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(Smith/Blessey)  
4:05 P.M.  
February 21, 1990  
RED

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: RED CROSS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1990  
11:30 a.m.

Chairman Moody, Ladies and gentlemen. It's always a pleasure to address the Red Cross. // One reason is that if my speech is a disaster, relief is close at hand. // Moreover, you prove what Emerson said: "The greatest gift is a portion of thyself." //

Seventy-seven years ago, William Howard Taft began a great and generous tradition. And since then, every President has been privileged -- as I am -- to serve as American Red Cross Honorary Chairman, and <sup>since 1943, to</sup> proclaim March as American Red Cross Month. ↓

To Franklin Roosevelt, the Red Cross "embrac[ed] in its membership all races and creeds." // To Dwight Eisenhower, it mirrored the "warm heart of a free people." // And another great President, Ronald Reagan, rightly observed that "The Red Cross volunteers have proved equal to the challenge." <sup>of our time,</sup> ×

This spirit is crystalized in the three windows beside me -- windows commissioned by the Red Cross in 1917 which represent the theme of ministry through sacrifice. These windows tell the Red Cross story. // From collecting blood to combating disaster. And what this has meant to Americans and people throughout the world for generations.

A few moments later, the mountaineer got the message: That rescue team was there to help. Just as

((Let me tell a story which illustrates that meaning. It's about a violent winter snowstorm -- and a remote mountain cabin all but covered by snow drifts.

((A Red Cross rescue team was carried by helicopter to within a mile of the cabin -- then struggled to the cabin and shoveled a path through the snow. Finally arriving at the door, the lead rescuer knocked. It was opened by a crusty mountaineer.

(("We're from the Red Cross," the rescuer explained. To which the mountaineer responded by scratching his head. // "Well, it's been a right tough winter," he said at last. "I don't see how we can give anything this year.") // *← what about end of job*

*that*  
For millions of people in need, from stranded snowbound mountaineers to families made homeless by floods and hurricanes, the Red Cross is a brilliant point of light -- part of that vast galaxy of individuals, businesses, schools, churches, synagogues, and voluntary associations working together to solve problems.

"A point of light." A star of hope across the globe. For 109 years that star has shone anytime there has been a need -- anywhere there is a need. And today it dazzles still. In 2,800 chapters -- in thousands of towns and cities -- providing light at the end of the tunnel, ~~a rainbow through the clouds.~~ *STAR*

Look, first, here at home. When forest fires seared Michigan in 1881 -- or the Dustbowl ravaged lives -- the Red Cross star ~~lit the night for~~ *inspired gave hope to* millions of people *helped* as it did in 1989 *And that legacy continues* from Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina to the earthquake in Northern California. Through CPR, AIDS education, and programs

for the elderly -- the Red Cross star casts a glow of love and caring. Showing that any definition of a successful life must include serving others.

And look around the world. In the late 1800s, the Red Cross sent food and medical supplies to a starving Russia. And since then has served from San Juan Hill to Hamburger Hill. // In 1987, 1,200 Red Cross volunteers assisted when Bangladesh was flooded. // In 1988, you sent the first international disaster relief to the Soviet Union in 65 years. // And today, look at Eastern Europe. Where you're providing emergency food, clothing, and medical aid to new refugees.

These efforts prove anew that a world without the Red Cross would be a terrible cross to bear. And show how the Red Cross star of hope can shine forever: By helping the volunteers of today become the leaders of tomorrow. //

For evidence, look at these men and women -- each a "Star Player" honored by the Red Cross -- or, as you say, each "playing your part." Dorothy Campbell-Bell of Nashville. Teaching law in the classroom -- and the disabled to swim. Or Rochester, New York's, Joe Delgado. Father of the Organization of Latin American Students. // In Philadelphia, Bill Gallagher is a <sup>Red</sup> Cross <sup>X</sup> leader and full-time medical student. And in Cape May, New Jersey, Karen Maiorana [Mah reh ANNA] started Operation Mail Call. // Then, there's Hartford's Ben Robinson. One of Ebony Magazine's Ten Young Leaders of America. And Debra Johnson of Ashtabula, Ohio. The 1988 Volunteer of the Year. //

That's some battalion. And today they're leading a cavalry charge of hope and healing. They're among the more than ~~21,000~~ <sup>million</sup> volunteers who grace settings from day-care centers to inner-city schools. And who are ~~helped~~ <sup>buoyed</sup> by the donors who last year raised nearly \$145 million for the Red Cross disaster relief fund.

I began with a story about such service to others. I'd like to close with another. It's about a man -- President Woodrow Wilson -- who so admired the Red Cross that he once told Admiral Cary Grayson to gather up sheep and put them grazing on the White House lawn.

"He appointed me shepherd of the flock," Grayson recalled. "When shearing time came I reported to him that we had a little over a hundred pounds of wool." // With that, Wilson ordered him to send two pounds of wool to every State -- telling the Governors to have it auctioned for the benefit of the Red Cross.

The auction raised \$50,000 -- and in time, Admiral Grayson became Chairman of the Red Cross. For like ~~Woodrow Wilson~~, he ~~believed in "we," not "me."~~ Like you, he believed that we succeed in life only when we make a difference in someone else's life.

You ~~share~~ <sup>share</sup> -- you live -- that belief. And have made the Red Cross a star of hope unto the world. This table was used by Red Cross Chairman William Howard Taft when he was President. So it's my honor to now use it as I sign the proclamation making March American Red Cross Month. Thank you for inviting me. God bless the Red Cross. And God bless the United States of America.

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