

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Speechwriting, White House Office
of: Speech Drafts
Folder Title: Nancy Reagan: Cenikor Graduation
Feb. 18, 1986
Box: 436

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

CENIKOR GRADUATION

FEBRUARY 18, 1986

Speeches

-- THANK YOU FOR THAT WARM RECEPTION. IT'S AN HONOR TO SHARE THIS DAY WITH YOU -- AND I'M DELIGHTED THAT WE'VE BEEN JOINED BY SOME OF MY FRIENDS FROM THE TEXANS' WAR ON DRUGS.

-- EVERYONE HERE TODAY HAS HELPED TO MAKE THIS MOMENT POSSIBLE. YOU GRADUATES KNOW THAT YOUR FAMILIES HAVE WORKED AND PRAYED FOR YOUR SUCCESS. YOUR CENIKOR COUNSELORS HAVE GIVEN THEIR ALL. YOUR FELLOW RESIDENTS HAVE OFFERED YOU THEIR FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT.

-- EVEN SO, TODAY BELONGS TO YOU. YOU CHOSE TO GET WELL, AND YOU WORKED FOR TWO LONG, HARD YEARS TO MAKE IT COME TRUE. YOU DESERVE THIS MOMENT IN THE SUN, BECAUSE YOU'VE STRUGGLED SO LONG IN THE DARKNESS. I KNOW THAT IN THIS MOMENT OF JOY EVERYONE HERE WANTS TO JOIN ME IN APPLAUDING YOU ONCE MORE. [APPLAUSE.]

-- THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME I'VE VISITED CENIKOR. MANY OF YOU KNOW OF MY VISIT TO THE COLORADO FACILITY IN 1983. EARLIER THAT SAME YEAR, MY HUSBAND VISITED THE CENIKOR FACILITY IN HOUSTON.

CENIKOR IMPRESSED US BOTH MORE THAN I CAN TELL YOU, AND I'M DELIGHTED TO HAVE THE CHANCE AT LAST TO VISIT CENIKOR OF FORT WORTH.

-- SO YOU SEE, I'M FAMILIAR WITH CENIKOR. I KNOW ABOUT YOUR PROGRAM -- AND I KNOW WHY THIS DAY MATTERS SO MUCH. THE PAST TWO YEARS HAVE BEEN TOUGH FOR YOU GRADUATES -- VERY TOUGH. I KNOW THERE MUST HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN YOU FELT LIKE GIVING UP. IN STICKING IT OUT TO THE END, EACH OF YOU HAS LEARNED A LESSON. IT'S THAT THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE DON'T COME EASY. NO, THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE

-3-

ARE WORTH WORKING FOR.

-- I'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU A LETTER ABOUT DRUG ABUSE THAT I RECENTLY RECEIVED. I THINK YOU'LL RECOGNIZE THE PAIN THAT THE WOMAN WHO WROTE IT WAS IN -- AND I'M CERTAIN THAT YOUR MOTHERS WILL.

-- "DEAR MRS. BEAGAN,

-- "OUR BEAUTIFUL TWENTY-FOUR YEAR OLD DAUGHTER WAS SO POWERFULLY INFLUENCED BY DRUGS THAT SHE TOOK HER OWN LIFE. MANY PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THE BOTTOMLESS PIT DRUGS LEAD THEM TO.

-4-

ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WOULD SAY 'NO.' AND MAYBE THEN THERE WOULDN'T BE ANY MORE FAMILIES TORN APART, [ANYMORE] SLEEPLESS NIGHTS WONDERING IF [A] CHILD IS ALIVE OR DEAD."

-- "SO SIGN ME OFF AS A MOTHER WHO NEVER HAS TO WORRY ABOUT HER PHONE RINGING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT -- WHAT A PRICE WE PAID FOR SLEEP."

-- "WITH TEARS IN MY EYES AND A BROKEN HEART, SINCERELY YOURS."

-5-

-- "WHAT A PRICE WE PAID FOR SLEEP" -- THERE COULDN'T BE A MORE HAUNTING PHRASE. THAT YOUNG WOMAN NEVER FOUND THE PEACE THAT YOU HAVE FOUND. HER FAMILY SLEEPS AT NIGHT BECAUSE THEIR CHILD IS GONE. YOUR FAMILIES CAN SLEEP AT NIGHT BECAUSE YOU'VE COME BACK.

-- I KNOW THAT WHEN YOU LEAVE CENIKOR TODAY, YOU AND YOUR PARENTS WILL WANT TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS IN THE SPIRIT OF TEAMWORK, PRIDE, COMMITMENT, AND LOVE THAT MADE THIS PROGRAM WORK. EARLIER, I SAT IN ON A RAP SESSION BETWEEN "

-6-

YOUNG FRIENDS FROM THE TEXANS' WAR ON DRUGS AND SOME STILL IN THE
CENIKOR PROGRAM. EACH OF US CAME AWAY WITH A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO
THE WAR ON DRUGS. RIGHT NOW, THERE ARE CHILDREN OUT THERE,
DESPERATELY SEEKING THE ANSWERS YOU HAVE FOUND, AND WE MUST DO ALL
WE CAN TO HELP THEM.

-- TODAY AS YOU GRADUATE, GO FORTH WITH ALL YOU HAVE. YOU
ARE STRONGER, MORE RESPONSIBLE, AND MORE COMPASSIONATE THAN YOU
WERE WHEN YOU CAME HERE. AND NOW YOU HAVE SO MUCH MORE TO GIVE
TO OTHERS.

-7-

-- I'D LIKE TO LEAVE YOU WITH A POEM -- A FEW WORDS THAT THE
LYRICIST OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN WROTE FOR MY FRIEND, MARY MARTIN.

A BELL'S NOT A BELL 'TIL YOU RING IT,
A SONG'S NOT A SONG 'TIL YOU SING IT,
LOVE ISN'T LOVE 'TIL YOU GIVE IT AWAY.

-- SO LET'S ALL GIVE OF OURSELVES AND OUR LOVE --
ESPECIALLY THOSE STILL TRAPPED BY THE DRUGS THAT YOU BRAVE YOUNG
MEN AND WOMEN HAVE OVERCOME.

-- CONGRATULATIONS AND GOD BLESS YOU.

#