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EMBARGOED UNTIL
SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1987
3:20 p.m.

MRS. REAGAN'S REMARKS
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1987

-- PRESIDENT HEALY, FACULTY, GRADUATES, AND FAMILIES, I'M HONORED TO BE SPEAKING BEFORE YOU TODAY.

-- MEDICAL SCHOOL COMMENCEMENTS BRING BACK MANY FOND MEMORIES FOR ME, BECAUSE MY FATHER WAS PROFESSOR OF SURGERY AT NORTHWESTERN FROM 1932 TO 1965. HOW MUCH I WISH HE COULD BE SITTING HERE TODAY TO SEE ME RECEIVE AN HONORARY DOCTORATE FROM GEORGETOWN. THIS DEGREE MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO ME PERSONALLY AND I THANK YOU FOR IT.

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-- THE NERVOUS STUDENT, DESPERATELY SEEKING A WAY OUT, WOULD INVARIABLY ANSWER, "WHY, SIR, I'D CALL A NEUROSURGEON."

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-- NOR, BY THE WAY, IS IT SUFFICIENT TO DEAL WITH THE EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS OF DRUG ABUSERS OR THEIR FAMILIES.

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-- I'M NOT TRYING TO REVIVE THE PAST WHEN I SAY THE DOCTOR/PATIENT RELATIONSHIP IS AS RELEVANT TODAY AS IT WAS 30 YEARS AGO. THE IRONIC THING IS THAT THE MORE NEW MEDICINES AND TECHNOLOGIES WE HAVE, THE MORE WE NEED THE HUMAN BOND BETWEEN DOCTOR AND PATIENT. LONG BEFORE WE HAD MIRACLE DRUGS AND INSURANCE CLAIM FORMS, WE HAD THE DOCTOR SITTING AT A PATIENT'S BEDSIDE, GIVING COMFORT AND STRENGTH AND SHOWING COMPASSION.

-- IN CLOSING, I WANT TO TELL YOU A STORY MY FATHER USED TO TELL ME. AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, THERE WAS A MEDICAL MISSIONARY IN INDIA BY THE NAME OF SHAW. HE HAD JUST ARRIVED TO TAKE OVER THE CARE OF A LEPER COLONY, WHEN HE SAW THREE OF THE LEPERS HAD MANACLES BINDING THEIR HANDS AND FEET, CUTTING THEIR DISEASED FLESH. DR. SHAW TURNED TO A GUARD AND SAID, "PLEASE UNFASTEN THE CHAINS."

-- THE GUARD SAID IT WASN'T SAFE BECAUSE THE MEN WERE DANGEROUS CRIMINALS AS WELL AS LEPERS. SHAW SAID, "I'LL BE RESPONSIBLE. THEY'RE SUFFERING ENOUGH." HE KNELT DOWN, REMOVED THE SHACKLES AND TREATED THEIR BLEEDING ANKLES.

-- A COUPLE OF WEEKS LATER HE HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT FREEING THE CRIMINALS. HE HAD TO MAKE AN OVERNIGHT TRIP AND DREADED LEAVING HIS WIFE AND CHILD ALONE. BUT HIS WIFE INSISTED SHE WASN'T AFRAID.

-- THE NEXT MORNING WHEN SHE WENT TO HER FRONT DOOR, SHE WAS STARTLED TO SEE THE THREE CRIMINALS LYING ON HER STEPS. THEY'D HEARD THE DOCTOR WAS GONE, SO THEY'D SLEPT ON THE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT NO HARM WOULD COME TO HIS FAMILY.

-- LIKE DR. SHAW, YOUR GOOD DEEDS WILL BE RETURNED MANY TIMES OVER IN THE YEARS AHEAD AND IN WAYS YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE. YOUR PROFESSION IS THE HUMAN CONDITION. AND WITH THAT COMES LIFE'S JOYS AND SORROWS AND FRUSTRATIONS AND INSIGHTS. IT MADE MY FATHER A VERY FULFILLED AND LOVING INDIVIDUAL.

-- I HOPE THE VERY SAME FOR EACH OF YOU.

-- THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE HONOR YOU'VE PRESENTED ME AND THANK YOU FOR THE HONOR OF ADDRESSING THIS GRADUATING CLASS.

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REMARKS FOR GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT
SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1987

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✓ THEY ARE THE SICK AND THEY HURT.

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I BELIEVE DOCTORS, ESPECIALLY PEDIATRICIANS, SHOULD OFFER GUIDANCE TO PARENTS ON BUILDING A CHILD'S SELF-IMAGE. THEY SHOULD LET PARENTS KNOW HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO BOND THE CHILD TO FAMILY AND SOCIETY. THEY SHOULD TELL PARENTS HOW ESSENTIAL IT IS THAT A CHILD LEARN TO DEFER GRATIFICATION, SEPARATE NEEDS FROM WANTS, AND UNDERSTAND THERE ARE LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES TO ONE'S ACTIONS.

-- MY FATHER ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THE BEST DOCTORS ARE GOOD TEACHERS, AND I THINK THAT IS WHAT YOU MUST BE. I KNOW THE

I KNOW THE INSURANCE COMPANIES WON'T PAY YOU FOR DOING THIS. I KNOW YOU WON'T BE REIMBURSED FOR YOUR TROUBLES. BUT YOU ARE MORE THAN THAT TERRIBLE PHRASE -- HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS -- WOULD IMPLY. YOU ARE DOCTORS. YOUR PATIENTS ARE MORE THAN CONSUMERS. THEY ARE THE SICK AND THE HURT.

-- I'M NOT TRYING TO REVIVE THE PAST WHEN I SAY THE DOCTOR/PATIENT RELATIONSHIP IS AS RELEVANT TODAY AS IT WAS 30 YEARS AGO. THE IRONIC THING IS THAT THE MORE NEW MEDICINES AND

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TECHNOLOGIES WE HAVE, THE MORE WE NEED THE HUMAN BOND BETWEEN DOCTOR AND PATIENT. LONG BEFORE WE HAD MIRACLE DRUGS AND INSURANCE CLAIM FORMS, WE HAD THE DOCTOR SITTING AT A PATIENT'S BEDSIDE, GIVING COMFORT AND STRENGTH AND SHOWING COMPASSION.

-- IN CLOSING, I WANT TO TELL YOU A STORY MY FATHER USED TO TELL ME. AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, THERE WAS A MEDICAL MISSIONARY IN INDIA BY THE NAME OF SHAW. HE HAD JUST ARRIVED TO TAKE OVER THE CARE OF A LEPER COLONY, WHEN HE SAW THREE OF THE

LEPERS HAD MANACLES BINDING THEIR HANDS AND FEET, CUTTING THEIR DISEASED FLESH. DR. SHAW TURNED TO A GUARD AND SAID, "PLEASE UNFASTEN THE CHAINS."

-- THE GUARD SAID IT WASN'T SAFE BECAUSE THE MEN WERE DANGEROUS CRIMINALS AS WELL AS LEPERS. SHAW SAID, "I'LL BE RESPONSIBLE. THEY'RE SUFFERING ENOUGH." HE KNELT DOWN, REMOVED THE SHACKLES AND TREATED THEIR BLEEDING ANKLES.

-- A COUPLE OF WEEKS LATER HE HAD SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT

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FREEING THE CRIMINALS. HE HAD TO MAKE AN OVERNIGHT TRIP AND DREADED LEAVING HIS WIFE AND CHILD ALONE. BUT HIS WIFE INSISTED SHE WASN'T AFRAID.

-- THE NEXT MORNING WHEN SHE WENT TO HER FRONT DOOR; SHE WAS STARTLED TO SEE THE THREE CRIMINALS LYING ON HER STEPS. THEY'D HEARD THE DOCTOR WAS GONE, SO THEY'D SLEPT ON THE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT NO HARM WOULD COME TO HIS FAMILY.

-- LIKE DR. SHAW, YOUR GOOD DEEDS WILL BE RETURNED MANY

TIMES OVER IN THE YEARS AHEAD AND IN WAYS YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE.

YOUR PROFESSION IS THE HUMAN CONDITION. AND WITH THAT COMES

LIFE'S JOYS AND SORROWS AND FRUSTRATIONS AND INSIGHTS. IT MADE

MY FATHER A VERY FULFILLED AND LOVING INDIVIDUAL.

-- I HOPE THE VERY SAME FOR EACH OF YOU.

-- THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THE HONOR YOU'VE PRESENTED ME

AND THANK YOU FOR THE HONOR OF ADDRESSING THIS GRADUATING CLASS.

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