BROUGHT ABOUT THE LONGEST
PEACETIME EXPANSION IN
OUR HISTORY:
REAL FAMILY INCOME UP,
THE POVERTY RATE DOWN,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP BOOMING,
AND AN EXPLOSION IN
RESEARCH AND NEW
TECHNOLOGY. WE ARE
EXPORTING MORE THAN EVER
BECAUSE AMERICAN INDUSTRY
BECAME MORE COMPETITIVE
AND, AT THE SAME TIME,
WE SUMMONED THE NATIONAL
WILL TO KNOCK DOWN
PROTECTIONIST WALLS
ABROAD INSTEAD OF
ERECTING THEM AT HOME.**

**⑦ COMMON SENSE ALSO
TOLD US THAT TO PRESERVE
THE PEACE WE'D HAVE TO
BECOME STRONG AGAIN AFTER**

YEARS OF WEAKNESS AND
CONFUSION. SO WE REBUILT
OUR DEFENSES -- AND THIS
NEW YEAR WE TOASTED
THE NEW PEACEFULNESS
AROUND THE GLOBE.
NOT ONLY HAVE THE
SUPERPOWERS ACTUALLY
BEGUN TO REDUCE THEIR
STOCKPILES OF NUCLEAR
WEAPONS -- AND HOPE FOR
EVEN MORE PROGRESS IS
BRIGHT -- BUT THE
REGIONAL CONFLICTS THAT
RACK THE GLOBE ARE ALSO
BEGINNING TO CEASE.
THE PERSIAN GULF IS
NO LONGER A WAR ZONE,
THE SOVIETS ARE LEAVING
AFGHANISTAN, THE
VIETNAMESE ARE PREPARING
TO PULL OUT OF CAMBODIA,
AND AN AMERICAN-MEDIATED
ACCORD WILL SOON SEND

50,000 CUBAN TROOPS HOME
FROM ANGOLA.

THE LESSON OF ALL
THIS WAS, OF COURSE, THAT
BECAUSE WE ARE A GREAT
NATION, OUR CHALLENGES
SEEM COMPLEX. IT WILL
ALWAYS BE THIS WAY.
BUT AS LONG AS WE
REMEMBER OUR FIRST
PRINCIPLES AND BELIEVE
IN OURSELVES, THE FUTURE
WILL ALWAYS BE OURS.

AND SOMETHING ELSE
WE LEARNED: ONCE YOU
BEGIN A GREAT MOVEMENT,
THERE'S NO TELLING WHERE
IT WILL END. WE MEANT
TO CHANGE A NATION,
AND INSTEAD, WE CHANGED
A WORLD.

⑧ COUNTRIES ACROSS THE
GLOBE ARE TURNING TO FREE
MARKETS AND FREE

SPEECH -- AND TURNING
AWAY FROM THE IDEOLOGIES
OF THE PAST. FOR THEM,
THE GREAT REDISCOVERY OF
THE 1980'S HAS BEEN THAT,
LO AND BEHOLD, THE MORAL
WAY OF GOVERNMENT IS THE
PRACTICAL WAY OF
GOVERNMENT. DEMOCRACY,
THE PROFOUNDLY GOOD,
IS ALSO THE PROFOUNDLY
PRODUCTIVE.

WHEN YOU'VE GOT TO
THE POINT WHERE YOU CAN
CELEBRATE THE
ANNIVERSARIES OF YOUR
39TH BIRTHDAY, YOU CAN
SIT BACK SOMETIMES,
REVIEW YOUR LIFE AND SEE
IT FLOWING BEFORE YOU.
FOR ME THERE WAS A FORK
IN THE RIVER, AND IT WAS
RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF
MY LIFE.

I NEVER MEANT TO GO INTO POLITICS; IT WASN'T MY INTENTION WHEN I WAS YOUNG. BUT I WAS RAISED TO BELIEVE YOU HAD TO PAY YOUR WAY FOR THE BLESSINGS BESTOWED ON YOU. I WAS HAPPY WITH MY CAREER IN THE ENTERTAINMENT WORLD, BUT I ULTIMATELY WENT INTO POLITICS BECAUSE I WANTED TO PROTECT SOMETHING PRECIOUS.

OURS WAS THE FIRST REVOLUTION IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND THAT TRULY REVERSED THE COURSE OF GOVERNMENT, AND WITH THREE LITTLE WORDS: "WE THE PEOPLE."

⑨ "WE THE PEOPLE" TELL THE GOVERNMENT WHAT TO DO, IT DOESN'T TELL US.

"WE THE PEOPLE" ARE THE DRIVER -- THE GOVERNMENT IS THE CAR. AND WE DECIDE WHERE IT SHOULD GO, AND BY WHAT ROUTE, AND HOW FAST. ALMOST ALL THE WORLD'S CONSTITUTIONS ARE DOCUMENTS IN WHICH GOVERNMENTS TELL THE PEOPLE WHAT THEIR PRIVILEGES ARE.

OUR CONSTITUTION IS A DOCUMENT IN WHICH "WE THE PEOPLE" TELL THE GOVERNMENT WHAT IT IS ALLOWED TO DO. "WE THE PEOPLE" ARE FREE.

THIS BELIEF HAS BEEN THE UNDERLYING BASIS FOR EVERYTHING I HAVE TRIED TO DO THESE PAST 8 YEARS.

BUT BACK IN THE 1960'S WHEN I BEGAN, IT SEEMED TO ME THAT WE

HAD BEGUN REVERSING THE
ORDER OF THINGS -- THAT
THROUGH MORE AND MORE
RULES AND REGULATIONS AND
CONFISCATORY TAXES,
THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING
MORE OF OUR MONEY,
MORE OF OUR OPTIONS,
AND MORE OF OUR FREEDOM.
I WENT INTO POLITICS
IN PART TO PUT UP MY HAND
AND SAY, "STOP!" I WAS
A CITIZEN POLITICIAN, AND
IT SEEMED THE RIGHT THING
FOR A CITIZEN TO DO.

I THINK WE HAVE
STOPPED A LOT OF WHAT
NEEDED STOPPING. AND
I HOPE WE HAVE ONCE AGAIN
REMINDED PEOPLE THAT MAN
IS NOT FREE UNLESS
GOVERNMENT IS LIMITED.
THERE'S A CLEAR CAUSE AND
EFFECT HERE THAT IS AS

NEAT AND PREDICTABLE
AS A LAW OF PHYSICS:
AS GOVERNMENT EXPANDS,
LIBERTY CONTRACTS.

⑩ NOTHING IS LESS FREE
THAN PURE COMMUNISM,
AND YET WE HAVE, THE PAST
FEW YEARS, FORGED A
SATISFYING NEW CLOSENESS
WITH THE SOVIET UNION.
I'VE BEEN ASKED IF THIS
ISN'T A GAMBLE AND MY
ANSWER IS NO, BECAUSE
WE'RE BASING OUR ACTIONS
NOT ON WORDS BUT DEEDS.

THE DETENTE OF THE
1970'S WAS BASED NOT ON
ACTIONS BUT PROMISES.
THEY'D PROMISE TO TREAT
THEIR OWN PEOPLE AND THE
PEOPLE OF THE WORLD
BETTER, BUT THE GULAG WAS
STILL THE GULAG, AND
THE STATE WAS STILL

EXPANSIONIST, AND THEY
STILL WAGED PROXY WARS IN
AFRICA, ASIA, AND LATIN
AMERICA.

THIS TIME, SO FAR,
IT'S DIFFERENT:
PRESIDENT GORBACHEV HAS
BROUGHT ABOUT SOME
INTERNAL DEMOCRATIC
REFORMS AND BEGUN THE
WITHDRAWAL FROM
AFGHANISTAN. HE HAS ALSO
FREED PRISONERS WHOSE
NAMES I'VE GIVEN HIM
EVERY TIME WE'VE MET.

BUT LIFE HAS A WAY
OF REMINDING YOU OF BIG
THINGS THROUGH SMALL
INCIDENTS. ONCE, DURING
THE HEADY DAYS OF THE
MOSCOW SUMMIT, NANCY AND
I DECIDED TO BREAK OFF
FROM THE ENTOURAGE ONE
AFTERNOON TO VISIT THE

SHOPS ON ARBAT STREET,
A LITTLE STREET JUST OFF
MOSCOW'S MAIN SHOPPING
AREA.

(11) EVEN THOUGH OUR
VISIT WAS A SURPRISE,
EVERY RUSSIAN THERE
IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED
US, AND CALLED OUT OUR
NAMES AND REACHED FOR
OUR HANDS. WE WERE JUST
ABOUT SWEEP AWAY BY THE
WARMTH -- YOU COULD
ALMOST FEEL THE
POSSIBILITIES IN ALL THAT
JOY. BUT WITHIN SECONDS
A K.G.B. DETAIL PUSHED
THEIR WAY TOWARD US AND
BEGAN PUSHING AND SHOVING
THE PEOPLE IN THE CROWD.
IT WAS AN INTERESTING
MOMENT. IT REMINDED ME
THAT WHILE THE MAN ON THE
STREET IN THE SOVIET

UNION YEARNS FOR PEACE,
THE GOVERNMENT IS
COMMUNIST -- THOSE WHO
RUN IT ARE COMMUNISTS --
AND THAT MEANS WE AND
THEY VIEW SUCH ISSUES AS
FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS
VERY DIFFERENTLY.

WE MUST KEEP UP OUR
GUARD -- BUT WE MUST ALSO
CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER
TO LESSEN AND ELIMINATE
TENSION AND MISTRUST.

MY VIEW IS THAT
PRESIDENT GORBACHEV IS
DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS
SOVIET LEADERS. I THINK
HE KNOWS SOME OF THE
THINGS WRONG WITH HIS
SOCIETY AND IS TRYING TO
FIX THEM. WE WISH HIM
WELL. AND WE'LL CONTINUE
TO WORK TO MAKE SURE THAT
THE SOVIET UNION THAT

EVENTUALLY EMERGES FROM
THIS PROCESS IS A LESS
THREATENING ONE.

⑫ WHAT IT ALL BOILS
DOWN TO IS THIS: I WANT
THE NEW CLOSENESS TO
CONTINUE. AND IT WILL
AS LONG AS WE MAKE IT
CLEAR THAT WE WILL
CONTINUE TO ACT IN A
CERTAIN WAY AS LONG AS
THEY CONTINUE TO ACT IN
A HELPFUL MANNER.
IF AND WHEN THEY DON'T --
AT FIRST PULL YOUR
PUNCHES. IF THEY
PERSIST, PULL THE PLUG.

IT'S STILL TRUST --
BUT VERIFY.

IT'S STILL PLAY --
BUT CUT THE CARDS.

IT'S STILL WATCH
CLOSELY -- AND DON'T BE
AFRAID TO SEE WHAT YOU

SEE.

I'VE BEEN ASKED
IF I HAVE ANY REGRETS.
I DO.

THE DEFICIT IS ONE.
I'VE BEEN TALKING A GREAT
DEAL ABOUT THAT LATELY,
BUT TONIGHT ISN'T FOR
ARGUMENTS AND I'M GOING
TO HOLD MY TONGUE.

BUT AN OBSERVATION:
I'VE HAD MY SHARE OF
VICTORIES IN THE
CONGRESS, BUT WHAT FEW
PEOPLE NOTICED IS THAT
I NEVER WON ANYTHING YOU
DIDN'T WIN FOR ME.
THEY NEVER SAW MY TROOPS;
THEY NEVER SAW REAGAN'S
REGIMENTS, THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE. YOU WON EVERY
BATTLE WITH EVERY CALL
YOU MADE AND LETTER YOU
WROTE DEMANDING ACTION.

⑬ WELL, ACTION IS STILL NEEDED. IF WE'RE TO FINISH THE JOB, REAGAN'S REGIMENTS WILL HAVE TO BECOME THE BUSH BRIGADES. SOON HE'LL BE THE CHIEF, AND HE'LL NEED YOU EVERY BIT AS MUCH AS I DID.

FINALLY, THERE IS A GREAT TRADITION OF WARNINGS IN PRESIDENTIAL FAREWELLS, AND I'VE GOT ONE THAT'S BEEN ON MY MIND FOR SOME TIME.

BUT ODDLY ENOUGH IT STARTS WITH ONE OF THE THINGS I'M PROUDEST OF THE PAST 8 YEARS: THE RESURGENCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE THAT I CALLED "THE NEW PATRIOTISM." THIS NATIONAL FEELING IS GOOD, BUT IT WON'T COUNT

FOR MUCH AND IT WON'T
LAST UNLESS IT'S GROUNDED
IN THOUGHTFULNESS AND
KNOWLEDGE.

AN INFORMED
PATRIOTISM IS WHAT WE
WANT. AND ARE WE DOING
A GOOD ENOUGH JOB
TEACHING OUR CHILDREN
WHAT AMERICA IS AND WHAT
SHE REPRESENTS IN THE
LONG HISTORY OF THE
WORLD?

THOSE OF US WHO ARE
OVER 35 OR SO YEARS OF
AGE GREW UP IN A
DIFFERENT AMERICA.
WE WERE TAUGHT, VERY
DIRECTLY, WHAT IT MEANS
TO BE AN AMERICAN, AND
WE ABSORBED ALMOST IN THE
AIR A LOVE OF COUNTRY AND
AN APPRECIATION OF ITS
INSTITUTIONS.

⑭ IF YOU DIDN'T GET
THESE THINGS FROM YOUR
FAMILY, YOU GOT THEM FROM
THE NEIGHBORHOOD,
FROM THE FATHER DOWN THE
STREET WHO FOUGHT IN
KOREA OR THE FAMILY WHO
LOST SOMEONE AT ANZIO.
OR YOU COULD GET A SENSE
OF PATRIOTISM FROM
SCHOOL. AND IF ALL ELSE
FAILED, YOU COULD GET A
SENSE OF PATRIOTISM FROM
THE POPULAR CULTURE.
THE MOVIES CELEBRATED
DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND
IMPLICITLY REINFORCED THE
IDEA THAT AMERICA WAS
SPECIAL. T.V. WAS LIKE
THAT, TOO, THROUGH THE
MID-SIXTIES.

BUT NOW WE'RE ABOUT
TO ENTER THE NINETIES,
AND SOME THINGS HAVE

CHANGED. YOUNGER PARENTS
AREN'T SURE THAT AN
UNAMBIVALENT APPRECIATION
OF AMERICA IS THE RIGHT
THING TO TEACH MODERN
CHILDREN. AND AS FOR
THOSE WHO CREATE THE
POPULAR CULTURE,
WELL-GROUNDED PATRIOTISM
IS NO LONGER THE STYLE.

OUR SPIRIT IS BACK,
BUT WE HAVEN'T
REINSTITUTIONALIZED IT.
WE'VE GOT TO DO A BETTER
JOB OF GETTING ACROSS
THAT AMERICA IS
FREEDOM -- FREEDOM OF
SPEECH, FREEDOM OF
RELIGION, FREEDOM OF
ENTERPRISE -- AND FREEDOM
IS SPECIAL AND RARE.
IT'S FRAGILE; IT NEEDS
PROTECTION.

(15) WE'VE GOT TO TEACH

HISTORY BASED NOT ON
WHAT'S IN FASHION
BUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT:
WHY THE PILGRIMS CAME
HERE, WHO JIMMY DOOLITTLE
WAS, AND WHAT THOSE
30 SECONDS OVER TOKYO
MEANT... YOU KNOW,
4 YEARS AGO ON THE
40TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY
I READ A LETTER FROM A
YOUNG WOMAN WRITING TO
HER LATE FATHER, WHO'D
FOUGHT ON OMAHA BEACH.
HER NAME WAS LISA ZANATTA
HENN, AND SHE SAID,
WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER,
WE WILL NEVER FORGET WHAT
THE BOYS OF NORMANDY DID.
WELL, LET'S HELP HER KEEP
HER WORD.

IF WE FORGET WHAT WE
DID, WE WON'T KNOW WHO
WE ARE. I AM WARNING OF

AN ERADICATION OF THE
AMERICAN MEMORY THAT
COULD RESULT, ULTIMATELY,
IN AN EROSION OF THE
AMERICAN SPIRIT.

LET'S START WITH
SOME BASICS -- MORE
ATTENTION TO AMERICAN
HISTORY AND A GREATER
EMPHASIS ON CIVIC RITUAL.
AND LET ME OFFER LESSON
NUMBER ONE ABOUT AMERICA:
ALL GREAT CHANGE IN
AMERICA BEGINS AT THE
DINNER TABLE. SO
TOMORROW NIGHT IN THE
KITCHEN I HOPE THE
TALKING BEGINS. AND
CHILDREN, IF YOUR PARENTS
HAVEN'T BEEN TEACHING YOU
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN
AMERICAN -- LET 'EM KNOW
AND NAIL 'EM ON IT. THAT
WOULD BE A VERY AMERICAN

THING TO DO.

AND THAT'S ABOUT ALL
I HAVE TO SAY TONIGHT.
EXCEPT FOR ONE THING.

(16) THE PAST FEW DAYS
WHEN I'VE BEEN AT THAT
WINDOW UPSTAIRS I'VE
THOUGHT A BIT OF THE
SHINING "CITY UPON A
HILL." THE PHRASE COMES
FROM JOHN WINTHROP, WHO
WROTE IT TO DESCRIBE THE
AMERICA HE IMAGINED.
WHAT HE IMAGINED WAS
IMPORTANT BECAUSE HE WAS
AN EARLY PILGRIM --
AN EARLY "FREEDOM MAN."
HE JOURNEYED HERE ON WHAT
TODAY WE'D CALL A LITTLE
WOODEN BOAT; AND, LIKE
THE OTHER PILGRIMS,
HE WAS LOOKING FOR A HOME
THAT WOULD BE FREE.

I'VE SPOKEN OF THE

SHINING CITY ALL MY
POLITICAL LIFE, BUT
I DON'T KNOW IF I EVER
QUITE COMMUNICATED WHAT
I SAW WHEN I SAID IT.
BUT IN MY MIND IT WAS A
TALL PROUD CITY BUILT ON
ROCKS STRONGER THAN
OCEANS, WIND-SWEPT,
GOD-BLESSED, AND TEEMING
WITH PEOPLE OF ALL KINDS
LIVING IN HARMONY AND
PEACE -- A CITY WITH FREE
PORTS THAT HUMMED WITH
COMMERCE AND CREATIVITY,
AND IF THERE HAD TO BE
CITY WALLS, THE WALLS HAD
DOORS AND THE DOORS WERE
OPEN TO ANYONE WITH THE
WILL AND THE HEART TO GET
HERE.

THAT'S HOW I SAW IT,
AND SEE IT STILL.

AND HOW STANDS THE

CITY ON THIS WINTER
NIGHT? MORE PROSPEROUS,
MORE SECURE AND HAPPIER
THAN IT WAS 8 YEARS AGO.
BUT MORE THAN THAT:
AFTER 200 YEARS,
TWO CENTURIES, SHE STILL
STANDS STRONG AND TRUE ON
THE GRANITE RIDGE, AND
HER GLOW HAS HELD STEADY
NO MATTER WHAT STORM --
(17) AND SHE'S STILL A
BEACON, STILL A MAGNET
FOR ALL WHO MUST HAVE
FREEDOM, FOR ALL THE
PILGRIMS FROM ALL
THE LOST PLACES WHO ARE
HURTLING THROUGH THE
DARKNESS, TOWARD HOME.

WE'VE DONE OUR PART.
AND AS I 'WALK OFF INTO
THE CITY STREETS,'
A FINAL WORD TO THE MEN
AND WOMEN OF THE REAGAN

REVOLUTION -- THE MEN AND
WOMEN ACROSS AMERICA WHO
FOR 8 YEARS DID THE WORK
THAT BROUGHT AMERICA
BACK:

MY FRIENDS, WE DID
IT. WE WEREN'T JUST
MARKING TIME; WE MADE
A DIFFERENCE.
WE MADE THE CITY
STRONGER -- WE MADE THE
CITY FREER -- AND WE LEFT
HER IN GOOD HANDS.

ALL IN ALL, NOT BAD.
NOT BAD AT ALL.

AND SO, GOODBYE.

GOD BLESS YOU. AND
GOD BLESS THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA.

#

PRESIDENT'S BACKUP COPY:
FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE NATION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1989

MY FELLOW AMERICANS, THIS IS THE 34TH TIME I'LL SPEAK TO YOU FROM THE OVAL OFFICE, AND THE LAST. WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER 8 YEARS NOW, AND SOON IT WILL BE TIME FOR ME TO GO. BUT BEFORE I DO, I WANTED TO SHARE SOME THOUGHTS, SOME OF WHICH I HAVE BEEN SAVING FOR A LONG TIME.

IT HAS BEEN THE HONOR OF MY LIFE TO BE YOUR PRESIDENT. SO MANY OF YOU HAVE WRITTEN THE PAST FEW WEEKS TO SAY THANKS, BUT I COULD SAY AS MUCH TO YOU. NANCY AND I ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE OPPORTUNITY YOU GAVE US TO SERVE.

ONE OF THE THINGS ABOUT THE PRESIDENCY IS THAT YOU'RE ALWAYS SOMEWHAT APART. YOU SPEND A LOT OF TIME GOING BY TOO FAST IN A CAR SOMEONE ELSE IS DRIVING, AND SEEING THE PEOPLE THROUGH TINTED GLASS -- THE PARENTS HOLDING UP A CHILD, AND THE WAVE YOU SAW TOO LATE AND COULDN'T RETURN. AND SO MANY TIMES I WANTED TO STOP, AND REACH OUT FROM BEHIND THE GLASS, AND CONNECT. AND MAYBE I CAN DO A LITTLE OF THAT TONIGHT.

PEOPLE ASK HOW I FEEL ABOUT LEAVING, AND THE FACT IS, PARTING IS "SUCH SWEET SORROW." THE SWEET PART IS CALIFORNIA, AND THE RANCH, AND FREEDOM. THE SORROW? THE GOODBYES, OF COURSE, AND LEAVING THIS BEAUTIFUL PLACE.

YOU KNOW, DOWN THE HALL AND UP THE STAIRS FROM THIS OFFICE IS THE PART OF THE WHITE HOUSE WHERE THE PRESIDENT AND HIS FAMILY LIVE. THERE ARE A FEW FAVORITE WINDOWS I HAVE UP THERE THAT I LIKE TO STAND AND LOOK OUT OF EARLY IN THE MORNING. THE VIEW IS OVER THE GROUNDS HERE TO THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT, AND THEN THE MALL, AND THE JEFFERSON MEMORIAL. BUT ON MORNINGS WHEN THE HUMIDITY IS LOW, YOU CAN SEE PAST THE JEFFERSON TO THE RIVER, THE POTOMAC, AND THE VIRGINIA SHORE. SOMEONE SAID THAT'S THE VIEW LINCOLN HAD WHEN HE SAW THE SMOKE RISING FROM THE BATTLE OF BULL RUN. I SEE MORE PROSAIC THINGS: THE GRASS ON THE BANKS, THE MORNING TRAFFIC AS PEOPLE MAKE THEIR WAY TO WORK, NOW AND THEN A SAILBOAT ON THE RIVER...

I HAVE BEEN THINKING A BIT AT THAT WINDOW. I'VE BEEN REFLECTING ON WHAT THE PAST 8 YEARS HAVE MEANT, AND MEAN. AND THE IMAGE THAT COMES TO MIND LIKE A REFRAIN IS A NAUTICAL ONE -- A SMALL STORY ABOUT A BIG SHIP, AND A REFUGEE, AND A SAILOR.

IT WAS BACK IN THE EARLY EIGHTIES, AT THE HEIGHT OF THE BOAT PEOPLE, AND THE SAILOR WAS HARD AT WORK ON THE CARRIER MIDWAY, WHICH WAS PATROLLING THE SOUTH CHINA SEA. THE SAILOR, LIKE MOST AMERICAN SERVICEMEN, WAS YOUNG, SMART, AND FIERCELY OBSERVANT. THE CREW SPIED ON THE HORIZON A LEAKY LITTLE BOAT -- AND CRAMMED INSIDE WERE REFUGEES FROM INDOCHINA HOPING TO GET TO AMERICA. THE MIDWAY SENT A SMALL LAUNCH TO BRING THEM TO THE SHIP, AND SAFETY. AS THE REFUGEES MADE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE CHOPPY SEAS, ONE SPIED THE SAILOR ON DECK, AND STOOD UP AND CALLED OUT TO HIM. HE YELLED, "HELLO AMERICAN SAILOR -- HELLO FREEDOM MAN."

A SMALL MOMENT WITH A BIG MEANING, A MOMENT THE SAILOR, WHO WROTE IT IN A LETTER, COULDN'T GET OUT OF HIS MIND. AND, WHEN I SAW IT, NEITHER COULD I.

BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT IT WAS TO BE AN AMERICAN IN THE 1980'S: WE STOOD, AGAIN, FOR FREEDOM. I KNOW WE ALWAYS HAVE, BUT IN THE PAST FEW YEARS THE WORLD -- AGAIN, AND IN A WAY, WE OURSELVES -- REDISCOVERED IT.

IT HAS BEEN QUITE A JOURNEY THIS DECADE, AND WE HELD TOGETHER THROUGH SOME STORMY SEAS. AND AT THE END, TOGETHER, WE ARE REACHING OUR DESTINATION.

THE FACT IS, FROM GRENADA TO THE WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW SUMMITS, FROM THE RECESSION OF '81 TO '82 TO THE EXPANSION THAT BEGAN IN LATE '82 AND CONTINUES TO THIS DAY, WE'VE MADE A DIFFERENCE.

THE WAY I SEE IT, THERE WERE TWO GREAT TRIUMPHS, TWO THINGS THAT I'M PROUDEST OF. ONE IS THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY, IN WHICH THE PEOPLE OF AMERICA CREATED -- AND FILLED -- 19 MILLION NEW JOBS. THE OTHER IS THE RECOVERY OF OUR MORALE: AMERICA IS RESPECTED AGAIN IN THE WORLD, AND LOOKED TO FOR LEADERSHIP.

SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME A FEW YEARS AGO REFLECTS SOME OF THIS. IT WAS BACK IN 1981, AND I WAS ATTENDING MY FIRST BIG ECONOMIC SUMMIT, WHICH WAS HELD THAT YEAR IN CANADA. THE MEETING PLACE ROTATES AMONG THE MEMBER COUNTRIES. THE OPENING MEETING WAS A FORMAL DINNER FOR THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE SEVEN INDUSTRIALIZED NATIONS. I SAT THERE LIKE THE NEW KID IN SCHOOL AND LISTENED, AND IT WAS ALL FRANCOIS THIS AND HELMUT THAT. THEY DROPPED TITLES AND SPOKE TO ONE ANOTHER ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS. AT ONE POINT I SORT OF LEANED IN AND SAID, "MY NAME'S RON."

IN THAT SAME YEAR, WE BEGAN THE ACTIONS WE FELT WOULD IGNITE AN ECONOMIC COMEBACK: CUT TAXES AND REGULATION, STARTED TO CUT SPENDING. SOON THE RECOVERY BEGAN.

TWO YEARS LATER ANOTHER ECONOMIC SUMMIT, WITH PRETTY MUCH THE SAME CAST. AT THE BIG OPENING MEETING WE ALL GOT TOGETHER, AND ALL OF A SUDDEN JUST FOR A MOMENT I SAW THAT EVERYONE WAS LOOKING AT ME. THEN ONE OF THEM BROKE THE SILENCE. "TELL US ABOUT THE AMERICAN MIRACLE," HE SAID.

BACK IN 1980, WHEN I WAS RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT, IT WAS ALL SO DIFFERENT. SOME PUNDITS SAID OUR PROGRAMS WOULD RESULT IN CATASTROPHE. OUR VIEWS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS WOULD CAUSE WAR, OUR PLANS FOR THE ECONOMY WOULD CAUSE INFLATION TO SOAR AND BRING ABOUT ECONOMIC COLLAPSE. I EVEN REMEMBER ONE HIGHLY RESPECTED ECONOMIST SAYING, BACK IN 1982, THAT "THE ENGINES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH HAVE SHUT DOWN HERE AND ACROSS THE GLOBE AND THEY ARE LIKELY TO STAY THAT WAY FOR YEARS TO COME..."

WELL, HE -- AND THE OTHER "OPINION LEADERS" -- WERE WRONG. THE FACT IS, WHAT THEY CALLED "RADICAL" WAS REALLY "RIGHT;" WHAT THEY CALLED "DANGEROUS" WAS JUST "DESPERATELY NEEDED."

AND IN ALL THAT TIME I WON A NICKNAME -- "THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR." BUT I NEVER THOUGHT IT WAS MY STYLE OR THE WORDS I USED THAT MADE A DIFFERENCE -- IT WAS THE CONTENT. I WASN'T A GREAT COMMUNICATOR BUT I COMMUNICATED GREAT THINGS, AND THEY DIDN'T SPRING FULL BLOWN FROM MY BROW, THEY CAME FROM THE HEART OF A GREAT NATION -- FROM OUR EXPERIENCE, OUR WISDOM, AND OUR BELIEF IN THE PRINCIPLES THAT HAVE GUIDED US FOR TWO CENTURIES.

THEY CALLED IT THE REAGAN REVOLUTION, AND I'LL ACCEPT THAT, BUT FOR ME IT ALWAYS SEEMED MORE LIKE THE GREAT REDISCOVERY: A REDISCOVERY OF OUR VALUES AND OUR COMMON SENSE.

COMMON SENSE TOLD US THAT WHEN YOU PUT A BIG TAX ON SOMETHING, THE PEOPLE WILL PRODUCE LESS OF IT. SO WE CUT THE PEOPLE'S TAX RATES AND THE PEOPLE PRODUCED MORE THAN EVER BEFORE. THE ECONOMY BLOOMED LIKE A PLANT THAT HAD BEEN CUT BACK AND COULD NOW GROW QUICKER AND STRONGER. OUR ECONOMIC PROGRAM BROUGHT ABOUT THE LONGEST PEACETIME EXPANSION IN OUR HISTORY: REAL FAMILY INCOME UP, THE POVERTY RATE DOWN, ENTREPRENEURSHIP BOOMING, AND AN EXPLOSION IN RESEARCH AND NEW TECHNOLOGY. WE ARE EXPORTING MORE THAN EVER BECAUSE AMERICAN INDUSTRY BECAME MORE COMPETITIVE AND, AT THE SAME TIME, WE SUMMONED THE NATIONAL WILL TO KNOCK DOWN PROTECTIONIST WALLS ABROAD INSTEAD OF ERECTING THEM AT HOME.

COMMON SENSE ALSO TOLD US THAT TO PRESERVE THE PEACE WE'D HAVE TO BECOME STRONG AGAIN AFTER YEARS OF WEAKNESS AND CONFUSION. SO WE REBUILT OUR DEFENSES -- AND THIS NEW YEAR WE TOASTED THE NEW PEACEFULNESS AROUND THE GLOBE. NOT ONLY HAVE THE SUPERPOWERS ACTUALLY BEGUN TO REDUCE THEIR STOCKPILES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS -- AND HOPE FOR EVEN MORE PROGRESS IS BRIGHT -- BUT THE REGIONAL CONFLICTS THAT RACK THE GLOBE ARE ALSO BEGINNING TO CEASE. THE PERSIAN GULF IS NO LONGER A WAR ZONE, THE SOVIETS ARE LEAVING AFGHANISTAN, THE VIETNAMESE ARE PREPARING TO PULL OUT OF CAMBODIA, AND AN AMERICAN-MEDIATED ACCORD WILL SOON SEND 50,000 CUBAN TROOPS HOME FROM ANGOLA.

THE LESSON OF ALL THIS WAS, OF COURSE, THAT BECAUSE WE ARE A GREAT NATION, OUR CHALLENGES SEEM COMPLEX. IT WILL ALWAYS BE THIS WAY. BUT AS LONG AS WE REMEMBER OUR FIRST PRINCIPLES AND BELIEVE IN OURSELVES, THE FUTURE WILL ALWAYS BE OURS.

AND SOMETHING ELSE WE LEARNED: ONCE YOU BEGIN A GREAT MOVEMENT, THERE'S NO TELLING WHERE IT WILL END. WE MEANT TO CHANGE A NATION, AND INSTEAD, WE CHANGED A WORLD.

COUNTRIES ACROSS THE GLOBE ARE TURNING TO FREE MARKETS AND FREE SPEECH -- AND TURNING AWAY FROM THE IDEOLOGIES OF THE PAST. FOR THEM, THE GREAT REDISCOVERY OF THE 1980'S HAS BEEN THAT, LO AND BEHOLD, THE MORAL WAY OF GOVERNMENT IS THE PRACTICAL WAY OF GOVERNMENT. DEMOCRACY, THE PROFOUNDLY GOOD, IS ALSO THE PROFOUNDLY PRODUCTIVE.

WHEN YOU'VE GOT TO THE POINT WHERE YOU CAN CELEBRATE THE ANNIVERSARIES OF YOUR 39TH BIRTHDAY, YOU CAN SIT BACK SOMETIMES, REVIEW YOUR LIFE AND SEE IT FLOWING BEFORE YOU. FOR ME THERE WAS A FORK IN THE RIVER, AND IT WAS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF MY LIFE.

I NEVER MEANT TO GO INTO POLITICS; IT WASN'T MY INTENTION WHEN I WAS YOUNG. BUT I WAS RAISED TO BELIEVE YOU HAD TO PAY YOUR WAY FOR THE BLESSINGS BESTOWED ON YOU. I WAS HAPPY WITH MY CAREER IN THE ENTERTAINMENT WORLD, BUT I ULTIMATELY WENT INTO POLITICS BECAUSE I WANTED TO PROTECT SOMETHING PRECIOUS.

OURS WAS THE FIRST REVOLUTION IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND THAT TRULY REVERSED THE COURSE OF GOVERNMENT, AND WITH THREE LITTLE WORDS: "WE THE PEOPLE."

"WE THE PEOPLE" TELL THE GOVERNMENT WHAT TO DO, IT DOESN'T TELL US. "WE THE PEOPLE" ARE THE DRIVER -- THE GOVERNMENT IS THE CAR. AND WE DECIDE WHERE IT SHOULD GO, AND BY WHAT ROUTE, AND HOW FAST. ALMOST ALL THE WORLD'S CONSTITUTIONS ARE DOCUMENTS IN WHICH GOVERNMENTS TELL THE PEOPLE WHAT THEIR PRIVILEGES ARE. OUR CONSTITUTION IS A DOCUMENT IN WHICH "WE THE PEOPLE" TELL THE GOVERNMENT WHAT IT IS ALLOWED TO DO. "WE THE PEOPLE" ARE FREE.

THIS BELIEF HAS BEEN THE UNDERLYING BASIS FOR EVERYTHING I HAVE TRIED TO DO THESE PAST 8 YEARS.

BUT BACK IN THE 1960'S WHEN I BEGAN, IT SEEMED TO ME THAT WE HAD BEGUN REVERSING THE ORDER OF THINGS -- THAT THROUGH MORE AND MORE RULES AND REGULATIONS AND CONFISCATORY TAXES, THE GOVERNMENT WAS TAKING MORE OF OUR MONEY, MORE OF OUR OPTIONS, AND MORE OF OUR FREEDOM. I WENT INTO POLITICS IN PART TO PUT UP MY HAND AND SAY, "STOP!" I WAS A CITIZEN POLITICIAN, AND IT SEEMED THE RIGHT THING FOR A CITIZEN TO DO.

I THINK WE HAVE STOPPED A LOT OF WHAT NEEDED STOPPING. AND I HOPE WE HAVE ONCE AGAIN REMINDED PEOPLE THAT MAN IS NOT FREE UNLESS GOVERNMENT IS LIMITED. THERE'S A CLEAR CAUSE AND EFFECT HERE THAT IS AS NEAT AND PREDICTABLE AS A LAW OF PHYSICS: AS GOVERNMENT EXPANDS, LIBERTY CONTRACTS.

NOTHING IS LESS FREE THAN PURE COMMUNISM, AND YET WE HAVE, THE PAST FEW YEARS, FORGED A SATISFYING NEW CLOSENESS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. I'VE BEEN ASKED IF THIS ISN'T A GAMBLE AND MY ANSWER IS NO, BECAUSE WE'RE BASING OUR ACTIONS NOT ON WORDS BUT DEEDS.

THE DETENTE OF THE 1970's WAS BASED NOT ON ACTIONS BUT PROMISES. THEY'D PROMISE TO TREAT THEIR OWN PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD BETTER, BUT THE GULAG WAS STILL THE GULAG, AND THE STATE WAS STILL EXPANSIONIST, AND THEY STILL WAGED PROXY WARS IN AFRICA, ASIA, AND LATIN AMERICA.

THIS TIME, SO FAR, IT'S DIFFERENT: PRESIDENT GORBACHEV HAS BROUGHT ABOUT SOME INTERNAL DEMOCRATIC REFORMS AND BEGUN THE WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN. HE HAS ALSO FREED PRISONERS WHOSE NAMES I'VE GIVEN HIM EVERY TIME WE'VE MET.

BUT LIFE HAS A WAY OF REMINDING YOU OF BIG THINGS THROUGH SMALL INCIDENTS. ONCE, DURING THE HEADY DAYS OF THE MOSCOW SUMMIT, NANCY AND I DECIDED TO BREAK OFF FROM THE ENTOURAGE ONE AFTERNOON TO VISIT THE SHOPS ON ARBAT STREET, A LITTLE STREET JUST OFF MOSCOW'S MAIN SHOPPING AREA.

EVEN THOUGH OUR VISIT WAS A SURPRISE, EVERY RUSSIAN THERE IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED US, AND CALLED OUT OUR NAMES AND REACHED FOR OUR HANDS. WE WERE JUST ABOUT SWEEPED AWAY BY THE WARMTH -- YOU COULD ALMOST FEEL THE POSSIBILITIES IN ALL THAT JOY. BUT WITHIN SECONDS A K.G.B. DETAIL PUSHED THEIR WAY TOWARD US AND BEGAN PUSHING AND SHOVING THE PEOPLE IN THE CROWD. IT WAS AN INTERESTING MOMENT. IT REMINDED ME THAT WHILE THE MAN ON THE STREET IN THE SOVIET UNION YEARNS FOR PEACE, THE GOVERNMENT IS COMMUNIST -- THOSE WHO RUN IT ARE COMMUNISTS -- AND THAT MEANS WE AND THEY VIEW SUCH ISSUES AS FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS VERY DIFFERENTLY.

WE MUST KEEP UP OUR GUARD -- BUT WE MUST ALSO CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO LESSEN AND ELIMINATE TENSION AND MISTRUST.

MY VIEW IS THAT PRESIDENT GORBACHEV IS DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS SOVIET LEADERS. I THINK HE KNOWS SOME OF THE THINGS WRONG WITH HIS SOCIETY AND IS TRYING TO FIX THEM. WE WISH HIM WELL. AND WE'LL CONTINUE TO WORK TO MAKE SURE THAT THE SOVIET UNION THAT EVENTUALLY EMERGES FROM THIS PROCESS IS A LESS THREATENING ONE.

WHAT IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO IS THIS: I WANT THE NEW CLOSENESS TO CONTINUE. AND IT WILL AS LONG AS WE MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO ACT IN A CERTAIN WAY AS LONG AS THEY CONTINUE TO ACT IN A HELPFUL MANNER. IF AND WHEN THEY DON'T -- AT FIRST PULL YOUR PUNCHES. IF THEY PERSIST, PULL THE PLUG.

IT'S STILL TRUST -- BUT VERIFY.

IT'S STILL PLAY -- BUT CUT THE CARDS.

IT'S STILL WATCH CLOSELY -- AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO SEE WHAT YOU SEE.

I'VE BEEN ASKED IF I HAVE ANY REGRETS. I DO.

THE DEFICIT IS ONE. I'VE BEEN TALKING A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THAT LATELY, BUT TONIGHT ISN'T FOR ARGUMENTS AND I'M GOING TO HOLD MY TONGUE.

BUT AN OBSERVATION: I'VE HAD MY SHARE OF VICTORIES IN THE CONGRESS, BUT WHAT FEW PEOPLE NOTICED IS THAT I NEVER WON ANYTHING YOU DIDN'T WIN FOR ME. THEY NEVER SAW MY TROOPS; THEY NEVER SAW REAGAN'S REGIMENTS, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. YOU WON EVERY BATTLE WITH EVERY CALL YOU MADE AND LETTER YOU WROTE DEMANDING ACTION.

WELL, ACTION IS STILL NEEDED. IF WE'RE TO FINISH THE JOB, REAGAN'S REGIMENTS WILL HAVE TO BECOME THE BUSH BRIGADES. SOON HE'LL BE THE CHIEF, AND HE'LL NEED YOU EVERY BIT AS MUCH AS I DID.

FINALLY, THERE IS A GREAT TRADITION OF WARNINGS IN PRESIDENTIAL FAREWELLS, AND I'VE GOT ONE THAT'S BEEN ON MY MIND FOR SOME TIME.

BUT ODDLY ENOUGH IT STARTS WITH ONE OF THE THINGS I'M PROUDEST OF THE PAST 8 YEARS: THE RESURGENCE OF NATIONAL PRIDE THAT I CALLED "THE NEW PATRIOTISM." THIS NATIONAL FEELING IS GOOD, BUT IT WON'T COUNT FOR MUCH AND IT WON'T LAST UNLESS IT'S GROUNDED IN THOUGHTFULNESS AND KNOWLEDGE.

AN INFORMED PATRIOTISM IS WHAT WE WANT. AND ARE WE DOING A GOOD ENOUGH JOB TEACHING OUR CHILDREN WHAT AMERICA IS AND WHAT SHE REPRESENTS IN THE LONG HISTORY OF THE WORLD?

THOSE OF US WHO ARE OVER 35 OR SO YEARS OF AGE GREW UP IN A DIFFERENT AMERICA. WE WERE TAUGHT, VERY DIRECTLY, WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN, AND WE ABSORBED ALMOST IN THE AIR A LOVE OF COUNTRY AND AN APPRECIATION OF ITS INSTITUTIONS.

IF YOU DIDN'T GET THESE THINGS FROM YOUR FAMILY, YOU GOT THEM FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD, FROM THE FATHER DOWN THE STREET WHO FOUGHT IN KOREA OR THE FAMILY WHO LOST SOMEONE AT ANZIO. OR YOU COULD GET A SENSE OF PATRIOTISM FROM SCHOOL. AND IF ALL ELSE FAILED, YOU COULD GET A SENSE OF PATRIOTISM FROM THE POPULAR CULTURE. THE MOVIES CELEBRATED DEMOCRATIC VALUES AND IMPLICITLY REINFORCED THE IDEA THAT AMERICA WAS SPECIAL. T.V. WAS LIKE THAT, TOO, THROUGH THE MID-SIXTIES.

BUT NOW WE'RE ABOUT TO ENTER THE NINETIES, AND SOME THINGS HAVE CHANGED. YOUNGER PARENTS AREN'T SURE THAT AN UNAMBIVALENT APPRECIATION OF AMERICA IS THE RIGHT THING TO TEACH MODERN CHILDREN. AND AS FOR THOSE WHO CREATE THE POPULAR CULTURE, WELL-GROUNDED PATRIOTISM IS NO LONGER THE STYLE.

OUR SPIRIT IS BACK, BUT WE HAVEN'T REINSTITUTIONALIZED IT. WE'VE GOT TO DO A BETTER JOB OF GETTING ACROSS THAT AMERICA IS FREEDOM -- FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF RELIGION, FREEDOM OF ENTERPRISE -- AND FREEDOM IS SPECIAL AND RARE. IT'S FRAGILE; IT NEEDS PROTECTION.

WE'VE GOT TO TEACH HISTORY BASED NOT ON WHAT'S IN FASHION BUT WHAT'S IMPORTANT: WHY THE PILGRIMS CAME HERE, WHO JIMMY DOOLITTLE WAS, AND WHAT THOSE 30 SECONDS OVER TOKYO MEANT... YOU KNOW, 4 YEARS AGO ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY I READ A LETTER FROM A YOUNG WOMAN WRITING TO HER LATE FATHER, WHO'D FOUGHT ON OMAHA BEACH. HER NAME WAS LISA ZANATTA HENN, AND SHE SAID, WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER, WE WILL NEVER FORGET WHAT THE BOYS OF NORMANDY DID. WELL, LET'S HELP HER KEEP HER WORD.

IF WE FORGET WHAT WE DID, WE WON'T KNOW WHO WE ARE. I AM WARNING OF AN ERADICATION OF THE AMERICAN MEMORY THAT COULD RESULT, ULTIMATELY, IN AN EROSION OF THE AMERICAN SPIRIT.

LET'S START WITH SOME BASICS -- MORE ATTENTION TO AMERICAN HISTORY AND A GREATER EMPHASIS ON CIVIC RITUAL. AND LET ME OFFER LESSON NUMBER ONE ABOUT AMERICA: ALL GREAT CHANGE IN AMERICA BEGINS AT THE DINNER TABLE. SO TOMORROW NIGHT IN THE KITCHEN I HOPE THE TALKING BEGINS. AND CHILDREN, IF YOUR PARENTS HAVEN'T BEEN TEACHING YOU WHAT IT MEANS TO BE AN AMERICAN -- LET 'EM KNOW AND NAIL 'EM ON IT. THAT WOULD BE A VERY AMERICAN THING TO DO.

AND THAT'S ABOUT ALL I HAVE TO SAY TONIGHT.
EXCEPT FOR ONE THING.

THE PAST FEW DAYS WHEN I'VE BEEN AT THAT WINDOW UPSTAIRS I'VE THOUGHT A BIT OF THE SHINING "CITY UPON A HILL." THE PHRASE COMES FROM JOHN WINTHROP, WHO WROTE IT TO DESCRIBE THE AMERICA HE IMAGINED. WHAT HE IMAGINED WAS IMPORTANT BECAUSE HE WAS AN EARLY PILGRIM -- AN EARLY "FREEDOM MAN." HE JOURNEYED HERE ON WHAT TODAY WE'D CALL A LITTLE WOODEN BOAT; AND, LIKE THE OTHER PILGRIMS, HE WAS LOOKING FOR A HOME THAT WOULD BE FREE.

I'VE SPOKEN OF THE SHINING CITY ALL MY POLITICAL LIFE, BUT I DON'T KNOW IF I EVER QUITE COMMUNICATED WHAT I SAW WHEN I SAID IT. BUT IN MY MIND IT WAS A TALL PROUD CITY BUILT ON ROCKS STRONGER THAN OCEANS, WIND-SWEPT, GOD-BLESSED, AND TEEMING WITH PEOPLE OF ALL KINDS LIVING IN HARMONY AND PEACE -- A CITY WITH FREE PORTS THAT HUMMED WITH COMMERCE AND CREATIVITY, AND IF THERE HAD TO BE CITY WALLS, THE WALLS HAD DOORS AND THE DOORS WERE OPEN TO ANYONE WITH THE WILL AND THE HEART TO GET HERE.

THAT'S HOW I SAW IT, AND SEE IT STILL.

AND HOW STANDS THE CITY ON THIS WINTER NIGHT? MORE PROSPEROUS, MORE SECURE AND HAPPIER THAN IT WAS 8 YEARS AGO. BUT MORE THAN THAT: AFTER 200 YEARS, TWO CENTURIES, SHE STILL STANDS STRONG AND TRUE ON THE GRANITE RIDGE, AND HER GLOW HAS HELD STEADY NO MATTER WHAT STORM --

AND SHE'S STILL A BEACON, STILL A MAGNET FOR ALL WHO MUST HAVE FREEDOM, FOR ALL THE PILGRIMS FROM ALL THE LOST PLACES WHO ARE HURTLING THROUGH THE DARKNESS, TOWARD HOME.

WE'VE DONE OUR PART. AND AS I 'WALK OFF INTO THE CITY STREETS,' A FINAL WORD TO THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE REAGAN REVOLUTION -- THE MEN AND WOMEN ACROSS AMERICA WHO FOR 8 YEARS DID THE WORK THAT BROUGHT AMERICA BACK:

MY FRIENDS, WE DID IT. WE WEREN'T JUST MARKING TIME; WE MADE A DIFFERENCE. WE MADE THE CITY STRONGER -- WE MADE THE CITY FREER -- AND WE LEFT HER IN GOOD HANDS.

ALL IN ALL, NOT BAD. NOT BAD AT ALL.

AND SO, GOODBYE.

GOD BLESS YOU. AND GOD BLESS THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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(Noonan)
January 10, 1989
6:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: FAREWELL TO THE NATION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1989

My fellow Americans, this is the 34th time I'll speak to you from the Oval Office, and the last. We have been together 8 years now, and soon it will be time for me to go. But before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts, some of which I have been saving for a long time.

It has been the honor of my life to be your President. So many of you have written the past few weeks to say thanks, but I could say as much to you. Nancy and I are grateful for the opportunity you gave us to serve.

One of the things about the Presidency is that you're always somewhat apart. You spend a lot of time going by too fast in a car someone else is driving, and seeing the people through tinted glass -- the parents holding up a child, and the wave you saw too late and couldn't return. And so many times I wanted to stop, and reach out from behind the glass, and connect. And maybe I can do a little of that tonight.

People ask how I feel about leaving, and the fact is parting is "such sweet sorrow." The sweet part is California, and the ranch, and freedom. The sorrow? The goodbyes, of course, and leaving this beautiful place.

You know, down the hall and up the stairs from this office is the part of the White House where the President and his family live. There are a few favorite windows I have up there that I like to stand and look out of early in the morning. The view is

over the grounds here to the Washington monument, and then the mall, and the Jefferson Memorial. But on mornings when the humidity is low, you can see past the Jefferson to the river, the Potomac, and the Virginia shore. Someone said that's the view Lincoln had when he saw the smoke rising from the battle of Bull Run. I see more prosaic things: the grass on the banks, the morning traffic as people make their way to work, now and then a sailboat on the river...

I have been thinking a bit at that window. I've been reflecting on what the past 8 years have meant, and mean. And the image that comes to mind like a refrain is a nautical one -- a small story about a big ship, and a refugee, and a sailor.

It was back in the early eighties, at the height of the boat people, and the sailor was hard at work on the Carrier Midway, which was patrolling the South China Sea. The sailor, like most American servicemen, was young, smart, and fiercely observant. The crew spied on the horizon a leaky little boat -- and crammed inside were refugees from Indochina hoping to get to America. The midway sent a small launch to bring them to the ship, and safety. As the refugees made their way through the choppy seas, one spied the sailor on deck, and stood up and called out to him. He yelled, "Hello American sailor -- Hello Freedom Man."

A small moment with a big meaning, a moment the sailor, who wrote it in a letter, couldn't get out of his mind. And, when I saw it, neither could I.

Because that's what it was to be an American in the 1980's: We stood, again, for freedom. I know we always have but in the

past few years the world -- again, in a way, we ourselves -- rediscovered it.

It has been quite a journey this decade, and we held together through some stormy seas. And at the end, together, we ~~reached~~ our destination. *see below*

The fact is, from Grenada to the Washington and Moscow Summits, from the recession of '81 to '82 to the expansion that began in late '82 and continues to this day, we've made a difference.

The way I see it, there were two great triumphs, two things that I'm proudest of. One is the economic recovery, in which the people of America created -- and filled -- 19 million new jobs. The other is the recovery of our morale: America is respected again in the world, and looked to for leadership.

Something that happened to me a few years ago reflects some of this. It was back in 1981, and I was attending my first big economic summit, which was held that year in Canada. The meeting place rotates among the member countries. The opening meeting was a formal dinner for the heads of government of the seven industrialized nations. I sat there like the new kid in school and listened, and it was all Francois this and Helmut that. They dropped titles and spoke to one another on a first-name basis. At one point I sort of leaned in and said, "My name's Ron."

In that same year, we began the actions we felt would ignite an economic comeback: Cut taxes and regulation, started to cut spending. Soon the recovery began.

Two years later another economic summit, with pretty much the same cast. At the big opening meeting we all got together, and all of a sudden just for a moment I saw that everyone was looking at me. Then one of them broke the silence. "Tell us about the American miracle," he said.

Back in 1980, when I was running for President, it was all so different. Some pundits said our programs would result in catastrophe. Our views on foreign affairs would cause war, our plans for the economy would cause inflation to soar and bring about economic collapse. I even remember one highly respected economist saying, back in 1982, that "The engines of economic growth have shut down here and across the globe and they are likely to stay that way for years to come. . ."

Well, he -- and the other "opinion leaders" -- were wrong. The fact is, what they called "radical" was really "right;" what they called "dangerous" was just "desperately needed."

And in all that time I won a nickname -- "The Great Communicator." But I never thought it was my style or the words I used that made a difference -- it was the content. I wasn't a great communicator but I communicated great things, and they didn't spring full blown from my brow, they came from the heart of a great Nation -- from our experience, our wisdom, and our belief in the principles that have guided us for two centuries.

They called it The Reagan Revolution, and I'll accept that, but for me it always seemed more like the Great Rediscovery: a rediscovery of our values and our common sense.

Common sense told us that when you put a big tax on something, the people will produce less of it. So we cut the people's tax rates and the people produced more than ever before. The economy bloomed like a plant that had been cut back and could now grow quicker and stronger. Our economic program brought about the longest peacetime expansion in our history: real family income up, the poverty rate down, entrepreneurship booming and an explosion in research and new technology. We are exporting more than ever because American industry became more competitive and at the same time, we summoned the national will to knock down protectionist walls abroad instead of erecting them at home.

Common sense also told us that to preserve the peace we'd have to become strong again after years of weakness and confusion. So we rebuilt our defenses -- and this New Year we toasted the new peacefulness around the globe. Not only have the superpowers actually begun to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons -- and hope for even more progress is bright -- but the regional conflicts that rack the globe are also beginning to cease. The Persian Gulf is no longer a war zone, the Soviets are leaving Afghanistan, the Vietnamese are preparing to pull out of Cambodia, and an American-mediated accord will soon send 50,000 Cuban troops home from Angola.

The lesson of all this was, of course, that because we are a great Nation, our challenges seem complex. It will always be this way. But as long as we remember our first principles and believe in ourselves, the future will always be ours.

And something else we learned: Once you begin a great movement, there's no telling where it will end. We meant to change a Nation, and instead, we changed a world.

Countries across the globe are turning to free markets and free speech -- and turning away from the ideologies of the past. For them, the Great Rediscovery of the 1980's has been that, lo and behold, the moral way of government is the practical way of government. Democracy, the profoundly good, is also the profoundly productive.

When you've got to the point where you can celebrate the anniversaries of your 39th birthday you can sit back sometimes, review your life and see it flowing before you. For me there was a fork in the river, and it was right in the middle of my life.

I never meant to go into politics; it wasn't my intention when I was young. But I was raised to believe you had to pay your way for the blessings bestowed on you. I was happy with my career in the entertainment world, but I ultimately went into politics because I wanted to protect something precious.

Ours was the first revolution in the history of mankind that truly reversed the course of government, and with three little words: "We the People."

"We the People" tell the government what to do, it doesn't tell us. "We the People" are the driver -- the government is the car. And we decide where it should go, and by what route, and how fast. Almost all the world's constitutions are documents in which governments tell the people what their privileges are. Our

Constitution is a document in which "We the People" tell the government what it is allowed to do. "We the People" are free.

This belief has been the underlying basis for everything I have tried to do these past 8 years.

But back in the 1960's when I began, it seemed to me that we had begun reversing the order of things -- that through more and more rules and regulations and confiscatory taxes, the government was taking more of our money, more of our options, and more of our freedom. I went into politics in part to put up my hand and say, "Stop!" I was a citizen politician, and it seemed the right thing for a citizen to do.

I think we have stopped a lot of what needed stopping. And I hope we have once again reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited. There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: as government expands, liberty contracts.

Nothing is less free than pure communism, and yet we have, the past few years, forged a satisfying new closeness with the Soviet Union. I've been asked if this isn't a gamble and my answer is no, because we're basing our actions not on words but deeds.

The detente of the 1970's was based not on actions but promises. They'd promise to treat their own people and the people of the world better, but the gulag was still the gulag, and the state was still expansionist, and they still waged proxy wars in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

This time, so far, it's different: President Gorbachev has brought about some internal democratic reforms and begun the withdrawal from Afghanistan. He has also freed prisoners whose names I've given him every time we've met.

But life has a way of reminding you of big things through small incidents. Once, during the heady days of the Moscow Summit, Nancy and I decided to break off from the entourage one afternoon to visit the shops on Arbat Street, a little street just off Moscow's main shopping area.

Even though our visit was a surprise, every Russian there immediately recognized us, and called out our names and reached for our hands. We were just about swept away by the warmth -- you could almost feel the possibilities in all that joy. But within seconds a KGB detail pushed their way toward us and began pushing and shoving the people in the crowd. It was an interesting moment. It reminded me that while the man on the street in the Soviet Union yearns for peace, the government is communist -- those who run it are communists -- and that means we and they view such issues as freedom and human rights very differently.

We must keep up our guard -- but we must also continue to work together to lessen and eliminate tension and mistrust.

My view is that President Gorbachev is different from previous Soviet leaders. I think he knows some of the things wrong with his society and is trying to fix them. We wish him well. And we'll continue to work to make sure that the Soviet

Union that eventually emerges from this process is a less threatening one.

What it all boils down to is this: I want the new closeness to continue. And it will as long as we make it clear that we will continue to act in a certain way as long as they continue to act in a helpful manner. If and when they don't -- at first pull your punches. If they persist, pull the plug.

It's still trust -- but verify.

It's still play -- but cut the cards.

It's still watch closely -- and don't be afraid to see what you see.

I've been asked if I have any regrets. I do.

The deficit is one. I've been talking a great deal about that lately, but tonight isn't for arguments and I'm going to hold my tongue.

But an observation: I've had my share of victories in the Congress, but what few people noticed is that I never won anything you didn't win for me. They never saw my troops; they never saw Reagan's Regiments, the American people. You won every battle with every call you made and letter you wrote demanding action.

Well, action is still needed. If we're to finish the job, Reagan's Regiments will have to become the Bush Brigades. Soon he'll be the chief, and he'll need you every bit as much as I did.

Finally, there is a great tradition of warnings in presidential farewells, and I've got one that's been on my mind for some time.

But oddly enough it starts with one of the things I'm proudest of the past 8 years: the resurgence of national pride that I called "the new patriotism." This national feeling is good, but it won't count for much and it won't last unless it's grounded in thoughtfulness and knowledge.

An informed patriotism is what we want. And are we doing a good enough job teaching our children what America is and what she represents in the long history of the world?

Those of us who are over 35 or so years of age grew up in a different America. We were taught, very directly, what it means to be an American, and we absorbed almost in the air a love of country and an appreciation of its institutions. If you didn't get these things from your family you got them from the neighborhood, from the father down the street who fought in Korea or the family who lost someone at Anzio. Or you could get a sense of patriotism from school. And if all else failed you could get a sense of patriotism from the popular culture. The movies celebrated democratic values and implicitly reinforced the idea that America was special. TV was like that too through the mid-sixties.

But now we're about to enter the nineties, and some things have changed. Younger parents aren't sure that an unambivalent appreciation of America is the right thing to teach modern

children. And as for those who create the popular culture, well-grounded patriotism is no longer the style.

Our spirit is back, but we haven't reinstitutionalized it. We've got to do a better job of getting across that America is freedom -- freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of enterprise -- and freedom is special and rare. It's fragile; it needs protection.

We've got to teach history based not on what's in fashion but what's important: Why the pilgrims came here, who Jimmy Doolittle was, and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant... You know, 4 years ago on the 40th anniversary of D-Day I read a letter from a young woman writing to her late father, who'd fought on Omaha Beach. Her name was Lisa Zanatta Henn, and she said, we will always remember, we will never forget what the boys of Normandy did. Well, let's help her keep her word.

If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are. I am warning of an eradication of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit.

Let's start with some basics -- more attention to American history and a greater emphasis on civic ritual. And let me offer lesson number one about America: All great change in America begins at the dinner table. So tomorrow night in the kitchen I hope the talking begins. And children, if your parents haven't been teaching you what it means to be an American -- let 'em know and nail 'em on it. That would be a very American thing to do.

And that's about all I have to say tonight. Except for one thing.

The past few days when I've been at that window upstairs I've thought a bit of the shining "city upon a hill." The phrase comes from John Winthrop, who wrote it to describe the America he imagined. What he imagined was important because he was an early Pilgrim -- an early "Freedom Man." He journeyed here on what today we'd call a little wooden boat; and, like the other pilgrims, he was looking for a home that would be free.

I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace -- a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity, and if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here.

That's how I saw it, and see it still.

And how stands the city on this winter night? More prosperous, more secure and happier than it was 8 years ago. But more than that: after 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true on the granite ridge, and her glow has held steady no matter what storm --

And she's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the Pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home.

We've done our part. And as I "walk off into the city streets," a final word to the men and women of the Reagan

Revolution -- the men and women across America who for 8 years did the work that brought America back:

My friends, we did it. We weren't just marking time; we made a difference. We made the city stronger -- we made the city freer -- and we left her in good hands.

All in all not bad. Not bad at all.

And so, goodbye.

God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

MASTER

NANCY

(Noonan)
January 9, 1989
7:00 p.m.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS: FAREWELL TO THE NATION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11, 1989

My fellow Americans, this is the 34th time I'll speak to you from the Oval Office, and the last. We have been together 8 years now, and soon it will be time for me to go. But before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts, some of which I have been saving for a long time.

It has been the honor of my life to be your President. So many of you have written the past few weeks to say thanks, but I could say as much to you. Nancy and I are grateful for the opportunity you gave us to serve.

One of the things about the Presidency is that you're always sort of a little apart. You spend a lot of time going by too fast in a car someone else is driving, and seeing the people through tinted glass -- the parents holding up a child, and the wave you saw too late and couldn't return. And so many times I wanted to stop, and reach out from behind the glass, and connect. And maybe I can do a little of that tonight.

People ask how I feel about leaving, and the fact is parting is "such sweet sorrow." The sweet part is California, and the ranch, and freedom. You may have heard freedom's something I kind of prize. I'll be able to go to church again without interrupting everybody else's peace and quiet. I always figured it's hard enough unburdening yourself to your Maker without having to go through the metal detector first. The sorrow? The goodbyes, of course, and leaving this beautiful place.

You know, down the hall and up the stairs from this office is the part of the White House where the President and his family live. There are a few favorite windows I have up there that I like to stand and look out of early in the morning. The view is over the grounds here to the Washington monument, and then the mall, and the Jefferson Memorial. But on mornings when the humidity is low, you can see past the Jefferson to the river, the Potomac, and the Virginia shore. Someone said that's the view Lincoln had when he saw the smoke rising from the battle of Bull Run. I see more prosaic things: the grass on the banks, the morning traffic as people make their way to work...

I have been thinking a bit at that window. I've been reflecting on what the past 8 years have meant, and mean. And I realize that the biggest thing I'll miss is being in a position to implement the things we believe in. From Grenada to the Washington and Moscow Summits, from the recession of '81 to '82 to the expansion that began in late '82 and continues to this day, we've made a difference.

The way I see it, there were two great triumphs, two things that I'm proudest of. One is the economic recovery, in which the people of America created -- and filled -- 19 million new jobs. The other is the recovery of our morale: America is respected again in the world, and looked to for leadership.

Something that happened to me a few years ago reflects some of this. It was back in 1981, and I was attending my first big economic summit, which was held that year in Canada. The meeting place rotates among the member countries. The opening meeting

was a formal dinner for the heads of government of the seven industrialized nations. I sat there like the new kid in school and listened, and it was all Francois this and Helmut that. They dropped titles and spoke to one another on a first-name basis. At one point I sort of leaned in and said, "My name's Ron."

When I got home we began the actions we felt would ignite an economic comeback: Cut taxes and regulation, started to cut spending. Soon the recovery began.

Two years later another economic summit, with pretty much the same cast. At the big opening meeting we all got together, and all of a sudden just for a moment I saw that everyone was looking at me. Then one of them spoke up and said, "Ron, tell us about the American miracle."

Back in 1980, when I was running for President, it was quite different. Some pundits said our programs would result in catastrophe. Our views on foreign affairs would cause war, our plans for the economy would cause inflation to soar and bring about economic collapse. I even remember one highly respected economist saying, back in 1982, that "The engines of economic growth are shut down here and across the world; it will be many years before we see a recovery."

Well, he -- and the other "opinion leaders" -- were wrong. The fact is, what they called "radical" was really "right;" what they called "dangerous" was just "desperately needed." It reminded me of something about intellectuals; they're nice people, but they're not always very smart.

And in all that time I won a nickname -- "The Great Communicator." But I never thought it was my style or the words I used that made a difference -- it was the content. I wasn't a great communicator but I communicated great things, and they didn't spring full blown from my brow, they came from the heart of a great Nation -- from our experience, our wisdom, and our belief in the principles that have guided us for two centuries.

They called it The Reagan Revolution, and I'll accept that, but for me it always seemed more like the Great Rediscovery: a rediscovery of our values and our common sense.

Common sense told us that when you put a big tax on something, the people will produce less of it. So we cut the people's tax rates and the people produced more than ever before. The economy bloomed like a plant that had been cut back and could now grow quicker and stronger. Our economic program brought about the longest peacetime expansion in our history: real family income up, the poverty rate down, entrepreneurship booming and an explosion in research and new technology. We are exporting more than ever before because, at the same time, we summoned the national will to knock down protectionist walls abroad instead of erecting them at home.

Common sense also told us that to preserve the peace we'd have to become strong again after years of weakness and confusion. When our Administration began, nearly half of our military aircraft couldn't fly on any given day for lack of spare parts. So we rebuilt our defenses -- and this New Year we toasted the new peacefulness around the globe. Not only have the

superpowers actually begun to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons -- and hope for even more progress is bright -- but the regional conflicts that rack the globe are also beginning to ease. The Persian Gulf is no longer a war zone, the Soviets are leaving Afghanistan, the Vietnamese are preparing to pull out of Cambodia, and an American-mediated accord will soon send 50,000 Cuban troops home from Angola.

Something else we learned: Once you begin a great movement, there's no telling where it will end. We meant to change a Nation, and instead, we changed a world.

Countries across the globe are turning to free markets and free speech -- and turning away from the ideologies of the past. For them, the Great Rediscovery of the 1980's has been that, lo and behold, the moral way of government is the practical way of government. Democracy, the profoundly good, is also the profoundly productive.

When you've got to the point where you can celebrate the anniversaries of your 39th birthday you can sit back sometimes, review your life and see it flowing before you. For me there was a fork in the river, and it was right in the middle of my life.

I never meant to go into politics; it wasn't my intention when I was young. But I was raised to believe you had to pay your way for the blessings bestowed on you. I was happy with my career in the entertainment world, but I ultimately went into politics because I wanted to protect something precious.

Ours was the first revolution in the history of mankind that truly reversed the course of government, and with three little words: "We the People."

"We the People" tell the government what to do, it doesn't tell us. "We the People" are the driver -- the government is the car. And we decide where it should go, and by what route, and how fast. Almost all the world's constitutions are documents in which governments tell the people what their privileges are. Our Constitution is a document in which "We the People" tell the government what it is allowed to do. "We the People" are free.

This belief has been the underlying basis for everything I have tried to do these past 8 years.

But back in the 1960's when I began, it seemed to me that we had begun reversing the order of things -- that through more and more rules and regulations and confiscatory taxes, the government was taking more of our money, more of our options, and more of our freedom. I went into politics in part to put up my hand and say, "Stop!" I was a citizen politician, and it seemed the right thing for a citizen to do.

I think we have stopped a lot of what needed stopping. And I hope we have once again reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited. There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: as government expands, liberty contracts.

Nothing is less free than pure communism, and yet we have the past few years forged a satisfying new closeness with the Soviet Union. I've been asked if this isn't a gamble and my

answer is no, because we're basing our actions not on words but deeds.

The detente of the 1970's was based not on actions but promises. They'd promise to treat their own people and the people of the world better, but the gulag was still the gulag and the state was still expansionist and they still waged proxy wars in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

This time, so far, it's different: President Gorbachev has brought about some internal democratic reforms and, as I said, begun the withdrawal from Afghanistan. He has also freed prisoners whose names I've given him every time we meet.

But life has a way of reminding you of big things through small incidents. Once, during the heady days of the Moscow Summit, Nancy and I decided to break off from the entourage one afternoon to visit the shops on Arbat Street, a little street just off Moscow's main shopping area.

Even though our visit was a surprise, every Russian there immediately recognized us, and called out our names and reached for our hands. The KGB eventually broke in and pushed the crowd back in a rough, KGB fashion. But before they did, we were just about swept away by the warmth -- you could almost feel the possibilities in all that joy. It is a moment from which I continue to draw much hope.

Still, we must never forget that while the man on the street in the Soviet Union may also want peace and yearn for freedom, he also believes in communism. Certainly the people who run the Soviet Union are still committed communists, which means there

remains a fundamental difference in even the definitions of freedom and human rights. So we must keep up our guard. But that doesn't mean we can't work together to eliminate the causes of tension and mistrust.

My view is that President Gorbachev is like no other Soviet leader. He knows what's wrong with his society and is trying to fix it. We wish him well. We must not be afraid to seek new opportunities with this new leader, while keeping an eye on the risks. And we should work to make sure that the Soviet Union that eventually emerges from this process is a less threatening one.

The new closeness should continue as long as they continue to act in a helpful manner. If and when they don't, at first pull your punches. If they persist, pull the plug.

It's still trust -- but verify.

It's still play -- but cut the cards.

It's still watch closely -- and don't be afraid to see what you see.

I've been asked if I have any regrets. I do.

The deficit is one. I've been talking a great deal about that lately, but tonight isn't for arguments and I'm going to hold my tongue.

But an observation: I've had my share of victories in the Congress, but what few people noticed is that I never won anything you didn't win for me. They never saw my troops; they never saw Reagan's Regiments, the American people. You won every

battle with every call you made and letter you wrote demanding action.

Well, action is still needed. If we're to finish the job, Reagan's Regiments will have to become the Bush Brigades. Soon he'll be the chief, and he'll need you every bit as much as I did.

I have a more personal regret. It's that in spite of the fact that we turned the economy around and lifted the standard of living for so many people -- in spite of that we never quite reached down into the heart of the horror and changed the lives of the poor. Oh yes, we continued providing for their needs, but we must do more to help them become self-supporting and independent.

I feel that I never quite got across that the conservative solution is not to look away. There are conservative answers to the problems of poverty -- answers like the Welfare Reform and Workfare we have just begun to enact, and more answers in the thousands of welfare experiments going on now in cities and towns across our great country. Answers like Enterprise Zones in areas of urban blight and turning over the ownership or at least the management of public housing to those who must live there. These are examples of conservative answers of incentive and pride that offer great hope in the years ahead.

Finally, there is a great tradition of warnings in presidential farewells, and I've got one that's been on my mind for some time.

But oddly enough it starts with one of the things I'm proudest of the past 8 years: the resurgence of national pride that I called "the new patriotism." This national feeling is good, but it won't count for much and it won't last unless it's grounded in thoughtfulness and knowledge.

An informed patriotism is what we want. And are we doing a good enough job teaching our children what America is and what she represents in the long history of the world?

Those of us who are over 30 or so years of age grew up in a different America. We were taught, very directly, what it means to be an American, and we absorbed almost in the air a love of country and an appreciation of its institutions. If you didn't get these things from your family you got them from the neighborhood, from the father down the street who fought in Korea or the family who lost someone at Anzio. Or you could get a sense of patriotism from school. ~~And if all~~ else failed you could get a sense of patriotism from the popular culture. The movies celebrated democratic values and implicitly reinforced the idea that America was special. TV was like that too through the mid-sixties.

But now we're about to enter the nineties, and some things have changed. Some younger parents aren't sure that an unambivalent appreciation of America is the right thing to teach modern children. And as for those who create the popular culture, well-grounded patriotism is no longer the style.

Our spirit is back, but we haven't reinstitutionalized it. We've got to do a better job of getting across that America is

freedom -- freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of enterprise -- and freedom is special and rare. It's fragile; it needs protection.

We've got to teach history based not on what's in fashion but what's important: Why the pilgrims came here, who Jimmy Doolittle was and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant... You know, 4 years ago on the 40th anniversary of D-Day I read a letter from a young woman writing to her late father, who'd fought on Omaha Beach. Her name was Lisa Zanatta Henn, and she said, "Dad, we will always remember, we will never forget" what you and the other boys of Normandy did. Well, let's help her keep her word.

If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are. I am warning of an eradication of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit.

Let's start with some basics -- more attention to American history and a greater emphasis on civic ritual. And let me offer lesson number one about America: All great change in America begins at the dinner table. So tomorrow night in the kitchen I hope the talking begins. And children, if your parents haven't been teaching you what it means to be an American -- let 'em know and nail 'em on it. That would be a very American thing to do.

And that's about all I have to say tonight. Except for one thing.

The past few days when I've been at that window upstairs I've thought a bit of the shining "city upon a hill." The phrase comes from John Winthrop, who wrote it to describe the America he

imagined. What he imagined was important because he was one of the earliest pilgrims who came here hoping for a home that would be free.

I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, wind-swept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace -- a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity, and if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here.

That's how I saw it, and see it still.

And how stands the city on this winter night? More prosperous, more secure and happier than it was 8 years ago. But more than that: after 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true on the granite ridge, and her glow has held steady no matter what storm --

And she's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the Pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home.

In the early days of this Administration, at the height of the boat people, there was a sailor hard at work on the Carrier Midway, which was patrolling the South China Sea. The sailor, like most American servicemen, was young, smart, and fiercely observant. And it happened that he spied on the horizon a leaky little wooden boat -- and crammed inside were refugees from

Indochina hoping to get to America. The ship turned toward them, and as they approached the sailor waved.

And one of the refugees stood up and called out to him. He yelled, "Hello, Mr. American sailor -- Hello, Mr. Freedom Man."

A small moment with a big meaning, a moment the sailor, who told it to me in a letter, couldn't get out of his mind. And neither, years later, can I.

Because that's what it was to be an American in the 1980's: We stood, again, for freedom. I know we always have, but in the past few years the world -- and, in a way, we ourselves -- rediscovered it. May America always stand for freedom.

It has been quite a journey this decade, and we held together through some stormy seas. But at the end, together, we reached our destination.

We've done our part. And as I "walk off into the city streets," a final word to the men and women of the Reagan Revolution -- the men and women across America who for 8 years did the work that brought America back:

My friends, we did it. We weren't just marking time; we made a difference. We made the city stronger -- we made the city freer -- and we left her in good hands.

All in all not bad. Not bad at all.

And so, goodbye.

God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.