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Conference. April 27, 1987

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REMARKS FOR YOUNG LEADERS CONFERENCE
MONDAY, APRIL 27, 1987

-- THANK YOU, JIM, AND THANK ALL OF YOU FOR YOUR WELCOME.
I'M DELIGHTED TO BE HERE.

-- JIM JUST MENTIONED MY WORK AGAINST DRUG ABUSE. YOU KNOW I SPEAK VERY OFTEN TO YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE TROUBLED AND LOST. I SPEND QUITE A BIT OF TIME DOING THIS, BECAUSE THE PSYCHOLOGISTS AND THERAPISTS TELL ME THESE YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE THINKS THEY'RE IMPORTANT. THEY NEED TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE BELIEVES IN THEM AND IN WHAT THEY CAN DO.

2

-- YOU HERE TODAY ARE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE WHO BARELY HAVE THE STRENGTH TO HOLD THEIR LIVES TOGETHER. YOU'RE LEADERS, WHICH MEANS YOU HAVE STRENGTH ENOUGH TO SHARE. YOU'RE CONFIDENT AND SUCCESSFUL IN YOUR LIVES OR ELSE YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE. YET NO MATTER HOW STRONG WE ARE, WE ALL NEED TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE BELIEVES IN US AND IN WHAT WE CAN DO.

-- AND THAT'S WHY I CAME TODAY -- TO TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. I KNOW THAT MOST OF YOU ALREADY ARE.

-- YOU KNOW MY HUSBAND TELLS THE TRUE STORY OF SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED WHEN WE WERE LIVING BACK IN CALIFORNIA. THERE WERE SOME BEACHFRONT HOMES THAT WERE IN DANGER OF BEING DESTROYED BY AN ABNORMALLY HIGH TIDE AND HEAVY SURF. THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND THE COLD NIGHT, VOLUNTEERS HAD WORKED AWAY, FILLING AND PILING SANDBAGS IN AN EFFORT TO SAVE THE HOMES.

-- AND, OF COURSE, BECAUSE OF THE DRAMA OF THE SITUATION, LOCAL TV STATIONS WERE ON THE SCENE. AND IT WAS ABOUT TWO IN THE



MORNING WHEN ONE NEWSCASTER INTERVIEWED A FELLOW IN HIS TEENS WHO WAS ATTIRED ONLY IN WET TRUNKS. HE AND HIS BUDDIES WERE OBVIOUSLY COLD AND TIRED, SO THE REPORTER ASKED HIM IF HE LIVED IN ONE OF THE HOMES THEY WERE TRYING TO SAVE. HE SAID NO. SO THE REPORTER ASKED IF ONE OF THE HOMES BELONGED TO ANY OF HIS FRIENDS. AGAIN, THE ANSWER WAS NO. SO FINALLY THE MAN ASKED, "WELL, WHY ARE YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS DOING THIS?" AND THE YOUNG MAN STOPPED A MINUTE AND THEN SAID, "WELL, I GUESS IT'S THE FIRST TIME WE EVER FELT LIKE WE WERE NEEDED."

-- YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NEEDED. AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE NEEDED TO DO IMPORTANT THINGS, SUCH AS VOLUNTEERING THEIR TIME AND ENERGY TO THEIR COMMUNITIES. YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. YOU CAN MAKE THINGS BETTER. YOU CAN EASE THE PAIN; YOU CAN LESSEN THE LONELINESS; YOU CAN LIFT UP THE HOPES OF ANOTHER HUMAN BEING. YOU HAVE THE POWER TO DO THESE THINGS RIGHT NOW. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU GRADUATE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU HAVE MONEY OR INFLUENCE OR HONORS. ALL YOU NEED IS A HEART.

-- A 16-YEAR-OLD CAN MAKE JUST AS BIG A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIFE OF ANOTHER PERSON AS A 60-YEAR-OLD. YOUR CARING AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS JUST AS IMPORTANT, JUST AS POWERFUL AS THAT OF AN OLDER PERSON. THOSE WHO NEED LOVE AND HUMAN COMPASSION DON'T ASK TO SEE BIRTH CERTIFICATES OR DRIVERS LICENSES BEFORE THEY ACCEPT HELP.

-- I WANT TO READ YOU SOMETHING BY A YOUNG MAN, OLDER THAN YOU, BUT YOUNG BY MOST STANDARDS. HIS NAME WAS RANDOLPH BOURNE

AND HE DIED IN THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC OF 1918. HE WAS SMALL, HUNCHBACKED, AND IN POOR HEALTH THROUGHOUT HIS SHORT 32 YEARS.

-- HE'S SPEAKING HERE OF HIS HANDICAP, BUT HIS WORDS APPLY TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE LESS FORTUNATE. HIS WORDS APPLY TO ALL WHO ARE IN NEED OF UNDERSTANDING OR AID. HE WROTE, "THE DOORS OF THE HANDICAPPED MAN ARE LOCKED -- AND THE KEY IS ON THE OUTSIDE. HE MAY HAVE TREASURES INSIDE, BUT THEY'LL NEVER BE REVEALED UNLESS THE PERSON ON THE OTHER SIDE HELPS UNLOCK THE DOOR."



-- THOSE OF US HERE TODAY -- NO MATTER WHAT OUR AGE -- ARE THE ONES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR. WE'RE THE FORTUNATE ONES. WE'RE THE ONES WHO MUST HELP OTHERS UNLOCK THE HANDICAPS THEY FACE -- HANDICAPS OF POVERTY OR ABUSE OR SICKNESS OR DESPAIR OR DRUGS.

-- BELIEVE ME, YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE. AND, CLEARLY, EACH OF YOU WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE; THAT'S WHY YOU CAME TO THIS CONFERENCE. AND I WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING? SOMETHING INSIDE YOU

IS GIVING YOU A MESSAGE. SOMETHING DEEP WITHIN THE HUMAN
CONDITION IS SPEAKING TO YOU. AND THE MESSAGE IS NOT JUST FOR
THE OLD; IT'S NOT JUST FOR THE YOUNG; IT'S FOR ALL WHO HAVE A
CONSCIENCE.

-- FOLLOW WHAT YOUR HEART IS TELLING YOU. HELP THOSE IN
NEED. HELP THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING TO FIND THE BASICS OF LIFE.
HELP THOSE WHO DON'T HAVE YOUR STRENGTH.

-- I'M AWARE YOU'VE ALREADY BEGUN. AND I JUST WANT YOU TO



10

KNOW, I'M PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH SUCH CARING, YOUNG LEADERS
AS YOURSELVES.

-- THANK YOU FOR INVITING ME TO BE PART OF YOUR CONFERENCE.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION
