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(Smith/Blessey)
April 10, 1989
Draft One
MICH

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: MICHIGAN BASKETBALL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
WED., APRIL 12, 1989

Coach Fisher, Bo Schembechler, Wolverine Players and Staff,
Friends.

Let me ~~say, first, that a great sports fan wishes he could~~
~~be with us.~~ You may recall, ^{fm,} that this was once the home court of
a Michigan alumnus. Well, this morning, I received the following
telegram: "Michigan basketball, like America, is ~~truly~~ Number
One! Sincerely, Gerald R. Ford." _e

Second, let me welcome you to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. For ^{leaf 200}
~~189 years now,~~ this has been the People's House. Well, in 1989,
you have become the People's Choice.

It was Yogi Berra who once said of a State dinner at the
White House: "How could you get a conversation started in there?
Everybody was talking too much."

My friends, today all of America is talking. They are
talking about you, and your incredible championship. They're
calling it Wolverine Wonder. Or the Michigan Miracle. Or
basketball's Impossible Dream.

You know, surrounded by all these household names, I feel like I should be recycling my autograph book.

In my opinion, Use's
~~I'm thinking, for instance,~~ of Terry Mills and Loy Vaught and Hughes. Together, in that great semifinal game against Illinois, you contributed 27 points, ~~as Michigan won a last-second thriller.~~
Or

~~I'm thinking, too,~~ of sophomore Sean (SHAWN) Higgins, who scored the winning basket against the Fighting Illini . . . and, yes, Bo, you did get Illinois!

Then, there's Rumeal (Ruh-MEAL) Robinson, of whom Sports Illustrated said . . . and Jerry Ford would love this . . . "he looks and plays like a fullback." ~~You were the Wolverines' playmaker and inspiration.~~ ~~And~~ against Seton Hall, your two free throws with three seconds left won Michigan's first-ever national basketball championship.

Of Glen Rice, one writer said, "He simply was sensational." Consider: He became the Big Ten all-time leading scorer and the NCAA tournament's Most Valuable Player. ~~He scored 31 points in the title game.~~ And, Glen, in the tourney's six games, you scored 184 points to break the old record held by Princeton's Bill Bradley . . . As you know, he now works just down the road from here.

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Fisher
~~Then, there's Steve Fisher . . . well, what more can be said~~

~~of~~ Michigan's new permanent coach? Steve, compared with you, Walter Mitty's was a hum-drum existence. Of your amazing success, even Ripley would disbelieve.

In three amazing weeks, you became the first rookie coach to win an NCAA basketball championship. You showed that persistence pays, and displayed what Hemmingway termed "grace under pressure." You helped Michigan become the first school to win the Rose Bowl and basketball title in the same year. And that Monday night, surrounded by your wife and two boys, you showed that Nice Guys Can Finish First.

Five weeks ago, following a last-second loss to Indiana . . . forgive me, but Vice-President Quayle insisted I mention that! . . . Glen Rice said that every Michigan player was "going on a mission." Well, last Monday, in Steve Fisher's words, that mission reached basketball's "Promised Land."

My friends, the 1989 Michigan basketball team had it all -- depth and quickness, shooting and intelligence, and that strength of character which embodies a champion.

~~So,~~ today, schools from Syracuse to North Carolina to UCLA salute your story. And, today, "Hail to the Victors" is No. 1 on basketball's hit parade. ~~Let me close by asking: Mission~~

~~mission complete?~~ You have
done it!
①

attempted? My friends, yours has been, and remains, Mission
achieved.

Thank you for coming here, God bless you, and God bless
America.

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My friends, today all of America is talking. They are talking about you, and your incredible championship. They're calling it Wolverine Wonder. Or the Michigan Miracle. Or basketball's Impossible Dream.

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For example, there's Terry Mills and Loy Vaught and Hughes. Together, in that great semifinal game against Illinois, you contributed 27 points. Or Sean (SHAWN) Higgins, who scored the winning basket against the Fighting Illini . . . and, yes, Bo, you did get Illinois!

Then, there's Rumeal (Ruh-MEAL) Robinson, of whom Sports Illustrated said . . . and Jerry Ford would love this . . . "he looks and plays like a fullback." Against Seton Hall, your two free throws with three seconds left won Michigan's first-ever national basketball championship.

Of Glen Rice, one writer said, "He simply was sensational." He became the Big Ten all-time leading scorer and the NCAA tournament's Most Valuable Player. And, Glen, in the tourney's six games, you scored 184 points to break the old record held by a guy who now works just down the road from here . . . yes, Princeton's Bill Bradley.

Finally, there's Steve Fisher . . . Michigan's new permanent coach. Steve, compared with you, Walter Mitty's was a hum-drum existence. Of your amazing success, even Ripley would disbelieve.

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Thank you for coming here, God bless you, and God bless America.