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U.S. Olympic Committee Dinner 3/28/90 [OA 4727]



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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 28, 1990

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER

The Omni Shoreham Hotel
Washington, D. C.

8:00 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Senator Mitchell, thank you, George. And let me just say this: Good athletes can't run on dirty air. And George Mitchell is doing more to lead this country towards a new Clean Air bill than anybody else, and I am very grateful to him for his leadership there in the Senate. (Applause.) And thank you. I know that the minute this is over, he'll rush back up because the Senate is in session. I know he can afford to rent a tuxedo, but -- (laughter) -- he comes down, leaves and in just a couple of minutes you turn on CNN, and there he'll be up there on the floor. So thank you, sir, for taking time.

To you, Barney, thank you, sir, for being here and, more important even than that, for what you and your great organization are doing to support the Olympics.

To Bob Helmick, and the members of the Olympic Committee, my thanks to all of you. And to Don and Bernie for providing a little professionalism in the announcing. And to all the world-class athletes assembled here. I don't want to date -- well, put it this way -- I don't want to see that Bob Mathias is dated chronologically -- (laughter) -- but he and I were elected to Congress on the very same day in 1966, and I'm delighted to see my old comrade in politics here. (Applause.)

It's been a big day for me. I received some of the Olympic leaders in the Oval Office, and just now I've been given some wonderful Olympic sweats backstage. I'll wear them with pride -- and hope I don't get in trouble for impersonating an athlete. (Laughter.)

Bar and I are leaving before dinner, and I apologize for that. We heard you were having broccoli. (Laughter.) But we do excuse ourselves. But the blessing -- the thing that some of you from out of town don't know, if the guy that speaks leaves before dinner, the talk is refreshingly short. And I will try to oblige you all so these guys can sit down.

But it's a special evening. And in ancient Greece -- true story -- competing in the games was the highest honor a citizen could receive. And back then, athletes that won didn't pay taxes for the rest of their lives. (Applause.) I'll get back to you on that. (Laughter.)

It's an honor -- hey, listen, it's an honor to be among such talent. Many of you are -- all of you here and many former medalists. Others are hard at work to bring home the gold in '92, '96, even '98 -- when, if you'll pardon the plug, we hope to see the games back in America in two of our most spectacular cities, Atlanta and Salt Lake City. (Applause.) Let me put in a plug for fitness. We want to see every kid in America get and stay in shape. Arnold Schwarzenegger is doing a great job leading the President's Council on Physical Fitness and I'd love to have each and every one of you

MORE

help him in your own way. We need your support on this.

These men and women behind me represent some of America's greatest hopes and aspirations. They are portraits of pure dedication. Maybe it's their discipline that sets them apart, their natural talents -- as George said, their will to win. But I think it's something more. They aspire to a kind of excellence that transcends the triumph of mind over muscle, of bodies over stopwatch, distance, high bar, hurdle. Their sense of purpose breaks through barriers of every kind.

Through the hours and weeks and years of training, with every breath taken, with every heartbeat, they're moving toward a moment, and you know the oath: where they will compete "for the honor of our country, and for the glory of sport." And they prove that in sport, no one is advantaged. Where you come from, the color of your skin, you're rich, you're poor -- it doesn't matter. It's just you against your opponent; it's your own limits.

Olympic athletes understand, and show the world what it means simply to strive. They teach us about the triumph of the spirit, about breaking through barriers. And they speak to our highest ideals. Sometimes it's about beating odds and defying expectations. A little girl with polio from Clarksville, Tennessee, grew up to make the bronze medal-winning 1956 U.S. relay team. Four years later she became the first U.S. woman to win three Olympic golds. Tonight, she's fulfilling another ambition -- working with the children's foundation she established. Her name -- Wilma Rudolph.

During another Olympiad, an underdog discus thrower fell during practice, tore the cartilage in his ribcage. Somehow, over the next two days -- with his torso turning shades of black, green, blue and yellow -- he made it to the finals. Made one last throw. And won the gold medal. He's since become the only athlete to win gold medals in four successive Olympiads. You applauded him tonight -- Al Oerter. He's with us here. (Applause.)

At other times, Olympians break barriers of another kind. In Berlin -- we'll never forget it -- in 1936, Hitler's Olympic Games were supposed to showcase his theories about the superiority of his so-called "master race" -- until a 23-year-old black American, Jesse Owens, exploded to victories in the 100-, the 200-, and the 400-meter relay -- and Hitler left the stadium.

It was an athletic triumph, but more than that; it really was a victory for humanity. Ruth Owens was at the White House earlier today. She, too, I believe is with us here tonight. She received, in her husband Jesse Owens' memory, the Congressional Gold Medal. His sprints to glory will forever be celebrated in America's heart. When Jesse Owens broke through a barrier made of man's own ignorance, the world would never be the same again. (Applause.)

Olympiads -- like Olymians -- are unique. They unite the world in purpose and principle. Something as small as a ping-pong ball brought Americans to China; paving the way for a breakthrough in relations in 1971. The world smiled then, as Zhou Enlai stood next to a 19-year-old from Santa Monica discussing the hippie movement with him, and gazing at his purple pants and his ponytail.

If Olympic competition is a drama, it's about great people and great contests -- uniting mind with body, athlete with coach, player with player, toward a common purpose. Among so many of them, who could forget 1980, in a tiny town in upstate New York, when a group of American kids -- one of them here with us tonight -- grabbed the American flag, took to the ice and beat the unbeatable. (Applause.)

You watch an athlete in motion and you might just see the bonds of human limits shattered in a fraction of a second, re-defined forever. But the real lesson Olympic athletes teach, the hope and inspiration they offer, is that nations might aspire to the same

measure of excellence in their own conduct.

If athletes have the courage to break barriers, so must nations. And if the athlete's mind and body are among the highest expressions of God's perfection, nations should aspire to the same perfection. If we could make it so -- and with enough will, we can -- what would we want the world to look like by the next Olympiad?

In a rebirth of the Old World, in a new Europe, we would heal the wounds of 40 years of false division, on a continent made whole and free by the will of its people.

In South Africa, as in every nation, we would see the abolition of racial and religious discrimination, making bigotry and bias the dusty relics of the past once and for all.

In Asia, and in this hemisphere, we would count the blessings of democracy, pluralism, and self-determination.

The Olympics, like democracy, are a kind of dialogue -- a way that nations can converse in the language of friendly competition, not deadly conflict. What nations can learn from their athletes I believe in all my heart can truly move the world. Toward greater freedom. Justice. Security. Prosperity. And understanding.

You might say, well, does that sound impossible? So did the four-minute mile. So did so many barriers believed to be insurmountable -- from the 29-foot long jump to the triple axel.

Last year we saw a massive political barrier crumble, as young men and women joined hands atop the Berlin Wall. In 1992, we'll see skiers fly by in an icy blur of speed. We'll see sprinters explode out of the blocks so hard that the Earth may almost move. We'll see a half ton of iron hoisted skyward -- and a vaulting-pole handled like the bow of a fine violin. We'll see tiny gymnasts defy gravity, bending the laws of physics.

When the world watches those athletes, let it be reminded how much it has to learn from them. Let every nation of the world know that the only barrier remaining now is the will to make the world better.

To the once and future medalists with us tonight: you know that we admire you. You're often told that what you do brings honor to your nation. And so it does. But in these times of great change, we must do more than simply admire. We should strive to be your equals in our own pursuits.

As we approach a new Olympiad, may we all remember that just as these athletes pursue a dream and serve as an inspiration for their country, America still serves as a dream and an inspiration for the entire world.

So keep training. Keep struggling. Keep breaking through barriers. And the world will follow you.

Thank you all. And God bless the United States of America. Thank you very, very much. (Applause.)

END

8:20 P.M. EST

**U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER / OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1990 / 7:00 P.M.**

**THANK YOU, GEORGE. BARNEY TRESNOWSKI
[TRIZ NOW SKI], ROBERT HELMICK, MEMBERS OF THE OLYMPIC
COMMITTEE... AND TO THE WORLD-CLASS ATHLETES ASSEMBLED
HERE: I WAS JUST GIVEN SOME WONDERFUL OLYMPIC SWEATS
BACK STAGE. I'LL WEAR THEM WITH PRIDE. JUST HOPE I
DON'T GET IN TROUBLE FOR IMPERSONATING AN ATHLETE. **

**IN ANCIENT GREECE -- TRUE STORY -- COMPETING IN THE
GAMES WAS THE HIGHEST HONOR A CITIZEN COULD RECEIVE.**

- 2 -

**AND BACK THEN, ATHLETES THAT WON DIDN'T PAY TAXES FOR
THE REST OF THEIR LIVES... I'LL GET BACK TO YOU ON
THAT... **

**IT'S AN HONOR TO BE AMONG SUCH TALENT. MANY OF YOU
ARE FORMER MEDALISTS. OTHERS ARE HARD AT WORK TODAY TO
BRING HOME THE GOLD IN '92, '96, AND EVEN '98 -- WHEN,
IF YOU'LL PARDON THE PLUG, WE HOPE TO SEE THE GAMES
BACK IN AMERICA IN TWO OF OUR MOST SPECTACULAR CITIES,
ATLANTA AND SALT LAKE CITY.**

WE ALSO WANT TO SEE EVERY AMERICAN GET AND STAY IN SHAPE. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER IS DOING A GREAT JOB LEADING THE PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL ON PHYSICAL FITNESS -- AND I KNOW HE CAN COUNT ON YOUR SUPPORT.


THESE MEN AND WOMEN [BEHIND ME] REPRESENT SOME OF AMERICA'S GREATEST HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS. THEY'RE PORTRAITS OF PURE DEDICATION. MAYBE IT'S THEIR DISCIPLINE THAT SETS THEM APART. THEIR NATURAL TALENTS. THEIR WILL TO WIN.

BUT I THINK IT'S SOMETHING MORE. THEY ASPIRE TO A KIND OF EXCELLENCE THAT TRANSCENDS THE TRIUMPH OF MIND OVER MUSCLE, OF BODIES OVER STOPWATCH, DISTANCE, HIGH BAR AND HURDLE. THEIR SENSE OF PURPOSE BREAKS THROUGH BARRIERS OF EVERY KIND.

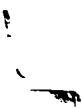
THROUGH THE HOURS AND WEEKS AND YEARS OF TRAINING, WITH EVERY BREATH TAKEN, WITH EVERY HEARTBEAT, THEY'RE MOVING TOWARD A MOMENT, AND AN OATH: WHERE THEY WILL COMPETE "FOR THE HONOR OF OUR COUNTRY, AND FOR THE GLORY OF SPORT." AND THEY PROVE THAT IN SPORT, NO ONE IS ADVANTAGED. WHERE YOU COME FROM; THE COLOR OF YOUR SKIN -- IT DOESN'T MATTER. IT'S JUST YOU AGAINST YOUR OPPONENT, AND YOUR OWN LIMITS.

OLYMPIC ATHLETES UNDERSTAND, AND SHOW THE WORLD, WHAT IT MEANS SIMPLY TO STRIVE. THEY TEACH US ABOUT THE TRIUMPH OF THE SPIRIT. ABOUT BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS. AND THEY SPEAK TO OUR HIGHEST IDEALS.

SOMETIMES IT'S ABOUT BEATING ODDS AND DEFYING EXPECTATIONS. A LITTLE GIRL WITH POLIO FROM CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE GREW UP TO MAKE THE BRONZE MEDAL-WINNING 1956 U.S. RELAY TEAM.

FOUR YEARS LATER SHE BECAME THE FIRST U.S. WOMAN TO WIN THREE OLYMPIC GOLDS. TONIGHT, SHE'S FULFILLING ANOTHER MISSION -- WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION SHE ESTABLISHED. HER NAME IS WILMA RUDOLPH. \\



DURING ANOTHER OLYMPIAD, AN UNDERDOG DISCUS THROWER FELL DURING PRACTICE AND TORE THE CARTILAGE IN HIS RIBCAGE. SOMEHOW, OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS, WITH HIS TORSO TURNING SHADES OF BLACK, GREEN, BLUE, AND YELLOW -- HE MADE IT TO THE FINALS. MADE ONE LAST THROW. AND WON THE GOLD MEDAL.

HE'S SINCE BECOME THE ONLY ATHLETE TO WIN GOLD MEDALS IN FOUR SUCCESSIVE OLYMPIADS. HIS NAME IS AL OERTER. [OR-DER] HE'S WITH US TONIGHT. \\


AT OTHER TIMES, OLYMPIANS BREAK BARRIERS OF ANOTHER KIND.


IN BERLIN, IN 1936, HITLER'S OLYMPIC GAMES WERE SUPPOSED TO SHOWCASE HIS THEORIES ABOUT THE SUPERIORITY OF HIS SO-CALLED "MASTER RACE" -- UNTIL A 23-YEAR-OLD BLACK AMERICAN NAMED JESSE OWENS EXPLODED TO VICTORIES IN THE 100, THE 200, AND THE 400 METER RELAY -- AND HITLER LEFT THE STADIUM.

IT WAS AN ATHLETIC TRIUMPH -- BUT MORE THAN THAT, IT WAS A VICTORY FOR HUMANITY.

RUTH OWENS WAS AT THE WHITE HOUSE EARLIER TODAY. SHE, TOO, IS WITH US TONIGHT. SHE RECEIVED, IN HER HUSBAND JESSE OWENS' MEMORY, THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL. HIS SPRINTS TO GLORY WILL FOREVER BE CELEBRATED IN AMERICA'S HEART. WHEN JESSE OWENS BROKE THROUGH A BARRIER MADE OF MAN'S OWN IGNORANCE, THE WORLD WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN. \\


OLYMPIADS -- LIKE OLYMPIANS -- ARE UNIQUE. THEY UNITE THE WORLD IN PURPOSE, AND IN PRINCIPLE.

SOMETHING AS SMALL AS A PING-PONG BALL BROUGHT AMERICANS TO CHINA, PAVING THE WAY FOR A BREAKTHROUGH IN RELATIONS IN 1971. THE WORLD SMILED THEN, AS ZHOU ENLAI STOOD NEXT TO A 19-YEAR-OLD FROM SANTA MONICA -- DISCUSSING THE HIPPIE MOVEMENT WITH HIM, AND GAZING AT HIS PURPLE PANTS AND PONYTAIL.

IF OLYMPIC COMPETITION IS A DRAMA, IT'S ABOUT GREAT PEOPLE, AND GREAT CONTESTS -- UNITING MIND WITH BODY, ATHLETE WITH COACH, AND PLAYER WITH PLAYER TOWARD A COMMON PURPOSE. AMONG SO MANY OF THEM, WHO COULD FORGET 1980, IN A TINY TOWN IN UPSTATE NEW YORK, WHEN A GROUP OF AMERICAN KIDS GRABBED THE AMERICAN FLAG, TOOK TO THE ICE... AND BEAT THE UNBEATABLE. \\


WATCH AN ATHLETE IN MOTION, AND YOU MIGHT JUST SEE THE BONDS OF HUMAN LIMITS SHATTERED IN A FRACTION OF A SECOND -- AND RE-DEFINED FOREVER. BUT THE REAL LESSON OLYMPIC ATHLETES TEACH, THE HOPE AND INSPIRATION THEY OFFER, IS THAT NATIONS MIGHT ASPIRE TO THE THE SAME MEASURE OF EXCELLENCE IN THEIR OWN CONDUCT.

IF ATHLETES HAVE THE COURAGE TO BREAK BARRIERS, SO MUST NATIONS.

AND IF THE ATHLETE'S MIND AND BODY ARE AMONG THE HIGHEST EXPRESSIONS OF GOD'S PERFECTION, NATIONS SHOULD ASPIRE TO THE SAME PERFECTION.

IF WE COULD MAKE IT SO -- AND WITH ENOUGH WILL, WE CAN -- WHAT WOULD WE WANT THE WORLD TO LOOK LIKE BY THE NEXT OLYMPIAD ?

IN A REBIRTH OF THE OLD WORLD, IN A NEW EUROPE -- WE WOULD HEAL THE WOUNDS OF FORTY YEARS OF FALSE DIVISION, ON A CONTINENT MADE WHOLE AND FREE BY THE WILL OF ITS PEOPLE.

IN SOUTH AFRICA, AS IN EVERY NATION -- WE WOULD SEE THE ABOLITION OF RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION, MAKING BIGOTRY AND BIAS THE DUSTY RELICS OF THE PAST ONCE AND FOR ALL.

IN ASIA, AND IN THIS HEMISPHERE -- WE WOULD COUNT THE BLESSINGS OF DEMOCRACY, PLURALISM, AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

THE OLYMPICS, LIKE DEMOCRACY, ARE A KIND OF DIALOGUE -- A WAY THAT NATIONS CAN CONVERSE IN THE LANGUAGE OF FRIENDLY COMPETITION, NOT DEADLY CONFLICT.

WHAT NATIONS CAN LEARN FROM THEIR ATHLETES TRULY
CAN MOVE THE WORLD. TOWARD GREATER FREEDOM. JUSTICE.
SECURITY. PROSPERITY. AND UNDERSTANDING.
DOES THAT SOUND IMPOSSIBLE? SO DID THE FOUR-MINUTE
MILE. SO DID SO MANY BARRIERS BELIEVED TO BE
INSURMOUNTABLE -- FROM THE 29-FOOT LONG JUMP TO THE
TRIPLE AXEL.

LAST YEAR WE SAW A MASSIVE POLITICAL BARRIER
CRUMBLE, AS YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN JOINED HANDS ATOP THE
BERLIN WALL. IN 1992, WE'LL SEE SKIERS FLY BY IN AN
ICY BLUR OF SPEED. WE'LL SEE SPRINTERS EXPLODE OUT OF
THE BLOCKS SO HARD THE EARTH MAY ALMOST MOVE. WE'LL
SEE A HALF TON OF IRON HOISTED SKYWARD -- AND A
VAULTING-POLE HANDLED LIKE THE BOW OF A FINE VIOLIN.
WE'LL SEE TINY GYMNASTS DEFY GRAVITY, BENDING THE LAWS
OF PHYSICS.

WHEN THE WORLD WATCHES THOSE ATHLETES, LET IT BE REMINDED HOW MUCH IT HAS TO LEARN FROM THEM. LET EVERY NATION OF THE WORLD KNOW THAT THE ONLY BARRIER REMAINING NOW -- IS THE WILL TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER.

TO THE ONCE AND FUTURE MEDALISTS WITH US TONIGHT: YOU KNOW THAT WE ADMIRE YOU. YOU'RE OFTEN TOLD THAT WHAT YOU DO BRINGS HONOR TO YOUR NATION. AND SO IT DOES.

BUT IN THESE TIMES OF GREAT CHANGE, WE MUST DO MORE THAN SIMPLY ADMIRE. WE SHOULD STRIVE TO BE YOUR EQUALS IN OUR OWN PURSUITS.

AS WE APPROACH A NEW OLYMPIAD, MAY WE ALL REMEMBER THAT JUST AS THESE ATHLETES PURSUE A DREAM AND SERVE AS INSPIRATION FOR THEIR COUNTRY, AMERICA STILL SERVES AS A DREAM AND INSPIRATION FOR THE WORLD.

**SO KEEP TRAINING. KEEP STRUGGLING. KEEP BREAKING
THROUGH BARRIERS. AND THE WORLD WILL FOLLOW YOU.**

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

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WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 3/27/90 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: ---

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: US OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>ROGERS</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

90 MAR 27 4:34

James W. Cicconi
Assistant to the President
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
Ext. 2702

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

1990 MAR 26 PM 7:58

March 26, 1990

INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: CHRISS WINSTON *WJ*
FROM: MARK LANGE *W*
SUBJECT: REMARKS FOR THE US OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER

I. SUMMARY

On Wednesday, March 28, you will make remarks at the US Olympic Committee fundraising dinner at the Omni Shoreham Hotel. You are scheduled to speak before the dinner, at 7:00 p.m., and your remarks are approximately 10 minutes long, on cards.

II. DISCUSSION

This dinner is sponsored by the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association, the main sponsor of the US Olympic Team and they have invited slightly over 800 guests. The guests include past Olympic gold medal winners, athletes hoping to compete in the 1992 Olympics, and many state and federal officials.

You will be introduced by Senator George Mitchell. Just as you reach the podium, a large group of athletes will be forming a semi-circle around you. They will be standing to your rear as you speak. Your remarks are inspirational and draw parallels between the glory of sport/competition and other barriers to be overcome, mainly in world events.

(Lange/Cawley)
March 27, 1990
8:35 A.M.
[OLY.DOC]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1990
7:00 P.M.

Thank you, George. Barney Tresnowski [triz NOW ski], Robert Helmick, Members of the Olympic Committee... and to the world-class athletes assembled here: I was just given some wonderful Olympic sweats back stage. I'll wear them with pride. Just hope I don't get in trouble for impersonating an athlete. \\

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These men and women [behind me] represent some of America's greatest hopes and aspirations. They're portraits of pure dedication. Maybe it's their discipline that sets them apart. Their natural talents. Their will to win. But I think it's something more. They aspire to a kind of excellence that transcends the triumph of mind over muscle, of bodies over

stopwatch, distance, high bar and hurdle. **Their sense of purpose breaks through barriers of every kind.**

Through the hours and weeks and years of training, with every breath taken, with every heartbeat, they're moving toward a moment, and an oath: where they will compete "for the honor of our country, and for the glory of sport." And they prove that in sport, no one is advantaged. Where you come from; the color of your skin -- it doesn't matter. It's just you against your opponent, and your own limits.

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So keep training. Keep struggling. Keep breaking through barriers. And the world will follow you.

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

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

1990 MAR 26 PM 7:58

March 26, 1990

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN

3/27/90

INFORMATION

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FROM: MARK LANGE *ML*

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II. DISCUSSION

This dinner is sponsored by the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association, the main sponsor of the US Olympic Team and they have invited slightly over 800 guests. The guests include past Olympic gold medal winners, athletes hoping to compete in the 1992 Olympics, and many state and federal officials.

You will be introduced by Senator George Mitchell. Just as you reach the podium, a large group of athletes will be forming a semi-circle around you. They will be standing to your rear as you speak. Your remarks are inspirational and draw parallels between the glory of sport/competition and other barriers to be overcome, mainly in world events.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

DATE: 3-27

FROM THE PRESIDENT

TO: Mark/Chriss

Like it !

But let's work in one sentence
on our fitness program.
America must be fit.. join scharznegger
in me in hleping achieve thjat goal.

gb .

(Lange/Cawley)
March 27, 1990
8:35 A.M.
[OLY.DOC]

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1990
7:00 P.M.

Thank you, George. Barney Tresnowski [triz NOW ski], Robert Helmick, Members of the Olympic Committee... and to the world-class athletes assembled here: I was just given some wonderful Olympic sweats back stage. I'll wear them with pride. Just hope I don't get in trouble for impersonating an athlete. \\

In ancient Greece -- true story -- competing in the Games was the highest honor a citizen could receive. ~~Still true.~~ And back then, athletes that won didn't pay taxes for the rest of their lives... I'll get back to you on that... \\

It's an honor to be among such talent. Many of you are former medalists. Others are hard at work today to bring home the gold in '92 and, in some cases, '96 and even '98 when, if you'll pardon the plug, we hope to see the Games back in America in two of our most spectacular cities, Atlanta and Salt Lake City. *Plug PCFF*

These men and women [behind me] represent some of America's greatest hopes and aspirations. They're portraits of pure dedication. Maybe it's their discipline that sets them apart. Their natural talents. Their will to win. But I think it's something more. They aspire to a kind of excellence that transcends the triumph of mind over muscle, of bodies over

stopwatch, distance, high bar and hurdle. **Their sense of purpose breaks through barriers of every kind.**

Through the hours and weeks and years of training, with every breath taken, with every heartbeat, they're moving toward a moment, and an oath: where they will compete "for the honor of our country, and for the glory of sport." And they prove that in sport, no one is advantaged. Where you come from; the color of your skin -- it doesn't matter. It's just you against your opponent, and your own limits.

Olympic athletes understand, and show the world, what it means simply to strive. **They teach us about the triumph of the spirit. About breaking through barriers. And they speak to our highest ideals.**

Sometimes it's about beating odds and defying expectations. A little girl with polio from Clarksville, Tennessee grew up to make the bronze medal-winning 1956 U.S. relay team. Four years later she became the first U.S. woman to win three Olympic golds. Tonight, she's fulfilling another mission -- working with the children's foundation she established. **Her name is Wilma Rudolph. **

During another Olympiad, an underdog discus thrower fell during practice and tore the cartilage in his ribcage. Somehow, over the next two days, with his torso turning shades of black, green, blue, and yellow -- he made it to the finals. Made one last throw. And won the gold medal. He's since become the only

athlete to win gold medals in four successive Olympiads. His name is Al Oerter. [OR-der] He's with us tonight. \\

At other times, Olympians break barriers of another kind. In Berlin, in 1936, Hitler's Olympic Games were supposed to showcase his theories about the superiority of his so-called "master race" -- until a 23-year-old Black American named Jesse Owens exploded to victories in the 100, the 200, and the 400 meter relay -- and Hitler left the stadium.

It was an athletic triumph -- but more than that, it was a victory for humanity. Ruth Owens was at the White House earlier today. [She, too, is with us tonight.] She received, in her husband Jesse Owens' memory, the Congressional Gold Medal. His sprints to glory will forever be celebrated in America's heart. When Jesse Owens broke through a barrier made of man's own ignorance, the world would never be the same again. \\

Olympiads -- like Olympians -- are unique. They unite the world in purpose, and in principle.

Something as small as a ping-pong ball brought Americans to China, paving the way for a breakthrough in relations in 1971. The world smiled then, as Zhou Enlai stood next to a 19-year-old from Santa Monica -- discussing the hippie movement with him, and gazing at his purple pants and ponytail.

If Olympic competition is a drama, it's about great people, and great contests -- uniting mind with body, athlete with coach, and player with player toward a common purpose. Among so many of them, who could forget 1980, in a tiny town in upstate New York,

when a group of American kids grabbed the American flag, took to the ice... and beat the unbeatable. \\

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If athletes have the courage to break barriers, so must nations. And if the athlete's mind and body are among the highest expressions of God's perfection, nations should aspire to the same perfection.

If we could make it so -- and with enough will, we can -- what would we want the world to look like by the next Olympiad ?

In a rebirth of the Old World, in a new Europe -- we would heal the wounds of forty years of false division, on a continent made whole and free by the will of its people.

In South Africa, as in every nation -- we would see the abolition of racial and religious discrimination, making bigotry and bias the dusty relics of the past once and for all.

In Asia, and in this hemisphere -- we would count the blessings of democracy, pluralism, and self-determination.

The Olympics, like democracy, are a kind of dialogue -- a way that nations can converse in the language of friendly competition, not deadly conflict.

What nations can learn from their athletes truly can move the world. Toward greater freedom. Justice. Security. Prosperity. And understanding.

Does that sound impossible? So did the four-minute mile. So did so many barriers believed to be insurmountable -- from the 29-foot long jump to the triple axel.

Last year we saw a massive political barrier crumble, as young men and women joined hands atop the Berlin Wall. In 1992, we'll see skiers fly by in an icy blur of speed. We'll see sprinters explode out of the blocks so hard the earth may almost move. We'll see a half ton of iron hoisted skyward -- and a vaulting-pole handled like the bow of a fine violin. We'll see tiny gymnasts defy gravity, bending the laws of physics.

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To the once and future medalists with us tonight: you know that we admire you. You're often told that what you do brings honor to your nation. And so it does. But in these times of great change, we must do more than simply admire. We should strive to be your equals in our own pursuits.

As we approach a new Olympiad, may we all remember that just as these athletes pursue a dream and serve as inspiration for their country, America still serves as a dream and inspiration for the world.

So keep training. Keep struggling. Keep breaking through barriers. And the world will follow you.

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

#

(Lange/Cawley)
March 27, 1990
6:15 A.M.
[OLY.DOC]

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We also want to see every American get and stay in shape. Arnold Schwarzenegger is doing a great job leading the President's Council on Physical Fitness -- and I know he can count on your support.

These men and women [behind me] represent some of America's greatest hopes and aspirations. They're portraits of pure dedication. Maybe it's their discipline that sets them apart.

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

90 MAR 26 P8:40

DATE: 03/23/90 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Monday 03/26

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
(03/23 6:30 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PINKERTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER ROSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Please provide any comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston by 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 03/26, with a copy to my office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

TO: CHRISS WINSTON

March 26, 1990

NSC clears the Presidential remarks for the U.S. Olympic Committee dinner with the changes indicated.

Brent Scowcroft
 Brent Scowcroft

cc: James W. Cicconi

James W. Cicconi
 Assistant to the President
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
 Ext. 2702

(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
6:30 P.M.
[OLY.DOC]

1990 MAR 23 PM 7:00

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Through the hours and weeks and years of training, with every breath taken, with every heartbeat, they're moving toward a moment, and an oath: where they will compete "for the honor of our country, and for the glory of sport." And they prove that

in sport, **no** one is advantaged. Where you come from; the color of your skin; the nature of your God -- it doesn't matter. It's just you against your opponent, and your own limits.

Olympic athletes understand, and show the world, what it means simply to strive. **They teach us about the triumph of the spirit. About breaking through barriers. And they speak to our highest ideals.**

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^{Sports} Olympiads -- like ^{the proud men and women who compete in them -- are very special.} Olympians ~~are unique~~ They unite the world in purpose, and in principle.

Something as small as a ping-pong ball brought Americans to China, paving the way for ^{a breakthrough in} ~~(diplomatic)~~ relations in ^{1971.} ~~(1972)~~ The world smiled then, as ^{Zhou Enlai} ~~(Chou En-lai)~~ stood next to a 19-year-old from Santa Monica -- discussing the hippie movement with him, and gazing at his purple pants and ponytail. J

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Watch an athlete in motion, and you might just see the bonds of human limits shattered in a fraction of a second -- and re-defined forever. **But the real lesson Olympic athletes teach, the hope and inspiration they offer, is that nations might aspire to the the same measure of excellence in their own conduct.**

Accuracy
It was in April 1971.
No diplomatic relations until 1979.
Wasn't Olympics but World Table Tennis Championship.

If athletes have the courage to break barriers, so must nations. And if the athlete's mind and body are among the highest expressions of God's perfection, nations should aspire to the same perfection.

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No!

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WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 03/23/90 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Monday 03/26

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
(03/23 6:30 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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RESPONSE:

90 MAR 26 4 09:04

James W. Cicconi
 Assistant to the President
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
 Ext. 2702

(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
6:30 P.M.
[OLY.DOC]

1990 MAR 23 PM 7:00

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#

CAROLYN'S COMMENTS

p.1/para.2:

I can not confirm that winning athletes got free meals. (Mark got this verbally from Dave or Rogich.) The part about tax exemption is OK, though.

p.1/para.3:

"These men and women (behind me)..."

Advance tells me that the Secret Service has approved the athletes standing behind the President. However, this is subject to change, so let's leave the brackets.

p.2/para.4:

"...and Hitler left the stadium."

This is an oldie in Olympic lore, but is a bit controversial. Apparently Hitler did leave the stadium, but it is unclear if it was due to Owens' victory. Some say he had other business to attend to and had to leave.

On one hand, the statement is indeed accurate. On the other hand, the implication is there...*

p.3/para.1:

"(She, too, is with us tonight.)"

The Olympic Committee has extended an invitation to Mrs. Owens, but as of 3:00 today, she has not RSVP'ed. Leave the brackets; they should know tomorrow.

p.4/para. 3-5:

Paragraph 3, after the bold, reads "we would...". Let's reword the beginnings of paragraphs 4 and 5 to parallel this. For example, "In South Africa...**we would fight for** the abolition of racial...." and "In Asia, and in this hemisphere, **we would count** the blessings of democracy..."

→ Note: Dan wrote in the Owens award remarks that Hitler stormed from the stadium. Mark changed this to say "he left"... again, factual but has implications.

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DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER ROSE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Please provide any comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston by 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 03/26, with a copy to my office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

Please see suggestions

3/26/90 2:24 PM

James W. Cicconi
 Assistant to the President
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
 Ext. 2702



(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
6:30 P.M.
[OLY.DOC]

1990 MAR 23 PM 7:00

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1990
7:00 P.M.

Thank you, George. Barney Tresnowski [triz NOW ski], Robert Helmick, Members of the Olympic Committee... and to the world-class athletes assembled here: I was just given some wonderful Olympic sweats back stage. I'll wear them with pride. Just hope I don't get in trouble for impersonating an athlete. \\

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 ✓
^{shamed}

embarrassed
and
distracted

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON



March 26, 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON

FROM:

JIM PINKERTON

SUBJECT:

U.S. Olympic Committee Dinner

pg. 3, para. 3 "Something as small as a..."

I would avoid bringing up the politically-sensitive topic of China, and of chinese-communist leaders unnecessarily.

4, 5 "In Asia, and in this hemisphere..."

The implication in this part of the speech seems to be that "democracy, pluralism, and self-determination" are criteria for participation in the Olympiad. This is confusing, given that China has been a participant in the Olympiad for many years.

4, 6, line 4 "Let me extend an invitation..."

The implication is that participation in the Olympiad demands "democracy...". What are we implying about not only the PRC but also other non-democratic Olympic participants?

#

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 26, 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR COMMUNICATIONS

FROM: NELSON LUND
ASSOCIATE COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Draft Presidential Remarks: U.S. Olympic
Committee Dinner

At the request of James W. Cicconi, Counsel's office has reviewed the captioned remarks. We have no legal objections to the contents of these remarks. Suggested changes are marked on the attached hard copy.

We appreciate having had the opportunity to review these remarks.

Attachment

cc: James W. Cicconi

(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
6:30 P.M.
[OLY.DOC]

1990 MAR 23 PM 7:00

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#

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 03/23/90 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Monday 03/26

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
(03/23 6:30 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Please provide any comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston by 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 03/26, with a copy to my office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

See comments
AA
 62:01v 928805
 50 MAR 26 410:29

James W. Cicconi
 Assistant to the President
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
 Ext. 2702

(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
6:30 P.M.
[OLY.DOC]

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OK

RESPONSE: *Bruce Zimm from Sig Rogich*

90 MAR 26 4 9 : 29

James W. Cicconi
 Assistant to the President
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
 Ext. 2702

(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
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Thank you. God bless you. And God bless the United States of America.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

March 24, 1990

MEMORANDUM FOR CHRISS WINSTON

FROM: ROGER B. PORTER *RBP*
SUBJECT: U.S. Olympic Committee Dinner Remarks

I have quickly reviewed the draft remarks for the President at the U.S. Olympic Committee dinner next week. They are inspirational and repeatedly emphasize the theme that we should not be bound by limits and that the human spirit can prevail.

Having attended many athletic banquets in my earlier years, these remarks stand up well as appropriate and positive for such occasions.

My suggestions are modest:

1. At the top of page two the phrase "the nature of your God" is used just before the phrase "it doesn't matter." I suspect that the President does not want to equate the nature of God with where individuals come from and the color of their skin. We all applaud religious toleration, but the nature of what people chose to worship does matter. Many, based on their convictions about the nature of God, have engaged in highly destructive behavior. I recommend simply dropping the phrase "the nature of your God."

2. At the end of the first paragraph on page five there is a phrase "making fools of the laws of physics." Given the President's close association with science and math education, it is probably not appropriate for him to be making a statement such as this, even though most would recognize it as hyperbolic. Simply leaving it, "We'll see tiny gymnasts defy gravity," is enough. Of course, they don't actually defy gravity. But this hyperbole is almost certainly acceptable.

These are modest points. The speech is excellent.

cc: James W. Cicconi

40:6v 92 MAR 26 04

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 03/23/90 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 2:00 p.m. Monday 03/26

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
(03/23 6:30 p.m. draft)

	ACTION FYI			ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGICH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>PINKERTON</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>PORTER ROSE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<u>WINSTON</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Please provide any comments/recommendations directly to Chriss Winston by 2:00 p.m. on Monday, 03/26, with a copy to my office. Thanks.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi
Assistant to the President
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
Ext. 2702

(Lange/Cawley)
March 23, 1990
6:30 P.M.
[OLY.DOC]

1990 MAR 23 PM 7:00

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE DINNER
OMNI SHOREHAM HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28, 1990
7:00 P.M.

Thank you, George. Barney Tresnowski [triz NOW ski], Robert Helmick, Members of the Olympic Committee... and to the world-class athletes assembled here: I was just given some wonderful Olympic sweats back stage. I'll wear them with pride. Just hope I don't get in trouble for impersonating an athlete. \\

In ancient Greece -- true story -- competing in the Games was the highest honor a citizen could receive. Still true. And back then, athletes that won got free meals, and didn't pay taxes for the rest of their lives... I'll get back to you on that... \\

It's an honor to be among such talent. These men and women [behind me] represent some of America's greatest hopes and aspirations. They're portraits of pure dedication. Maybe it's their discipline that sets them apart. Their natural talents. Their will to win. But I think it's something more. They aspire to a kind of excellence that transcends the triumph of mind over muscle, of bodies over stopwatch, distance, high bar and hurdle. **Their sense of purpose breaks through barriers of every kind.**

Through the hours and weeks and years of training, with every breath taken, with every heartbeat, they're moving toward a moment, and an oath: where they will compete "for the honor of our country, and for the glory of sport." And they prove that

in sport, **no** one is advantaged. Where you come from; the color of your skin; ~~[the nature of your God]~~ -- it doesn't matter. It's just you against your opponent, and your own limits.

Olympic athletes understand, and show the world, what it means simply to strive. **They teach us about the triumph of the spirit. About breaking through barriers. And they speak to our highest ideals.**

Sometimes it's about beating odds and defying expectations. A little girl with polio from Clarksville, Tennessee grew up to make the bronze medal-winning 1956 U.S. relay team. Four years later she became the first U.S. woman to win three Olympic golds. She would have been here, but she's busy with the children's foundation she established. **Her name is Wilma Rudolph.** \\

During another Olympiad, an underdog discus thrower fell during practice and tore up the cartilage in his ribcage. Somehow, over the next two days, with his torso turning shades of black, green, blue, and yellow -- he made it to the finals. Made one last throw. And won the gold medal. He's since become the **only** athlete to win gold medals in **four** successive Olympiads. **His name is Al Oerter.** [OR-der] **He's with us tonight.** \\

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