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**Record Group/Collection:** George H.W. Bush Presidential Records  
**Collection/Office of Origin:** Speechwriting, White House Office of  
**Series:** Smith, Curt, Files  
**Subseries:** Chron File, 1989-1992

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**OA/ID Number:** 13889  
**Folder ID Number:** 13889-021

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**Folder Title:**  
Nixon Library, Yorba Linda, California, 7/19/90

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Stack:	Row:	Section:	Shelf:	Position:
<b>G</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>

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Call gambler hi  
10:00 AM

(Smith/Garmey)  
June 25, 1990  
9 A.M.  
NIX

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: NIXON LIBRARY  
YORBA LINDA, CALIFORNIA  
THURSDAY, JULY 19, 1990  
10:30 A.M.

Mister

Pat

President, and Mrs. Nixon -- and how pleased I am to see you,  
President and Mrs. Ford, President and Mrs. Reagan. Ladies and  
gentlemen. Thank you for the privilege of saluting an office to  
which my predecessors devoted the full measure of their lives:  
The Presidency of the United States. //

To Lincoln, the Presidency played America's "mystic chords  
of memory." To TR, it meant the "bully pulpit," reflecting  
American values and ideals. And it was Dwight Eisenhower --  
beloved Ike -- who described its power "to proclaim anew our  
faith," and summon "lightness against the dark."

To occupy this office is to feel a kinship with these and  
other Presidents. Each of whom, in his own way, sought to do  
right -- and thus achieve good. // Each felt a sacred obligation  
to serve this dream we call America. And often wondered, I  
suspect, how they could be worthy of God, and man. //

We have with us today heroes who met that test. Three  
former Presidents -- and three First Ladies -- who enriched the  
United States -- and helped the U.S. enrich the world. //

((Collectively, I'm glad to get you together for a very  
simple reason. Maybe we can compare notes. See, I still haven't  
figured out how to open the lower drawer of my office desk.)) //

Individually: Here this morning are the 38th President of the United States, Gerald Ford, and Mrs. Ford. // On behalf of each American, an entire Nation is grateful for the example of your lives. //

Here, too, are Mrs. Reagan and my distinguished predecessor, the 40th President of the United States. // To Ronald Reagan, I say: "Thank you for helping us to believe in ourselves again. We will not forget how you truly blessed America." //

Go to Grand Rapids or to Austin and Hyde Park. Go -- in \_\_ months -- to Santa Barbara. You will see what these Americans and their spouses meant. Their libraries move us, inspire us -- etch what we are as a Nation, and a people. Their lessons live as oral history -- passed from one generation to another. //

Last year, nearly \_\_ million men and women visited Presidential libraries. Most were American -- almost half ages \_\_ or younger. They don't remember the 37th President of the United States -- or the years 1969-74. They will come here, and wonder: "What was Richard Nixon, and his Presidency, about?" Let us provide an answer worthy of America, and of my friend. //

Writing of Richard Nixon, historians will observe many things. They will note that only FDR ran as many times -- five -- for national office: Each winning four. And that more people voted for RN as President than any man in history. // They will talk of Horatio Alger and Alger Hiss, the Great Debates of 1960 and the Great Comeback of '68. Of the book, Six Crises, and the seventh crisis, Watergate. // They will write of Checkers --

Millie's role model. And, yes, <sup>3</sup> Mr. President, your answer to my "Vision thing" -- "Let me make this perfectly clear." //

We will read of your times as President: Perhaps as tumultuous as any since Lincoln's. And what you sought as President: A Nation where what we are matters more than what we have. We will recall, too, as <sup>an</sup> author said, how Richard Nixon "was central to the experience of being American in the second half of this century." // Yet these are public facts: RN's life was personal. So let me say what I would tell those who journey to Yorba Linda.

I would say, first: Look at perhaps the truest index of any man -- his family. Think of his mother -- a gentle Quaker - - and his father, who built the house not far from here. And his daughters, Julie and Tricia. Any parent would be proud of offspring such as these. // Think, finally, of what Good Housekeeping proclaimed the most admired woman of post-World War I America. <sup>Two</sup> The woman we know, and love, as Pat. //

As First Lady, Pat Nixon championed the Right to Read program, refurbished the White House and opened it to more Americans than ever, and brought the "Parks to People" program to the disabled and the disadvantaged. She believed the White House should be alight like Washington's other monuments -- and so it was. She was our most widely traveled First Lady -- visiting \_\_ continents and \_\_ Nations. //

Most of all, she grew up in Nevada -- poor, orphaned -- to become a parable of America's heart, and love. // When, in 1958,

*Foreign*  
~~Caracas~~ mobs stoned the Nixons' car, she was, a reporter said, "stronger than any man." Yet it was also Pat who moved pianist Duke Ellington, at a White House dinner, to improvise a melody. "I shall pick a name," he said, "gentle, graceful -- like Patricia." Mrs. Nixon, the Secret Service called you "Starlight."  
I thank you for illuminating the true beauty of America. //

Next, I would say to visitors here: Look at the qualities which, collectively, we know as character. // Richard Nixon had an intellectual's complexity. He was a writer / eight books // each composed on his famous <sup>yellow?</sup> legal pads // who, like Jack London, admired the dignity of manual labor. A pragmatist who believed that "politics is poetry, not prose." // He worked in the most public of arenas -- yet was, at bottom, he mused, "an introvert in an extrovert's profession." // A man who, even in Peking and Moscow, upheld the values of Mayberry. ✓ *yes!*

"Many times we were called square," he would say, "and as far as we were concerned, that was just fine." ((To which I say: Amen)) // He repudiated the tribunes of intellectual fashion -- endorsing <sup>beliefs</sup> principles which are always in fashion. He was a patriot -- would not contest the 1960 Election. <sup>yes!</sup> He mirrored love of country, and God. He was loyal to friends, and protective of loved ones. He also liked to laugh -- at a joke, and at himself.

((Let me repeat a story which ~~President Nixon~~ President Nixon himself enjoys. // One day, greeting an airport crowd, he heard a young girl shouting, "How is Smokey the Bear?" // then at the Washington Zoo. The girl kept repeating the question. Not

grasping her words, RN was first baffled -- then turned to an aide. // "Smokey the Bear," the aide whispered. "Washington National Zoo." // Triumphant, President Nixon walked over, and extended his hand. Said he: "How do you do / Miss Bear?") //

*Well, I am no one to comment on anyone's ~~is~~ CRITICIZE A VERBAL BLUNDER. Remember the time I said we must "conquer"?*

President Nixon was being sensitive to a child's feelings. Just as he remembered birthdays with roses, and mailed handwritten letters to defeated rivals like his dear friend Hubert Humphrey. // When a secretary made a typing error, he would save her embarrassment by redictating his memo. When the POWs returned home in early 1973 to a White House State Dinner, he saw that each wife received a corsage. He was thoughtful, sentimental and uncommonly kind. *Don* Let me speak that so my voice

*to hand from* reaches Berkeley *square to* and Harvard Yard: Richard Nixon was among the most thoroughly decent men to ever occupy the Oval Office. //

This brings me to what I would next tell those who travel to Yorba Linda. What President Nixon said of Dwight Eisenhower in a 1969 eulogy was true, also, of RN: "He came from the heart of America." Not geographically, perhaps, but culturally. //

Richard Nixon was the quintessence of Middle America, and touched deep chords of response in millions of citizens. As President, upholding what he termed the "Silent Majority" -- a hero in Dallas and Davenport, Syracuse and Siler City. // He loved America's good, quiet, decent people. He was one of them; he spoke for them; he felt, deeply, on their behalf. Theodore White would say: "Middle America had been without a great leader for generations, and in Richard Nixon it elevated a man of talent

and ability." // For millions of Americans, President Nixon became what they had rarely known: A Voice. Mr. President, as long as I am President, that voice will not be stilled. //

Finally, I would say to visitors: Richard Nixon helped change our lives. At home, founding the Environmental Protection Agency, revenue sharing, and a pioneering cancer initiative. // <sup>delicate,</sup> Abroad, engaging in diplomatic summitry, and helping ~~and~~ the bipolar globe. // Who can forget RN's trip to China -- mythic, almost magic. Or how he signed the first agreement of the nuclear age to limit strategic nuclear arms? He ended the draft. Was credited by Golda Meir with saving Israel during the Yom Kippur War. Endured hate and obscenities to achieve a noble goal in a noble cause -- "Peace With Honor" in Viet Nam. // "Being President," he said, "is nothing compared with what you can do as President." Mr. President, you helped achieve "A Generation of peace." I salute you -- for America and the world. // <sup>written</sup>

There have been, literally, millions of words about Richard Nixon. But let me close with a passage from the President himself. It was written 20 years this May, after he visited college students, in early dawn, at the Lincoln Memorial. Where they talked of peace, war, and what the Quakers call "peace at the center." Returning to the White House, President Nixon dictated a memorandum. Listen to what it says of idealism, and conscience. //

"What we must think about," he began, "is what are those elements of the spirit which really matter." He confessed he

didn't have an answer -- but that students were searching, just as he had forty years before. //

Then, RN concluded: "I just wanted them [to realize] that ending the war, and cleaning up the streets, air, and water, were not going to solve spiritual hunger -- which all of us have and which, of course, has been the great mystery of life from the beginning of time." ///

Mr. President, you provided answers -- to those young people and those who'll visit the Nixon Library. You made a difference for the Nation that you loved. // Defeated, you came back -- again and again. Disparaged, you prevailed. You showed how life can be a metaphor for courage. Believing in -- and making real - - a touch of the American Dream. //

Some people talk of an "Old Nixon," others, a "New." The Real Nixon has always been good enough for me. // I was proud to serve you, and that you were my President. ~~Looking back, I am~~ even prouder today. // God bless you, sir. God bless America. And now, it is my distinct pleasure and honor to introduce the 37th President of the United States.

# # # #

(Smith/Garmey)  
July 16, 1990  
9 A.M.  
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President and Mrs. Nixon. How pleased I am to see you.

President and Mrs. Reagan, President and Mrs. Ford. Secretary Mosbacher. Reverend Graham, Senior Members of the Nixon Administration, Governor Duekmejian, Senator Wilson, Chief Justice Burger, Vicky Carr. Those great American heroes -- our Viet Nam Prisoners of War. Ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Mr. President, for that introduction. And to all of you, for the privilege of helping to dedicate the ~~Richard M. Nixon~~ Library and Birthplace. // *in his spirit*

To Lincoln, the Presidency helped play -- as he put it -- America's "mystic chords of memory." To TR, it meant the "bully pulpit," reflecting America at her most vital. And it was Dwight Eisenhower -- beloved Ike -- who described its power "to proclaim anew our faith," and summon "lightness against the dark."

To occupy this office is to feel a kinship with these and other Presidents. Each of whom, in his own way, sought to do right -- and thus achieve good. // Each felt a sacred obligation to serve the idea we call America. And each wondered, I suspect, how they could be worthy of God, and man. //

This year, an estimated 1.3 million people will visit Presidential museums and libraries. Exploring the lives of these

Presidents passed -- like oral history -- from one generation to another. // They will see how each President is like a finely-cut prism with many facets. Their achievements, and their philosophy. Their family, and their humanity.

In Santa Barbara, for instance, visitors will soon see the library of my distinguished predecessor, the 40th President of the United States, and Mrs. Reagan. To Ronald Reagan, I say: "We will not soon forget how you truly blessed America." //

Look, next, to Michigan -- where a museum and library honors the 38th President of the United States, Gerald Ford, and Mrs. Ford. An entire Nation is grateful for your leadership and love of country. //

Tomorrow morning, the first visitors will enter ~~the~~ Library <sup>at least in person</sup> and ~~Birthplace of our 37th President.~~ <sup>and the</sup> They will note that only FDR ran as many times as Richard Nixon -- five -- for national office: Each winning four elections. And that more people voted for Richard Nixon as President than any man in history. // They will hear of Horatio Alger and Alger Hiss. Of the book, Six Crises, and the seventh crisis, Watergate. // They will think of Checkers -- Millie's role model. // And, yes, Mr. President, your answer to my "Vision thing" -- "Let me make this perfectly clear." //

Many of these visitors will know of your times as President: Perhaps as tumultuous as any since Lincoln's. And of your goal as President: A world where peace would link the community of nations. Yet other young visitors will not remember the years

1969-74. They had not even been born when Richard Nixon became President. So to help them grasp our 37th President, here is what I would tell those who journey to Yorba Linda.

I would say, first: Look at perhaps the truest index of any man -- his family. Think of his mother -- a gentle Quaker - - and his father, who built their small frame house less than 100 yards from here. And his daughters, Tricia and Julie. Any parent would be proud of children with the loyalty and love of these two women. // Think, finally, of a gracious First Lady who ranks among the most admired woman of post-World War II America. The woman we know, and love, as Pat. //

As First Lady, Pat Nixon championed the Right to Read program, and brought the "Parks to People" program to the disabled and disadvantaged. She refurbished the White House and opened it to more Americans than ever before. She was our most widely traveled First Lady -- visiting five continents and 22 Nations. Overcoming the poverty and tragedy of her childhood to become a mirror of America's heart, and love. // When, in 1958, foreign mobs stoned the Nixons' car, she was, a reporter said, "stronger than any man." Yet it was also Pat who moved pianist Duke Ellington, at a White House dinner, to improvise a melody. "I shall pick a name," he said, "gentle, graceful -- like Patricia." // Mrs. Nixon, the Secret Service called you "Starlight." Your husband has said it best: You "fit that name to a T." //

Next, I would say to visitors here: Look at Richard Nixon the man. // He had an intellectual's complexity. He was an author / eight books // each composed on his famous yellow legal pads // who, like his favorite author, Tolstoy, admired the dignity of manual labor. He worked in the most pragmatic of arenas -- yet insisted that "politics is poetry, not prose." // He believed in love of country, and God -- in loyalty to friends, and protecting loved ones. He was also a soft touch when it came to kids. // Believe me, I can empathize. //

((Let me repeat a story which President Nixon himself enjoys. // One day, greeting an airport crowd, he heard a young girl shouting, "How is Smokey the Bear?" // at that time, living in the Washington Zoo. The girl kept repeating the question. Not understanding her words, the President turned to an aide for translation. // "Smokey the Bear," the aide mumbled, pointing to the girl. "Washington National Zoo." // Triumphant, President Nixon walked over, extended his hand, and said: "How do you do / Miss Bear?")) ///

Now, I'm not one to criticize verbal confusion. After all, some say English is my only foreign language. // President Nixon was merely being kind. Just as he mailed hand-written letters to defeated rivals like his dear friend Hubert Humphrey. Or saw that when the POWS returned home in early '73 to a White House Dinner, each wife received a corsage. // Richard Nixon was extraordinarily controversial. He could also be uncommonly sensitive to the feelings of other people. //

This brings me to what I would next tell those who travel to Yorba Linda. What President Nixon said of Dwight Eisenhower in a 1969 eulogy was true, also, of himself: He "came from the heart of America." Not geographically, perhaps, but culturally. //

Richard Nixon was the quintessence of Middle America, and touched deep chords of response in millions of her citizens. As President, upholding what he termed the "Silent Majority" from Dallas to Davenport, Syracuse to Siler City. // He loved America's good, quiet, decent people; he spoke for them; he felt, deeply, on their behalf. // Theodore White would say: "Middle America had been without a great leader for generations, and in Richard Nixon it . . . elevated a man of talent and ability." // For millions of Americans, this President became something they had rarely known: A voice -- speaking loudly, and eloquently, for their values and their dreams. //

Finally, and most importantly, I would say to visitors: Richard Nixon helped change the course not only of America but of the entire world. He believed in returning power to the people. So he created revenue sharing. // And that young people should be free to choose their futures. So Richard Nixon ended the draft. // He helped the United States reach new horizons in space and technology. Began a pioneering cancer initiative that gave hope and life to millions. // He knew that the great outdoors is precious, but fragile. So he created the Environmental Protection Agency -- an historic step to help preserve, and wisely use, our natural resources. //

All of this Richard Nixon did. Yet he will be best remembered for dedicating his life to the greatest cause offered any President -- the cause of peace among Nations. //

Richard Nixon believed that true peace means the triumph of freedom -- not merely the absence of war. So he endured much in his quest for "Peace With Honor" in Viet Nam. // Yet he also understood America's special mission to end the brutality of war. So he engaged in diplomatic summitry -- and helped change the post-war bi-polar globe. //

Who can forget how in Moscow, President Nixon signed the first agreement of the nuclear age to protect our environment and limit strategic nuclear arms? // Or how he planted the first fragile seeds of peace in the Middle East: Golda Meir credited him with saving Israel during the Yom Kippur War. // Even now, memories resound of President Nixon's trip to China -- the week that revolutionized the world. No American President had ever stood on the soil of the People's Republic of China. As Richard Nixon stepped onto the tarmac and extended his hand to Chou En-lai, his vision ended more than two decades of isolation. //

"Being President," he often said, "is nothing compared with what you can do as President." Mr. President, you worked with every fiber of your being to help achieve "A Generation of Peace." //

Today, as the movement toward democracy sweeps our globe, you can take great pride that history will call you one of its architects.

There have been, literally, millions of words written about Richard Nixon. But let me close with a passage from the President himself. It comes from his first Inaugural Address -- January 20, 1969 -- where the new President spoke of how "the greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker."//

He began by noting that within the lifetime of most present, mankind would celebrate a new year which occurs only once in a thousand years -- the start of a new millennium. And that America had the chance to "lead the world onto that high ground of peace that man has dreamed of since the dawn of civilization."

Finally, Richard Nixon concluded: "If we succeed, generations to come will say of us that we helped make the world safe for mankind. I believe the American people are ready to answer this call." //

Mr. President, you helped America answer its "summons to greatness." You made a difference for the Nation that you loved. // Thank you for serving the cause of peace. And for believing in -- and making real -- a touch of the American Dream. //

God bless you and your family. God bless America. And now, it is my distinct pleasure and honor to introduce the 37th President of the United States.

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Look, next, to Michigan -- where a museum and library honors the 38th President of the United States, Gerald Ford, and Mrs. Ford. An entire Nation is grateful for your leadership and love of country. //

Tomorrow morning, the first visitors will enter our newest Presidential Library and Birthplace. They will note that only FDR ran as many times as Richard Nixon -- five -- for national office: Each winning four elections. And that more people voted for Richard Nixon as President than any man in history. // They will hear of Horatio Alger and Alger Hiss. Of the book, six Crises, and the seventh crisis, Watergate. // They will think of Checkers -- Millie's role model. // And, yes, Mr. President, your answer to my "Vision thing" -- "Let me make this perfectly clear." //

Many of these visitors will know of your times as President: Perhaps as tumultuous as any since Lincoln's. And of your goal as President: A world where peace would link the community of nations. Yet other young visitors will not remember the years

1969-74. They had not even been born when Richard Nixon became President. So to help them understand our 37th President, here is what I would tell those who journey to Yorba Linda. //

I would say, first: Look at perhaps the truest index of any man -- his family. Think of his mother -- a gentle Quaker - - and his father, who built their small frame house less than 100 yards from here. And his daughters, Tricia and Julie. Any parent would be proud of children with the loyalty and love of these two women. // Think, finally, of a gracious First Lady who ranks among the most admired woman of post-World War II America. The woman we know, and love, as Pat. //

As First Lady, Pat Nixon championed the Right to Read program, and brought the "Parks to People" program to the disabled and disadvantaged. She refurbished the White House and opened it to more Americans than ever before. She was our most widely traveled First Lady -- visiting five continents and 22 Nations. Overcoming the poverty and tragedy of her childhood to become a mirror of America's heart, and love. // When, in 1958, foreign mobs stoned the Nixons' car, she was, a reporter said, "stronger than any man." Yet it was also Pat who moved pianist Duke Ellington, at a White House dinner, to improvise a melody. "I shall pick a name," he said, "gentle, graceful -- like Patricia." // Mrs. Nixon, the Secret Service called you "Starlight." Your husband has said it best: You "fit that name to a T." //

Next, I would say to visitors here: Look at Richard Nixon the man. // He had an intellectual's complexity. He was an author / eight books // each composed on his famous yellow legal pads // who, like his favorite author, Tolstoy, admired the dignity of manual labor. He worked in the most pragmatic of arenas -- yet insisted that "politics is poetry, not prose." // He believed in love of country, and God -- in loyalty to friends, and protecting loved ones. He was also a soft touch when it came to kids. // Believe me, I can empathize. //

((Let me repeat a story which President Nixon himself enjoys. // One day, greeting an airport crowd, he heard a young girl shouting, "How is Smokey the Bear?" // at that time, living in the Washington Zoo. The girl kept repeating the question. Not understanding her words, the President turned to an aide for translation. // "Smokey the Bear," the aide mumbled, pointing to the girl. "Washington National Zoo." // Triumphant, President Nixon walked over, extended his hand, and said: "How do you do / Miss Bear?")) ///

Now, I'm not one to criticize verbal confusion. After all, some say English is my only foreign language. // President Nixon was merely being kind. Just as he mailed hand-written letters to defeated rivals like his dear friend Hubert Humphrey. Or saw that when the POWS returned home in early '73 to a White House Dinner, each wife received a corsage. // Richard Nixon was extraordinarily controversial. He could also be uncommonly sensitive to the feelings of other people. //

This brings me to what I would next tell those who travel to Yorba Linda. What President Nixon said of Dwight Eisenhower in a 1969 eulogy was true, also, of himself: He "came from the heart of America." Not geographically, perhaps, but culturally. //

Richard Nixon was the quintessence of Middle America, and touched deep chords of response in millions of her citizens. As President, upholding what he termed the "Silent Majority" from Dallas to Davenport, Syracuse to Siler City. // He loved America's good, quiet, decent people; he spoke for them; he felt, deeply, on their behalf. // Theodore White would say: "Middle America had been without a great leader for generations, and in Richard Nixon it . . . elevated a man of talent and ability." // For millions of Americans, this President became something they had rarely known: A voice -- speaking loudly, and eloquently, for their values and their dreams. //

Finally, and most importantly, I would say to visitors: Richard Nixon helped change the course not only of America but of the entire world. He believed in returning power to the people. So he created revenue sharing. // And that young people should be free to choose their futures. So Richard Nixon ended the draft. // He helped the United States reach new horizons in space and technology. Began a pioneering cancer initiative that gave hope and life to millions. // He knew that the great outdoors is precious, but fragile. So he created the Environmental Protection Agency -- an historic step to help preserve, and wisely use, our natural resources. //

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All of this Richard Nixon did. Yet the most positive aspects of his Presidency will relate to his dedicating his life to the greatest cause offered any President -- the cause of peace among Nations. //

Richard Nixon believed that true peace means the triumph of freedom -- not merely the absence of war. So he endured much in his quest for "Peace With Honor" in Viet Nam. // Yet he also understood America's special mission to end the brutality of war. So he engaged in diplomatic summitry -- and helped change the post-war bi-polar globe. //

Who can forget how in Moscow, President Nixon signed the first agreement of the nuclear age to protect our environment and limit strategic nuclear arms? // Or how he planted the first fragile seeds of peace in the Middle East: Golda Meir credited him with saving Israel during the Yom Kippur War. // Even now, memories resound of President Nixon's trip to China -- the week that revolutionized the world. No American President had ever stood on the soil of the People's Republic of China. As Richard Nixon stepped from Air Force One and extended his hand to Chou En-lai, his vision ended more than two decades of isolation. // "Being President," he often said, "is nothing compared with what you can do as President." Mr. President, you worked with every fiber of your being to help achieve "A Generation of Peace." // Today, as the movement toward democracy sweeps our globe, you can take great pride that history will say of you: "Here was a true architect of peace."

There have been, literally, millions of words written about Richard Nixon. But let me close with a passage from the President himself. It comes from his first Inaugural Address -- January 20, 1969 -- where the new President spoke of how "the greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker."//

He began by noting that within the lifetime of most present, mankind would celebrate a new year which occurs only once in a thousand years -- the start of a new millennium. And that America had the chance to "lead the world onto that high ground of peace that man has dreamed of since the dawn of civilization."

Finally, Richard Nixon concluded: "If we succeeded, generations to come will say of us that we helped make the world safe for mankind. I believe the American people are ready to answer this call." //

Mr. President, you helped America answer its "summons to greatness." You made a difference for the Nation that you loved. // Thank you for serving the cause of peace. And for believing in -- and making real -- a touch of the American Dream. //

God bless you and your family. And now, it is my distinct pleasure and honor to introduce the 37th President of the United States.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Anaheim, California)

For Immediate Release

July 19, 1990

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT GERALD FORD,  
PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN,  
PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH  
AND PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON  
DURING DEDICATION OF NIXON LIBRARY

Yorba Linda, California

10:38 A.M. PDT

PRESIDENT FORD: Thank you very, very much, Governor Deukmejian. Mr. President, Mr. President, Mr. President -- (laughter) -- if I've overlooked a president -- (laughter) -- will you please stand up. (Laughter.) I'm, frankly, terrified that I might botch up the protocol for first ladies, so I'll simply salute with great respect and tremendous admiration Barbara, Pat, Nancy and Betty. (Applause.)

Betty and I are delighted to be here, among so many long-time friends. Because our lives have been intertwined with the remarkable career of a native son of California, who was born in that house right over there and who is sitting right here. So, you see, you can come home again. (Applause.)

During World War II, the 37th and the 38th presidents of the United States were wearing Navy lieutenant uniforms somewhere in the South Pacific. But our courses never did converge. My first meeting with Dick Nixon came in January of 1949 at the start of the 81st Congress. When I was sworn in as a freshman member, Congressman Dick Nixon was a veteran second-termer, already renowned as the nemesis of Alger Hiss. Quite frankly, you never really forget the senior members who treat you kindly and give you a hand when you come to the Congress.

Betty and Pat became good friends while their husbands oftentimes neglected them in the pursuit of things that we thought important -- very wrongly.

In 1951, as you may remember, Dick, I invited Senator Nixon, who had meanwhile moved to the other body, to come to our annual Lincoln Day Dinner in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He came to the old Rowe Hotel; have his typical stem-winding, rock-and-sock-em campaign speech. The only problem -- both the lights and the microphone went off at the climax of his speech. Dick passed it off with a joke. But despite the blackout, or despite the joke, I was reelected to the last Republican House we have had in four decades. My guest was elected Vice President, and we all thought the Republic was safe forever.

I could go on reminiscing -- Betty says I usually do. But permit me a closing thought about the future. My best remembered prophesy was to say in 1976 that Poland was not and would never be under the domination of the Soviet Union. (Laughter and applause.) As you all know, I took quite a bit of heat. But I said it and I'm glad. (Laughter and applause.) Because I personally felt the warmth and longing for freedom of the Polish people in both Warsaw and Krakow on my way to the Helsinki Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe.

I also recall Vice President Nixon's tumultuous welcome by the Poles after challenging Nikita Khrushchev to a test of which system -- ours or theirs -- better produced the life, a good life for

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their citizens.

In Helsinki, I told the leaders of 33 European nations, including the Soviet Union and its Eastern allies, that it took 11 years for the noble ideals and the brave hopes of our American Declaration of Independence to be embodied as enforceable rights in our Constitution; that peace was not a piece of paper, nor the results of promises made, but of promises kept. I warned Chairman Brezhnev and the other signers that "we had better say what we mean and mean what we say, or we will have the anger of our citizens to answer."

Now, 15 years later, the future of Europe's freedom seems much, much brighter. The collapse of communist economies and peaceful reform of their political regimes appears irreversible. The prospects for peace are better than at any time since the end of World War II.

In 1945, the four presidents here today took off their military uniforms, as did many of you in this audience, resolved to preserve the hard-won peace through strength and freedom. Dick Nixon and I, as members of the Congress, strongly supported President Truman's Marshall Plan, his timely aid to Greece and Turkey, his firm action against communist aggression in Korea, and his proposal for NATO. Vice President Nixon supported President Eisenhower's leadership for peace through the North Atlantic Alliance, as I did in the House.

Later, Representative George Bush and I in the Congress, Governor Reagan in California, and President Nixon in the White House sought ways to bring an honorable end to the tragedy of Vietnam. We all, in various responsibilities during the '70s and '80s, sought to maintain and greatly strengthen America's leadership in the struggle between freedom and repression. But the crucial point is this: and so have all of you.

And so have the majority of Americans for the last 45 years. The American people have stood solidly for individual rights and freedom for others. This is no time to rest on our oars. Rather it is now the time to redouble our devotion to these enduring ideals.

It does not diminish the roles many others in our country have played in the expansion of democratic freedoms to say that you, Dick Nixon, have the gratitude of men and women everywhere who cherish peace with liberty. Because you loved your country and because you had the courage to serve, this day is a celebration richly deserved by you and by Pat. (Applause.)

It is now my great pleasure and a special honor to introduce an outstanding former First Lady, Mrs. Nancy Reagan. (Applause.) Ladies and gentlemen, it's a very high honor and a very great privilege for me to introduce the 40th President of the United States, the honorable Ronald Reagan. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT REAGAN: Thank you. Thank you very much, President Ford. Mr. President, Mrs. Bush; President and Mrs. Ford; our very distinguished honorees, the 37th President of the United States and Mrs. Nixon, and ladies and gentlemen.

Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking -- (laughter) -- I'll borrow a line from Henry VIII, who said to each of his six wives, "I won't keep you long." (Laughter.) But I do want to say how honored Nancy and I are to be part of this wonderful ceremony and to share a few thoughts about a man who has been so important and influential in history.

We're gathered here today to pay tribute to a man who has been part of our lives for almost half a century, and to welcome to California this presidential library which will tell the story of this very special man and of his unique contribution to the cause of world peace.

Much has been written and said about Richard Nixon. Some of it's even been true. (Laughter.) Journalists, historians, political pundits and just plain folks will talk for decades about his career and what it meant to our country and to the world. It will come as no surprise to anyone here that there will always be a good deal of debate about Richard Nixon.

Generally speaking, people in public life who take bold steps, who make tough decisions, and who show great courage generate controversy. Such is the fate of the man in the arena. But about two points, there can be no debate. First, Richard Nixon is a patriot. He is a man who has dedicated his life in service to a country he deeply loves. He believes in America and the American people. Since he was a young man and throughout his adult life, Richard Nixon has worked not for his own well-being, but for the betterment of our society.

During the time I served as Governor of California, Nancy and I had the honor of representing President Nixon on several trips abroad. We were always proud to be his emissary to other world leaders and were always impressed by the deep respect they had for President Nixon.

And that brings me to the second point: Richard Nixon is a man who understands the world. He understands politics, power, and the forces of history. Whether with Mao or Brezhnev, De Gaulle or Gandhi, President Nixon was the first among equals. A man whose foreign policy was universally acknowledged as brilliant.

Accomplishments of the Nixon foreign policy will go down in history as truly great. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say the world is a better place, a safer place because of Richard Nixon. (Applause.)

We always knew that when President Nixon took his place at the negotiating table the United States was represented by a man whose knowledge was second to none. During my eight years in the White House, I relied on his insight and wisdom, and I will always be grateful for the benefit of his seasoned expertise. Even now, as a former president, Richard Nixon continues to be a major player on the world scene -- and that is as it should be.

I cannot conclude my remarks here without telling you how happy Nancy and I are -- and I suspect I speak for all of us here today -- to be with our very dear friend, Pat Nixon. (Applause.) A loyal wife, a caring mother and grandmother, Pat Nixon was one of our nation's most gracious first ladies. She was a superbly charming hostess, whether in Washington or San Clemente. And she represented our country splendidly when she traveled abroad. She is a true unsung hero of the Nixon administration, and our country owes her a great debt of gratitude. (Applause.)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you've already done what I was just going to ask you, and that was to join me now in a show of our affection and appreciation for this very special lady. (Applause.)

And speaking of first ladies, it's a great delight to share this stage today with our current First Lady, Barbara Bush, a tireless crusader for literacy -- (applause) -- a compassionate and gentle lady whose warmth has touched us all. Barbara is making all of us proud. (Applause.)

Besides that, she's married to a friend of mine -- (laughter) -- who it is my high honor to introduce. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you all very, very much. What a wonderful reunion. And I am very proud to have been introduced to this gathering by Ronald Reagan. I know how I got here. (Laughter.) President Reagan is my mentor and my esteemed friend. (Applause.) And I will always be grateful to him.

But to President and Mrs. Nixon, Barbara and I are delighted to be with you on this memorable day. My special greetings to all my predecessors -- to President and Mrs. Reagan, to President and Mrs. Ford -- to members of the Nixon family, who are right out here; to Secretary Simon, who has done such a superb job on all of this; to my current Secretary of Commerce Bob Mosbacher and, of course, to our old friend, your own Governor George Deukmejian. (Applause.) To all these Cabinet officials out here -- former Secretary Haig and Secretary Schultz, and I'm told that Chief Justice Warren Burger was there. All the senior members of the Nixon administration. Of course, all of our friend, Reverend Billy Graham. And Reverend Peale and Ambassador Moore, all the way from Ireland; and Ambassador Annenberg, and Ambassador Zhu-qizhen of China, welcome, sir. To Hugh Hewitt and Vicky Carr, and ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. President, once again, for that introduction. (Applause.)

I'm not sure, President Reagan, whether it's you or me that attracted this noise over here, but I remember as Vice President, you had your share of this kind of attention. (Laughter.) But let me just say to all of you, our thanks for the privilege of helping to dedicate this beautiful library of the 37th President of the United States of America.

To Lincoln, the presidency helped play -- as he put it -- "America's mystic chords of memory." Shall we wait just one minute? And to Teddy Roosevelt, the presidency meant the "bully pulpit" -- calling on America's boundless energy. And it was Dwight Eisenhower, beloved Ike, who described its power "to proclaim anew our faith" and summon "lightness against the dark."

To occupy this office is to feel a kinship with these and other presidents, each of whom in his own way sought to do right and, thus, to achieve good. Each summoned the best from the idea we call America, and each wondered, I suspect, how he could be worthy of God and man.

This year, an estimated 1.5 million people will visit presidential museums and libraries, exploring the lives of these presidents, passed down, like oral history, from one generation to another. And they will see how each president is like a finely-cut prism with many facets -- their achievements and their philosophy; their family and their humanity.

For instance, not far from here, as we've heard, visitors will soon see the library of my distinguished predecessor, the 40th President of the United States, and Mrs. Reagan. President Reagan, we will not soon forget how you truly blessed America. (Applause.)

Look next to Michigan, where a museum and library honor the 38th President of the United States Gerald Ford, and Mrs. Ford. (Applause.) An entire nation is grateful for your decency, your leadership and your love of country.

And tomorrow morning, the first visitors will enter our newest presidential library, and they will note that only FDR ran as many times as Richard Nixon -- five -- for national office. Each winning four elections. And that more people voted for Richard Nixon as President than any other man in history. (Applause.) They will hear of Horatio Alger and Alger Hiss; of the book, Six Crises; and the seventh crisis, Watergate; and they will think of Checkers -- Millie's role model. (Laughter.) And, yes, Mr. President, they will hear again your answer to my "vision thing" -- "Let me make this perfectly clear." (Laughter.)

And many of these visitors will know of your times as President, perhaps as tumultuous as any since Lincoln's, and of your goal as President -- a world where peace would link the Community of Nations. And yet, others, young visitors, will not remember the years 1969 to '74. They'd not even been born when Richard Nixon

became President. So to help them understand our 37th President, here is what I would tell those who journey to Yorba Linda.

I would say first, look at perhaps the truest index of any man -- his family. Think of his mother, a gentle Quaker; and his father who built their small frame house that we see less than 100 yards from here; and his daughters, Patricia and Julie. Any parent would be proud of children with the loyalty and love of these two women. (Applause.)

And think finally of a very gracious First Lady who ranks among the most admired women of postwar America, the woman who we know and love as Pat. (Applause.) As First Lady, we remember Pat Nixon championed the Right To Read program; helped bring the Parks To People program to the disadvantaged. She refurbished the White House and opened it to more people than ever before. And she was widely -- she was our most widely-traveled First Lady, visiting five continents and 22 nations, overcoming the poverty and tragedy of her childhood to become a mirror of America's heart and love. And when, in 1958, foreign mobs stoned the Nixon's car, she was, an observer said, "stronger than any man." And yet, it was also Pat who moved pianist Duke Ellington at a White House dinner to improvise the melody -- "I shall pick a name," he said, "gentle, graceful, like Patricia."

Mrs. Nixon, the Secret Service called you "Starlight," and your husband has said it best: "You fit that name to a T." So once again, I won't ask you to stand up again -- you've already done it. But let us show our appreciation for the grace and the beauty that Pat Nixon brought to the White House. (Applause.)

And then next I would say to visitors here, look at Richard Nixon the man. He had an intellectual's complexity. Knowing how you feel about some intellectuals, Mr. President, I don't mean to offend you. But -- (laughter) -- he was an author -- eight books each composed on those famous yellow pads, who like his favorite author, Tolstoy, admired the dignity of manual labor. And he worked in the most pragmatic of arenas and yet insisted that politics is poetry, not prose. And he believed in love of country and in God, in loyalty to friends and protecting loved ones. And he was also a soft touch when it came to the kids -- believe me, I can empathize with that.

Let me repeat a story which President Nixon, himself, enjoys -- I hope he enjoys it. One day greeting an airport crowd he heard a young girl shouting, "How is Smokey the Bear" -- and at that time living in the Washington Zoo. And the girl kept repeating the question. And not understanding her words, the President turned to an aide for translation -- "Smokey the Bear," the aide mumbled pointing to the girl, "Washington National Zoo." Triumphant, President Nixon walked over, extended his hand and said, "How do you do, Miss Bear." (Laughter.)

I'd be the last to criticize verbal confusion, after all I confess some say English is my only foreign language. (Laughter.) President Nixon, the point is he was merely being kind, just as he mailed those handwritten letters to defeated rivals like his friend Hubert Humphrey or saw that when the POWs returned home in early '73 to a White House dinner, each wife received a corsage.

Just as Richard Nixon was extraordinarily controversial, he could also be uncommonly sensitive to the feelings of other people. This brings me to what I would next tell those who travel to Yorba Linda. What President Nixon said of Dwight Eisenhower in a '69 eulogy was true, also of himself -- "He came from the heart of America, not geographically perhaps but culturally." And Richard Nixon was the quintessence of middle America and touched deep chords of response in millions of our citizens. As President, upholding what he termed the "silent majority" from Dallas to Davenport and Syracuse to Siler City he loved America's good, quiet, decent people. And he spoke for them. He felt deeply on their behalf.

Teddy White, Theodore White, would say, "Middle America

has been without a great leader for generations and in Richard Nixon it elevated a man of talent and ability." For millions of Americans this President became something they had rarely known -- a voice speaking loudly and eloquently for those values, their values and their dreams.

And finally, and most importantly, I would say to visitors Richard Nixon helped changed the course, not only of America but of the entire world. He believed in returning power to the people; so he created revenue sharing. And that young people should be free to choose their future; so Richard Nixon ended the draft. And he helped the United States reach new horizons in space and technology. He began a pioneering cancer initiative that gave hope and life to millions. And he knew that the great outdoors is precious but fragile and so he created the Environmental Protection Agency, a historic step to help preserve and widely use our natural resources. (Applause.)

And all of this Richard Nixon did and yet future generations will remember him most, in my view, for dedicating his life to the greatest cause offered any president -- the cause of peace among nations. Who can forget how he endured much in his quest for peace with honor in Vietnam. He knew that true peace means the triumph of freedom, not merely the absence of war. And as President he served this country's special mission to help those around the world for whom America has always been a morning star of liberty. Engaging in diplomatic summitry and helping change the post-war bipolar globe.

Who can forget how in Moscow Richard Nixon signed the first agreement to limit strategic nuclear arms, giving new hope to the world for lasting peace. Or how he planted the first fragile seeds of peace in the Middle East and Golda Meir, whose statue is inside, credited him with saving Israel during the Yom Kippur War. And even now, memories resound of President Nixon's trip to China -- the week that revolutionized the world. No American president had ever stood on the soil of the People's Republic of China and as President Nixon stepped from Air Force One and extended his hand to Chou En Lai, his vision ended more than two decades of isolation.

"Being president," he often said, "is nothing compared with what you can do as president." Mr. President, you worked with every fiber of your being to help achieve a generation of peace. And today as the movement toward democracy sweeps our globe, you can take great personal pride that history will say of you here was a true architect of peace. (Applause.)

Yes, there have been literally millions of words written about this President. But let me close with a passage from the President himself that comes from his first inaugural address, January 20, 1969, where the new President spoke of how the greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker. And he began by noting that within the lifetime of most present, mankind would celebrate a new year which occurs only once in a thousand years -- the start of a new millennium. And that America had the chance to lead the world onto that high ground of peace that man has dreamed of since the dawn of civilization.

And finally, Richard Nixon concluded, "if we succeed generations to come will say of us that we helped make the world safe for mankind. I believe the American people are ready to answer this call," he said.

Mr. President, you helped America answer its summons to greatness. Thank you for serving the cause of peace. God bless you and your wonderful family. And now it is my honor, as President of the United States, to introduce the 37th President of the United States, Richard M. Nixon. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT NIXON: Thank you. Mr. President, may I express my deep appreciation for that much-too-generous introduction. Over the past 44 years since I've been in public life, I have been

introduced to literally thousands of audiences all over the world. This is the first time I've ever been introduced by the President of the United States. (Applause.) I express my appreciation to my other colleagues, former presidents, for their gracious comments -- not only about me, but particularly about my wife, Pat. This is a very special day for us.

I think that I speak for all of those in this great audience today in expressing appreciation not only to President Bush and Barbara Bush, but also to President Ford and President Reagan and their ladies, that they are here today. This is a very special occasion because there are four presidents here. But what makes it even more special is that for the first time in the inauguration of a library, four first ladies are here. (Applause.)

I think all of my colleagues would agree that there is no more important a position for a career than a woman could have than to be a first lady, the wife of the President of the United States. Or as First Lady Barbara Bush might put it in the future, there could be no more important career for a man than to be the husband of the President of the United States. (Applause.)

I want to express appreciation to all of you who have made this facility possible and to all of you who have come on this day to participate in this ceremony with us. It's been a great day for us, and it's one that we will always remember.

Over the past years, Pat and I have had the opportunity to visit some wonderful places. We've been to Versailles, we've been to Westminster, to the Kremlin, to the Great Wall of China, to Angkor Wat in Cambodia. I must say that many of them were memorable experiences -- all of them were, in fact. But nothing we have ever seen matches this moment -- to be welcomed home again so warmly on this day by our friends in California. (Applause.)

I hope all of you will have an opportunity to take a tour of the library and, I hope that you will, when you see there, you will share some of the things that my colleagues, the former presidents, and President Bush have referred to. What you will see, among other things, is a personal life -- the influence of a strong family, of inspirational ministers, of great teachers. You will see a political life -- running for Congress, running for the Senate, running for governor, running for president three times. Won some, lost some. All interesting. (Laughter and applause.) And you will see, also, the life of a great nation -- 77 years of it. A period in which we had unprecedented progress for the United States. And you will see great leaders -- leaders who changed the world, who helped to make the world what we have today.

Seeing those things will certainly be interesting. But let me remind you that when you go through this library, I hope you will remember that while the past is interesting, it is important only insofar as it points the way to a better future. And that is why we are here today, to talk about that better future. (Applause.)

As I look back over life, I can think what has happened in the years since I was born in this little house 71 years ago. I have many memories -- some of them good, some of them not so good. But I do know that as far as that life is concerned, I am glad that I had the opportunity to come from here and go as far as I have.

Let me say that as far as the past is concerned, though, remember: what is important is what it tells us about the future.

My friend, Paul McCracken, from the University of Michigan, sent me a little poem that graphically makes that point. He said, "The lightning bug is brilliant, but it doesn't have a mind. It travels through creation with its headlight on behind." (Laughter.) And so as far as we're concerned, let us learn from the past, but let us always keep our headlight on the road ahead.

Looking back over the years, when I think of what has

happened in those 77 years, I remember that, 70 years ago in that little house, I used to lie in bed, I'd hear a train whistle in the middle of the night, and I would dream of places far away that I hoped to visit someday. I never dreamed that I would ever have the opportunity to visit over 80 countries during the period of my lifetime.

I must say that as far as those visits are concerned, they taught me something. You will hear sometimes these days that the United States is in decline, that we have seen our best days. You will hear that the United States no longer has the means or the will to play a great role in the world. Don't you believe it. (Applause.)

I can tell you what I have found in my travels. In my travels to other countries, I have found some people who like us. I have found some people who have envy us. I have found some people who hate us. But most of the people in the world know in their hearts that without the leadership of the United States of America, peace and freedom would not survive in the world. (Applause.)

It is our privilege to provide that leadership. That is why I would trust that all of you here and all of you listening on television and on radio would give President Bush your wholehearted support as he works for that kind of leadership for the United States of America. (Applause.)

This is not a burden to be borne grimly, but it's a great challenge. Look at what the challenge is. I was born a year before World War I began. And in my lifetime, more people were killed in wars than in all the wars fought in the history of civilization before the 20th century began. Our challenge today is looking ahead to deal with that problem. The 20th century will be remembered as a century of war. Our challenge is to help make the 21st century of peace. (Applause.)

But peace is not our only goal. Our goal, also, is to remember why we are here, what America really means to the world. And so as we consider our challenges beyond peace, let history record that we just did not save the world from communism, but that we helped to make the world safe for freedom. That is the great challenge for Americans today. (Applause.)

Let our goal be that all people in the world can enjoy what most Americans enjoy -- the blessings of freedom, of justice, of progress. That was a dream that was impossible in times past. But because of recent developments, it is a dream that can now come true.

So with this challenge in mind, let us look also to where we have been and where we are going. As I look back on those years, 77 in all, but I remember that in the period of that time that I have seen many things happen in the world. And I know that as I stand here, that we are very fortunate as Americans to have played a role in what has happened.

In 1971, after a White House state dinner, a splendid musical group from California entertained the audience. At the conclusion of the program, the chairman, or I should say, the leader of the group asked to say a few words. He expressed appreciation for being invited to appear at the White House. And then he concluded by saying, "You know, it's a long way from Watts to the White House." He was right. But let me tell you -- it's a long way from Yorba Linda to the White House, too. (Applause.)

I have made that journey, and I want to see a country in which every young American can have the opportunity to make that journey. It doesn't mean that all will make it. We all can't be president. We all can't be congressmen or senator or governors -- I found that out. (Laughter.) But on the other hand, let us always make sure for the young Americans that the road ahead is never blocked by prejudice or ignorance or poverty. And that he or she can go as hard as his or her talents will take them. That is the goal

that we want for young Americans today. (Applause.)

Because there are so many young people here today, may I add a word to you. I believe in the American dream because I have seen it come true in my own life. And I want you to know that as far as you're concerned, I want your dreams to come true as well. You will suffer disappointments in life and sometimes you will be very discouraged. It is sad to lose. But the greatest sadness is to travel through life without knowing either victory or defeat. Always remember that only when during your lifetime you are involved in a cause greater than yourself can you be truly true to yourself. (Applause.)

So with those points in mind, may I leave also this final thought. Remember that there couldn't be a better time to be alive than now. There couldn't be a better country in which to be born and in which to live than now because you hold the future in your hands. (Applause.)

END

11:27 A.M. PDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Anaheim, California)

For Immediate Release

July 19, 1990

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT GERALD FORD,  
PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN,  
PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH  
AND PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON  
DURING DEDICATION OF NIXON LIBRARY

Yorba Linda, California

10:38 A.M. PDT

PRESIDENT FORD: Thank you very, very much, Governor Deukmejian. Mr. President, Mr. President, Mr. President -- (laughter) -- if I've overlooked a president -- (laughter) -- will you please stand up. (Laughter.) I'm, frankly, terrified that I might botch up the protocol for first ladies, so I'll simply salute with great respect and tremendous admiration Barbara, Pat, Nancy and Betty. (Applause.)

Betty and I are delighted to be here, among so many long-time friends. Because our lives have been intertwined with the remarkable career of a native son of California, who was born in that house right over there and who is sitting right here. So, you see, you can come home again. (Applause.)

During World War II, the 37th and the 38th presidents of the United States were wearing Navy lieutenant uniforms somewhere in the South Pacific. But our courses never did converge. My first meeting with Dick Nixon came in January of 1949 at the start of the 81st Congress. When I was sworn in as a freshman member, Congressman Dick Nixon was a veteran second-termer, already renowned as the nemesis of Alger Hiss. Quite frankly, you never really forget the senior members who treat you kindly and give you a hand when you come to the Congress.

Betty and Pat became good friends while their husbands oftentimes neglected them in the pursuit of things that we thought important -- very wrongly.

In 1951, as you may remember, Dick, I invited Senator Nixon, who had meanwhile moved to the other body, to come to our annual Lincoln Day Dinner in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He came to the old Rowe Hotel; have his typical stem-winding, rock-and-sock-em campaign speech. The only problem -- both the lights and the microphone went off at the climax of his speech. Dick passed it off with a joke. But despite the blackout, or despite the joke, I was reelected to the last Republican House we have had in four decades. My guest was elected Vice President, and we all thought the Republic was safe forever.

I could go on reminiscing -- Betty says I usually do. But permit me a closing thought about the future. My best remembered prophesy was to say in 1976 that Poland was not and would never be under the domination of the Soviet Union. (Laughter and applause.) As you all know, I took quite a bit of heat. But I said it and I'm glad. (Laughter and applause.) Because I personally felt the warmth and longing for freedom of the Polish people in both Warsaw and Krakow on my way to the Helsinki Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe.

I also recall Vice President Nixon's tumultuous welcome by the Poles after challenging Nikita Khrushchev to a test of which system -- ours or theirs -- better produced the life, a good life for

MORE

their citizens.

In Helsinki, I told the leaders of 33 European nations, including the Soviet Union and its Eastern allies, that it took 11 years for the noble ideals and the brave hopes of our American Declaration of Independence to be embodied as enforceable rights in our Constitution; that peace was not a piece of paper, nor the results of promises made, but of promises kept. I warned Chairman Brezhnev and the other signers that "we had better say what we mean and mean what we say, or we will have the anger of our citizens to answer."

Now, 15 years later, the future of Europe's freedom seems much, much brighter. The collapse of communist economies and peaceful reform of their political regimes appears irreversible. The prospects for peace are better than at any time since the end of World War II.

In 1945, the four presidents here today took off their military uniforms, as did many of you in this audience, resolved to preserve the hard-won peace through strength and freedom. Dick Nixon and I, as members of the Congress, strongly supported President Truman's Marshall Plan, his timely aid to Greece and Turkey, his firm action against communist aggression in Korea, and his proposal for NATO. Vice President Nixon supported President Eisenhower's leadership for peace through the North Atlantic Alliance, as I did in the House.

Later, Representative George Bush and I in the Congress, Governor Reagan in California, and President Nixon in the White House sought ways to bring an honorable end to the tragedy of Vietnam. We all, in various responsibilities during the '70s and '80s, sought to maintain and greatly strengthen America's leadership in the struggle between freedom and repression. But the crucial point is this: and so have all of you.

And so have the majority of Americans for the last 45 years. The American people have stood solidly for individual rights and freedom for others. This is no time to rest on our oars. Rather it is now the time to redouble our devotion to these enduring ideals.

It does not diminish the roles many others in our country have played in the expansion of democratic freedoms to say that you, Dick Nixon, have the gratitude of men and women everywhere who cherish peace with liberty. Because you loved your country and because you had the courage to serve, this day is a celebration richly deserved by you and by Pat. (Applause.)

It is now my great pleasure and a special honor to introduce an outstanding former First Lady, Mrs. Nancy Reagan. (Applause.) Ladies and gentlemen, it's a very high honor and a very great privilege for me to introduce the 40th President of the United States, the honorable Ronald Reagan. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT REAGAN: Thank you. Thank you very much, President Ford. Mr. President, Mrs. Bush; President and Mrs. Ford; our very distinguished honorees, the 37th President of the United States and Mrs. Nixon, and ladies and gentlemen.

Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking -- (laughter) -- I'll borrow a line from Henry VIII, who said to each of his six wives, "I won't keep you long." (Laughter.) But I do want to say how honored Nancy and I are to be part of this wonderful ceremony and to share a few thoughts about a man who has been so important and influential in history.

We're gathered here today to pay tribute to a man who has been part of our lives for almost half a century, and to welcome to California this presidential library which will tell the story of this very special man and of his unique contribution to the cause of world peace.

Much has been written and said about Richard Nixon. Some of it's even been true. (Laughter.) Journalists, historians, political pundits and just plain folks will talk for decades about his career and what it meant to our country and to the world. It will come as no surprise to anyone here that there will always be a good deal of debate about Richard Nixon.

Generally speaking, people in public life who take bold steps, who make tough decisions, and who show great courage generate controversy. Such is the fate of the man in the arena. But about two points, there can be no debate. First, Richard Nixon is a patriot. He is a man who has dedicated his life in service to a country he deeply loves. He believes in America and the American people. Since he was a young man and throughout his adult life, Richard Nixon has worked not for his own well-being, but for the betterment of our society.

During the time I served as Governor of California, Nancy and I had the honor of representing President Nixon on several trips abroad. We were always proud to be his emissary to other world leaders and were always impressed by the deep respect they had for President Nixon.

And that brings me to the second point: Richard Nixon is a man who understands the world. He understands politics, power, and the forces of history. Whether with Mao or Brezhnev, De Gaulle or Gandhi, President Nixon was the first among equals. A man whose foreign policy was universally acknowledged as brilliant.

Accomplishments of the Nixon foreign policy will go down in history as truly great. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say the world is a better place, a safer place because of Richard Nixon. (Applause.)

We always knew that when President Nixon took his place at the negotiating table the United States was represented by a man whose knowledge was second to none. During my eight years in the White House, I relied on his insight and wisdom, and I will always be grateful for the benefit of his seasoned expertise. Even now, as a former president, Richard Nixon continues to be a major player on the world scene -- and that is as it should be.

I cannot conclude my remarks here without telling you how happy Nancy and I are -- and I suspect I speak for all of us here today -- to be with our very dear friend, Pat Nixon. (Applause.) A loyal wife, a caring mother and grandmother, Pat Nixon was one of our nation's most gracious first ladies. She was a superbly charming hostess, whether in Washington or San Clemente. And she represented our country splendidly when she traveled abroad. She is a true unsung hero of the Nixon administration, and our country owes her a great debt of gratitude. (Applause.)

Now, ladies and gentlemen, you've already done what I was just going to ask you, and that was to join me now in a show of our affection and appreciation for this very special lady. (Applause.)

And speaking of first ladies, it's a great delight to share this stage today with our current First Lady, Barbara Bush, a tireless crusader for literacy -- (applause) -- a compassionate and gentle lady whose warmth has touched us all. Barbara is making all of us proud. (Applause.)

Besides that, she's married to a friend of mine -- (laughter) -- who it is my high honor to introduce. Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT BUSH: Thank you all very, very much. What a wonderful reunion. And I am very proud to have been introduced to this gathering by Ronald Reagan. I know how I got here. (Laughter.) President Reagan is my mentor and my esteemed friend. (Applause.) And I will always be grateful to him.

But to President and Mrs. Nixon, Barbara and I are delighted to be with you on this memorable day. My special greetings to all my predecessors -- to President and Mrs. Reagan, to President and Mrs. Ford -- to members of the Nixon family, who are right out here; to Secretary Simon, who has done such a superb job on all of this; to my current Secretary of Commerce Bob Mosbacher and, of course, to our old friend, your own Governor George Deukmejian. (Applause.) To all these Cabinet officials out here -- former Secretary Haig and Secretary Schultz, and I'm told that Chief Justice Warren Burger was there. All the senior members of the Nixon administration. Of course, all of our friend, Reverend Billy Graham. And Reverend Peale and Ambassador Moore, all the way from Ireland; and Ambassador Annenberg, and Ambassador Zhu-qizhen of China, welcome, sir. To Hugh Hewitt and Vicky Carr, and ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. President, once again, for that introduction. (Applause.)

I'm not sure, President Reagan, whether it's you or me that attracted this noise over here, but I remember as Vice President, you had your share of this kind of attention. (Laughter.) But let me just say to all of you, our thanks for the privilege of helping to dedicate this beautiful library of the 37th President of the United States of America.

To Lincoln, the presidency helped play -- as he put it -- "America's mystic chords of memory." Shall we wait just one minute? And to Teddy Roosevelt, the presidency meant the "bully pulpit" -- calling on America's boundless energy. And it was Dwight Eisenhower, beloved Ike, who described its power "to proclaim anew our faith" and summon "lightness against the dark."

To occupy this office is to feel a kinship with these and other presidents, each of whom in his own way sought to do right and, thus, to achieve good. Each summoned the best from the idea we call America, and each wondered, I suspect, how he could be worthy of God and man.

This year, an estimated 1.5 million people will visit presidential museums and libraries, exploring the lives of these presidents, passed down, like oral history, from one generation to another. And they will see how each president is like a finely-cut prism with many facets -- their achievements and their philosophy; their family and their humanity.

For instance, not far from here, as we've heard, visitors will soon see the library of my distinguished predecessor, the 40th President of the United States, and Mrs. Reagan. President Reagan, we will not soon forget how you truly blessed America. (Applause.)

Look next to Michigan, where a museum and library honor the 38th President of the United States Gerald Ford, and Mrs. Ford. (Applause.) An entire nation is grateful for your decency, your leadership and your love of country.

And tomorrow morning, the first visitors will enter our newest presidential library, and they will note that only FDR ran as many times as Richard Nixon -- five -- for national office. Each winning four elections. And that more people voted for Richard Nixon as President than any other man in history. (Applause.) They will hear of Horatio Alger and Alger Hiss; of the book, Six Crises; and the seventh crisis, Watergate; and they will think of Checkers -- Millie's role model. (Laughter.) And, yes, Mr. President, they will hear again your answer to my "vision thing" -- "Let me make this perfectly clear." (Laughter.)

And many of these visitors will know of your times as President, perhaps as tumultuous as any since Lincoln's, and of your goal as President -- a world where peace would link the Community of Nations. And yet, others, young visitors, will not remember the years 1969 to '74. They'd not even been born when Richard Nixon

became President. So to help them understand our 37th President, here is what I would tell those who journey to Yorba Linda.

I would say first, look at perhaps the truest index of any man -- his family. Think of his mother, a gentle Quaker; and his father who built their small frame house that we see less than 100 yards from here; and his daughters, Patricia and Julie. Any parent would be proud of children with the loyalty and love of these two women. (Applause.)

And think finally of a very gracious First Lady who ranks among the most admired women of postwar America, the woman who we know and love as Pat. (Applause.) As First Lady, we remember Pat Nixon championed the Right To Read program; helped bring the Parks To People program to the disadvantaged. She refurbished the White House and opened it to more people than ever before. And she was widely -- she was our most widely-traveled First Lady, visiting five continents and 22 nations, overcoming the poverty and tragedy of her childhood to become a mirror of America's heart and love. And when, in 1958, foreign mobs stoned the Nixon's car, she was, an observer said, "stronger than any man." And yet, it was also Pat who moved pianist Duke Ellington at a White House dinner to improvise the melody -- "I shall pick a name," he said, "gentle, graceful, like Patricia."

Mrs. Nixon, the Secret Service called you "Starlight," and your husband has said it best: "You fit that name to a T." So once again, I won't ask you to stand up again -- you've already done it. But let us show our appreciation for the grace and the beauty that Pat Nixon brought to the White House. (Applause.)

And then next I would say to visitors here, look at Richard Nixon the man. He had an intellectual's complexity. Knowing how you feel about some intellectuals, Mr. President, I don't mean to offend you. But -- (laughter) -- he was an author -- eight books each composed on those famous yellow pads, who like his favorite author, Tolstoy, admired the dignity of manual labor. And he worked in the most pragmatic of arenas and yet insisted that politics is poetry, not prose. And he believed in love of country and in God, in loyalty to friends and protecting loved ones. And he was also a soft touch when it came to the kids -- believe me, I can empathize with that.

Let me repeat a story which President Nixon, himself, enjoys -- I hope he enjoys it. One day greeting an airport crowd he heard a young girl shouting, "How is Smokey the Bear" -- and at that time living in the Washington Zoo. And the girl kept repeating the question. And not understanding her words, the President turned to an aide for translation -- "Smokey the Bear," the aide mumbled pointing to the girl, "Washington National Zoo." Triumphant, President Nixon walked over, extended his hand and said, "How do you do, Miss Bear." (Laughter.)

I'd be the last to criticize verbal confusion, after all I confess some say English is my only foreign language. (Laughter.) President Nixon, the point is he was merely being kind, just as he mailed those handwritten letters to defeated rivals like his friend Hubert Humphrey or saw that when the POWs returned home in early '73 to a White House dinner, each wife received a corsage.

Just as Richard Nixon was extraordinarily controversial, he could also be uncommonly sensitive to the feelings of other people. This brings me to what I would next tell those who travel to Yorba Linda. What President Nixon said of Dwight Eisenhower in a '69 eulogy was true, also of himself -- "He came from the heart of America, not geographically perhaps but culturally." And Richard Nixon was the quintessence of middle America and touched deep chords of response in millions of our citizens. As President, upholding what he termed the "silent majority" from Dallas to Davenport and Syracuse to Siler City he loved America's good, quiet, decent people. And he spoke for them. He felt deeply on their behalf.

Teddy White, Theodore White, would say, "Middle America

has been without a great leader for generations and in Richard Nixon it elevated a man of talent and ability." For millions of Americans this President became something they had rarely known -- a voice speaking loudly and eloquently for those values, their values and their dreams.

And finally, and most importantly, I would say to visitors Richard Nixon helped changed the course, not only of America but of the entire world. He believed in returning power to the people; so he created revenue sharing. And that young people should be free to choose their future; so Richard Nixon ended the draft. And he helped the United States reach new horizons in space and technology. He began a pioneering cancer initiative that gave hope and life to millions. And he knew that the great outdoors is precious but fragile and so he created the Environmental Protection Agency, a historic step to help preserve and widely use our natural resources. (Applause.)

And all of this Richard Nixon did and yet future generations will remember him most, in my view, for dedicating his life to the greatest cause offered any president -- the cause of peace among nations. Who can forget how he endured much in his quest for peace with honor in Vietnam. He knew that true peace means the triumph of freedom, not merely the absence of war. And as President he served this country's special mission to help those around the world for whom America has always been a morning star of liberty. Engaging in diplomatic summitry and helping change the post-war bipolar globe.

Who can forget how in Moscow Richard Nixon signed the first agreement to limit strategic nuclear arms, giving new hope to the world for lasting peace. Or how he planted the first fragile seeds of peace in the Middle East and Golda Meir, whose statue is inside, credited him with saving Israel during the Yom Kippur War. And even now, memories resound of President Nixon's trip to China -- the week that revolutionized the world. No American president had ever stood on the soil of the People's Republic of China and as President Nixon stepped from Air Force One and extended his hand to Chou En Lai, his vision ended more than two decades of isolation.

"Being president," he often said, "is nothing compared with what you can do as president." Mr. President, you worked with every fiber of your being to help achieve a generation of peace. And today as the movement toward democracy sweeps our globe, you can take great personal pride that history will say of you here was a true architect of peace. (Applause.)

Yes, there have been literally millions of words written about this President. But let me close with a passage from the President himself that comes from his first inaugural address, January 20, 1969, where the new President spoke of how the greatest honor history can bestow is the title of peacemaker. And he began by noting that within the lifetime of most present, mankind would celebrate a new year which occurs only once in a thousand years -- the start of a new millennium. And that America had the chance to lead the world onto that high ground of peace that man has dreamed of since the dawn of civilization.

And finally, Richard Nixon concluded, "if we succeed generations to come will say of us that we helped make the world safe for mankind. I believe the American people are ready to answer this call," he said.

Mr. President, you helped America answer its summons to greatness. Thank you for serving the cause of peace. God bless you and your wonderful family. And now it is my honor, as President of the United States, to introduce the 37th President of the United States, Richard M. Nixon. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT NIXON: Thank you. Mr. President, may I express my deep appreciation for that much-too-generous introduction. Over the past 44 years since I've been in public life, I have been

introduced to literally thousands of audiences all over the world. This is the first time I've ever been introduced by the President of the United States. (Applause.) I express my appreciation to my other colleagues, former presidents, for their gracious comments -- not only about me, but particularly about my wife, Pat. This is a very special day for us.

I think that I speak for all of those in this great audience today in expressing appreciation not only to President Bush and Barbara Bush, but also to President Ford and President Reagan and their ladies, that they are here today. This is a very special occasion because there are four presidents here. But what makes it even more special is that for the first time in the inauguration of a library, four first ladies are here. (Applause.)

I think all of my colleagues would agree that there is no more important a position for a career than a woman could have than to be a first lady, the wife of the President of the United States. Or as First Lady Barbara Bush might put it in the future, there could be no more important career for a man than to be the husband of the President of the United States. (Applause.)

I want to express appreciation to all of you who have made this facility possible and to all of you who have come on this day to participate in this ceremony with us. It's been a great day for us, and it's one that we will always remember.

Over the past years, Pat and I have had the opportunity to visit some wonderful places. We've been to Versailles, we've been to Westminster, to the Kremlin, to the Great Wall of China, to Angkor Wat in Cambodia. I must say that many of them were memorable experiences -- all of them were, in fact. But nothing we have ever seen matches this moment -- to be welcomed home again so warmly on this day by our friends in California. (Applause.)

I hope all of you will have an opportunity to take a tour of the library and, I hope that you will, when you see there, you will share some of the things that my colleagues, the former presidents, and President Bush have referred to. What you will see, among other things, is a personal life -- the influence of a strong family, of inspirational ministers, of great teachers. You will see a political life -- running for Congress, running for the Senate, running for governor, running for president three times. Won some, lost some. All interesting. (Laughter and applause.) And you will see, also, the life of a great nation -- 77 years of it. A period in which we had unprecedented progress for the United States. And you will see great leaders -- leaders who changed the world, who helped to make the world what we have today.

Seeing those things will certainly be interesting. But let me remind you that when you go through this library, I hope you will remember that while the past is interesting, it is important only insofar as it points the way to a better future. And that is why we are here today, to talk about that better future. (Applause.)

As I look back over life, I can think what has happened in the years since I was born in this little house 71 years ago. I have many memories -- some of them good, some of them not so good. But I do know that as far as that life is concerned, I am glad that I had the opportunity to come from here and go as far as I have.

Let me say that as far as the past is concerned, though, remember: what is important is what it tells us about the future.

My friend, Paul McCracken, from the University of Michigan, sent me a little poem that graphically makes that point. He said, "The lightning bug is brilliant, but it doesn't have a mind. It travels through creation with its headlight on behind." (Laughter.) And so as far as we're concerned, let us learn from the past, but let us always keep our headlight on the road ahead.

Looking back over the years, when I think of what has

happened in those 77 years, I remember that, 70 years ago in that little house, I used to lie in bed, I'd hear a train whistle in the middle of the night, and I would dream of places far away that I hoped to visit someday. I never dreamed that I would ever have the opportunity to visit over 80 countries during the period of my lifetime.

I must say that as far as those visits are concerned, they taught me something. You will hear sometimes these days that the United States is in decline, that we have seen our best days. You will hear that the United States no longer has the means or the will to play a great role in the world. Don't you believe it. (Applause.)

I can tell you what I have found in my travels. In my travels to other countries, I have found some people who like us. I have found some people who have envy us. I have found some people who hate us. But most of the people in the world know in their hearts that without the leadership of the United States of America, peace and freedom would not survive in the world. (Applause.)

It is our privilege to provide that leadership. That is why I would trust that all of you here and all of you listening on television and on radio would give President Bush your wholehearted support as he works for that kind of leadership for the United States of America. (Applause.)

This is not a burden to be borne grimly, but it's a great challenge. Look at what the challenge is. I was born a year before World War I began. And in my lifetime, more people were killed in wars than in all the wars fought in the history of civilization before the 20th century began. Our challenge today is looking ahead to deal with that problem. The 20th century will be remembered as a century of war. Our challenge is to help make the 21st century of peace. (Applause.)

But peace is not our only goal. Our goal, also, is to remember why we are here, what America really means to the world. And so as we consider our challenges beyond peace, let history record that we just did not save the world from communism, but that we helped to make the world safe for freedom. That is the great challenge for Americans today. (Applause.)

Let our goal be that all people in the world can enjoy what most Americans enjoy -- the blessings of freedom, of justice, of progress. That was a dream that was impossible in times past. But because of recent developments, it is a dream that can now come true.

So with this challenge in mind, let us look also to where we have been and where we are going. As I look back on those years, 77 in all, but I remember that in the period of that time that I have seen many things happen in the world. And I know that as I stand here, that we are very fortunate as Americans to have played a role in what has happened.

In 1971, after a White House state dinner, a splendid musical group from California entertained the audience. At the conclusion of the program, the chairman, or I should say, the leader of the group asked to say a few words. He expressed appreciation for being invited to appear at the White House. And then he concluded by saying, "You know, it's a long way from Watts to the White House." He was right. But let me tell you -- it's a long way from Yorba Linda to the White House, too. (Applause.)

I have made that journey, and I want to see a country in which every young American can have the opportunity to make that journey. It doesn't mean that all will make it. We all can't be president. We all can't be congressmen or senator or governors -- I found that out. (Laughter.) But on the other hand, let us always make sure for the young Americans that the road ahead is never blocked by prejudice or ignorance or poverty. And that he or she can go as hard as his or her talents will take them. That is the goal

that we want for young Americans today. (Applause.)

Because there are so many young people here today, may I add a word to you. I believe in the American dream because I have seen it come true in my own life. And I want you to know that as far as you're concerned, I want your dreams to come true as well. You will suffer disappointments in life and sometimes you will be very discouraged. It is sad to lose. But the greatest sadness is to travel through life without knowing either victory or defeat. Always remember that only when during your lifetime you are involved in a cause greater than yourself can you be truly true to yourself. (Applause.)

So with those points in mind, may I leave also this final thought. Remember that there couldn't be a better time to be alive than now. There couldn't be a better country in which to be born and in which to live than now because you hold the future in your hands. (Applause.)

END

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