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(Smith/Blessey)  
5:00 P.M.  
March 13, 1990  
TREE

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: TREE TRUST ACT  
SOUTH LAWN  
TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 1990

Distinguished Guests, Members of the Congress, Ladies and gentlemen. Welcome you to the White House. And to an event which says that to preserve our great outdoors, we must protect it. Or, as with trees, rebuild it.

((You know, I've been involved in planting so many trees around the country, I may have to open a branch office.)) //

~~((But today, we meet in America's home office. I'm truly glad to be here. // So I'll resist the temptation to say that our Administration is branching out. Or going out on a limb. Or even that I hope to leaf you with some thoughts.)) //~~

~~Instead, let me get to the root of the matter. // No, seriously, I want to talk about trees. What they create: A breeze that cleanses. And signify: Oral history -- passed from one generation to another.~~

I've talked a lot lately about the new breeze of freedom that's changing our world. Today we celebrate another breeze. Not as dramatic, perhaps, as the events in Budapest and Berlin. But equally moving -- and in the end, I believe, triumphant. A gentle, lyric breeze. A breeze that whispers that we must renew and restore the natural beauty of our land. //

*continuity*

This breeze blows from the branches of the Sequoias to the great ebonies of India. Reminding us that forests are sanctuaries of man. And that trees enhance not only our atmosphere -- providing oxygen and absorbing carbon dioxide. But also the community of man -- for each tree is a link between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons. // *and they would tell you*

((I thought of that last summer after a bad windstorm swept through Washington. Barbara and I were a little worried about the trees out there. Maybe it's because I feel affinity: Some of them were a little long in the tooth. // For instance, that magnolia there was planted by Andrew Jackson. But thankfully, the trees here emerged unscathed. //

((But elsewhere in Washington, it was a different story. And the next morning people were out surveying the damage. Mourning the loss of a favorite oak or elm. Regarding it with concern and affection -- as a family would a friend.)) //

Ask anyone that morning: *and they would tell you* Trees are precious -- but fragile. So in the budget I submitted last month to Congress, I asked for \$175 million to plant 1 billion trees a year. And today I'm asking Congress to approve another means to protect the environment. We call it the National Tree Trust Act of 1990. And it will foster the partnership between the public and private sectors to plant trees across America.

Our plan will create a private nonprofit Foundation to receive a one-time grant to promote community tree planting and cultivation projects. A Foundation to solicit, and oversee,

public contributions. And forge cooperation between individuals, businesses, governments and community organizations. Most of all, it will sound a nationwide call for each American to become a volunteer. Increasing the beauty of trees that is breathtaking. And the bounty of trees that is breathgiving. //

As you can imagine, the Foundation's funding won't come out of the woodwork. // But from the Department of Agriculture. ~~Secretary Yeutter, thank you.~~ // And it will work by using State Forestry agencies and groups like the American Forestry Association's Global Relief Campaign. Volunteers helping <sup>thousands</sup> ~~millions~~ of new volunteers, <sup>to</sup> learn not only how and where to plant trees. But how to care for them -- why we need them -- and how they help the environment. // Today, only one tree is being planted for every four that die or are removed. Our Foundation can <sup>help</sup> change that -- as one of a Thousand Points of Light, creating a Billion Trees of Life. And plant so many trees we'll knock Johnny Appleseed out of the Guinness Book of Records. //

The National Tree Trust Act of 1990 is a key part of our national tree planting and forest improvement initiative, to be administered by the Department of Agriculture. And that initiative, in turn, is crucial to my America the Beautiful program, which I submitted (last month) to Congress. ↙

I'm proud of America the Beautiful, <sup>VA</sup> it will help maintain and expand our parks, wildlife refuges, ~~parks~~, and public lands. For while it's not true that I'm going to build a tree house out here, and call it 1600 1/2 Pennsylvania Avenue. // Just a rumor } ✓

started by my grandkids. // It is true: I love the outdoors.

// And I love exploring it with our kids and our grandkids. //

((Look at these kids here. They know what I mean. Seeing the Grand Tetons through the eyes of a ten-year-old grandson. Or teaching our 6-year-old twin granddaughters about the mysteries of the ocean. It's at times like these that we realize, more than ever, how our children will inherit the earth.)) //

Nearly a century ago, perhaps America's greatest conservationist put it best. For it was Teddy Roosevelt who called our lands and wildlife "the property of unborn generations." And he said this about America's sequoias and redwoods: "They should be kept as we keep a great and beautiful cathedral." //

Today, ours is the chance to keep that cathedral great and beautiful. By ~~helping~~ <sup>planting</sup> not only sequoias and redwoods -- but poplars and maples and cyprus and elms. // And I can't think of a better time to begin than this spring -- the 20th anniversary of an event -- Earth Day -- Teddy Roosevelt would have loved.

Four weeks from now we'll celebrate it. But I thought we'd get a head start this afternoon. So Barbara will shortly join me to plant a Red Bud blossoming tree. // It seems small today. But so once did the special tree just behind me. // I ~~was the~~ <sup>my 1st sec</sup> age of some of you when it was planted by President Eisenhower. // And when you're my age, this tree can be just as big -- tell just as much history -- do just as much to ensure the splendor of America.

*Copy*

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Trees can stir the new breeze which enriches America's cathedral of the outdoors. So let us plant them -- nurture them. So that America will remain America the Beautiful for all the generations to come. Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

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