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Society Reception. March 25, 1983

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(Parvin)
March 18, 1983
12:00 p.m.

MRS. REAGAN: AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RECEPTION
FRIDAY, MARCH 25, 1983

-- Thank you and welcome to the White House. And you'll be pleased to know that smoking is prohibited. When you breathe deeply here you draw in history, not someone else's foul air. But I'm delighted you could be here today. Through you and millions of other volunteers across the country, we are moving steadily forward in the fight against cancer. And it's a genuine privilege for me to be the American Cancer Society's Honorary Chairman for 1983.

-- I imagine all of you are familiar with the lines from Dante's Inferno, "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." In the past, that pretty well summed up the outlook for those who were stricken with cancer. They were considered helpless and their condition was considered hopeless. Today, however, there is an accelerating feeling of hope toward cancer. It's an exciting time for research. The clues that will ultimately solve the mysteries of this terrible disease are coming faster now. Through hard, determined work in research and education, we are hastening the day when cancer -- all cancers -- will be curable and, finally, preventable.

-- I know from personal experience how important it is for people to take action and not simply fear cancer. This past Christmas I learned that a skin cancer on my lip was malignant.

I am so thankful it was a mild one that was treated successfully. With education, other cancers can be caught in time as well. I don't think we can emphasize those 7 warning signals often enough. They are life savers. Over 3 million Americans have been cured of cancer and this figure is growing all the time. These people are winners, and I am proud to be one of them.

-- Let me close by expressing the Nation's thanks to the American Cancer Society and its volunteers. You represent not only the true spirit of volunarium, but of human compassion. And I am very proud to be associated with your cause. Thank you and God bless you all.