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AFGE Speech

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AFGE SPEECH

THANK YOU, KEN, FOR THIS TERRIFIC WELCOME. THESE PAST FOUR YEARS HAVE BEEN TOUGH AND CHALLENGING ONES FOR FEDERAL EMPLOYEES -- BUT WHEN IT COMES TO TAKING ON CHALLENGES, THIS UNION HAS ONE OF THE TOUGHEST LEADERS IN AMERICA IN KEN BLAYLOCK.

I ALSO WANT TO EXTEND A SPECIAL GREETING TO YOUR EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT, JOHN STURDIVANT, WHO WORKED CLOSELY WITH ME ON THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM -- WHICH BY THE WAY LOOKS BETTER AND BETTER THE MORE YOU READ THE 19th CENTURY PLATFORM THE REPUBLICANS PRODUCED IN DALLAS.

YOU COULDN'T HAVE PICKED A BETTER PLACE THAN CLEVELAND FOR THIS YEAR'S CONVENTION, BECAUSE YOU CAN'T FIND A BETTER OR STRONGER SUPPORTER OF FEDERAL WORKERS THAN CONGRESSWOMAN MARY ROSE OAKER. I'VE BEEN PROUD TO WORK SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH MARY ROSE ON BEHALF OF FAIR PLAY, FAIR BENEFITS, AND FAIR WORKING CONDITIONS FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO MAKE OUR GOVERNMENT WORK.

AND OF COURSE I'M DELIGHTED TO SEE my FRIEND & yours VIC RAZZO, WHO IS A LEADER IN THE AS GOVERNMENT WORKERS, YOU UNDERSTAND, PERHAPS BETTER WORKERS
THAN MOST, THE STARK CHOICE WE FACE IN THIS ELECTION.

IT IS A CHOICE BETWEEN TWO VISIONS OF THE FUTURE AND TWO APPROACHES TO NATIONAL LEADERSHIP.

NOWHERE WAS THAT MORE VIVIDLY DEMONSTRATED THAN AT THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION LAST WEEK IN DALLAS.

FOR FOUR LONG DAYS, MR. REAGAN AND THE REPUBLICANS GAVE US SPEECH AFTER SPEECH DUCKING RESPONSIBILITY AND CASTING BLAME.

BLAME THE FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD FOR HIGH INTEREST
RATES.

BLAME THE CONGRESS FOR RECORD DEFICITS.

BLAME THE RUSSIANS FOR THE COLLAPSE OF ARMS CONTROL.

BLAME THE POOR FOR BEING POOR AND THE HOMELESS FOR
BEING ON THE STREETS.

AND WHEN YOU CAN'T THINK OF ANYONE ELSE TO BLAME,
BLAME THE GOVERNMENT AND FEDERAL WORKERS.

WELL LET ME TELL YOU SOMETHING. I, FOR ONE, AM SICK
AND TIRED OF THE POLITICS OF BLAME.

IT ISN'T THE FEDERAL WORKER WHO SENDS UNCLE SAM AN
\$1100 BILL FOR A 22 CENT PLASTIC STOOL CAP. IT'S FEDERAL
WORKERS WHO HAVE FERRETTED OUT THE ABUSES AND BLOWN THE WHISTLE .

IT ISN'T THE FEDERAL WORKER WHO LOBBIES THE WHITE HOUSE
AND THE EPA FOR DELAYS IN TOXIC WASTE CLEAN-UP. IT'S THE FEDERAL
WORKER WHO IS FIGHTING TO KEEP OUR AIR AND WATER CLEAN.

IT ISN'T THE FEDERAL WORKER WHO CREATES THE NEEDS THAT
GOVERNMENT SERVES. IT'S THE FEDERAL WORKER WHO ANSWERS THOSE
NEEDS -- WHO NURSES OUR VETERANS BACK TO HEALTH. / .MAKES SURE
THE SOCIAL SECURITY CHECKS GO OUT ON TIME. / . KEEPS OUR MILITARY
READY TO FIGHT. . . BATTLES THE DRUG SMUGGLERS AT OUR BORDER.

YOU DESERVE TO BE PROUD OF YOUR WORK, / AND YOU
DESERVE POLITICAL LEADERS WHO SHARE THAT PRIDE - / NOT LEADERS
WHO USE YOU AS SCAPEGOATS. /

AND LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE IN THIS ELECTION.
DESPITE THE RHETORIC OF DALLAS, THE ISSUE BEFORE THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE IS NOT BIG GOVERNMENT. NONE OF US BELIEVES THAT GOVERNMENT
HAS THE ANSWER TO EVERY PROBLEM OR THE SOLUTION TO EVERY NEED.

THE ISSUE BEFORE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE IS WHAT KIND OF
GOVERNMENT, SERVING WHAT PURPOSES, FOR WHOSE BENEFIT.

THEIR GOVERNMENT -- THE REAGAN REPUBLICANS --
IS ONE THAT SEEKS TO IMPOSE A RIGID ORTHODOXY ON ALL AMERICANS.
OUR GOVERNMENT / UNDERSTANDS THAT THE GREATNESS OF AMERICA / LIES IN
OUR DIVERSITY, OUR PLURALISM, OUR TOLERANCE FOR THE VIEWS OF
OTHERS. /

THEIR GOVERNMENT / CUTS TAXES FOR THE RICH AND NUTRITION
PROGRAMS FOR THE POOR AND CALLS IT PROGRESS. // OUR ~~GOVERNMENT~~
PLAYS BY ONE SET OF RULES FOR ALL / AND CALLS IT SIMPLE FAIRNESS. //

THEIR MISSION ~~IN GOVERNMENT~~ IS TO DISMANTLE, ~~DESTROYING~~
THE GOOD WITH THE BAD. OUR MISSION IS TO REBUILD, TO CAST ASIDE
WHAT DOESN'T WORK AND DELIVER EVEN MORE EFFECTIVELY THOSE SERVICES
OUR PEOPLE NEED.

THEIR GOVERNMENT ATTACKS LIES AND FRAUD IN
DOMESTIC PROGRAMS WITH A BULLDOZER, BUT HARDLY TURN THE SCREW
ON THE MILITARY BUDGET. OUR GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT THE
DRIVE FOR EFFICIENCY DOESN'T STOP AT THE FRONT STEPS OF THE
PENTAGON. /

THE ISSUE IS NOT BIG GOVERNMENT OR SMALL GOVERNMENT.
IT IS GOOD GOVERNMENT -- EFFICIENT, PRODUCTIVE, COMPASSIONATE
GOVERNMENT IN THE HANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO BELIEVE PUBLIC
SERVICE IS A HIGH CALLING. //

AND THE HIGHEST DEMAND ON GOVERNMENT'S LEADERS IS
TO TALK WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ABOUT THE CHALLENGES BEFORE
OUR NATION. /

WE FACE SEVERAL CHALLENGES. BUT ONE I WANT TO EMPHA-
SIZE TONIGHT IS THE CHALLENGE OF PEACE. THE TWO PRINCIPAL
PARTIES TAKE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THIS CHALLENGE.
MR. B. AGAN SAID THAT THE ELECTION GIVES THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
THE CLARDEST POLITICAL CHOICE IN 50 YEARS. AND ON THE CHOICE
OF WAR AND PEACE, HE'S ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.

THIS PRESIDENT HAS NEVER MET AN ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENT
HE DIDN'T DISLIKE.

HE OPPOSED PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S TEST BAN TREATY.

HE OPPOSED PRESIDENT NIXON'S SALT I AND ABM TREATIES.

HE OPPOSED PRESIDENT FORD'S AGREEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS
AT VLADIVOSTOK. VLAD DI VOS TO K

HE OPPOSED PRESIDENT CARTER'S SALT II AGREEMENT.

AND NOW, AS PRESIDENT, HE HAS PRESIDED OVER THE
TOTAL COLLAPSE OF ALL ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS.

WELL I SAY THIS: IF THIS PRESIDENT CAN'T STOP
EXCHANGING INSULTS AND START EXCHANGING SOLID NEGOTIATING
PROPOSALS TO END THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE, THEN IT'S TIME TO
EXCHANGE THIS PRESIDENT FOR ~~ONE~~ ONE WHO WILL.

THIS PRESIDENT BELIEVES THAT ARMS CONTROL WEAKENS
AMERICA. WELL YOU AND I KNOW, AND EVERY GENERAL AND ADMIRAL
I'VE SPOKEN WITH KNOWS, THAT SENSIBLE ARMS CONTROL STRENGTHENS
AMERICA AND MAKES THE WORLD A SAFER PLACE.

IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, TENSIONS WITH RUSSIA
HAVE RISEN: WE'VE SENT TROOPS TO CENTRAL AMERICA: AND OUR
YOUNG MEN HAVE NEEDLESSLY DIED IN BEIRUT. THE QUESTION IS,
OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY SON JOHN --
AND TO YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN? WILL THIS PRESIDENT,
UNRESTRAINED BY THE NEED FOR REELECTION, HEIGHTEN THE RISK OF WAR?

I DON'T WANT TO TAKE THAT CHANCE. I WANT A
PRESIDENT WHO EXCHANGES PROPOSALS, NOT INSULTS, WITH THE SOVIET
UNION; WHO UNDERSTANDS THAT AN ARMS RACE DOES NOT LEAD TO PEACE:
IT LEADS TO AN ARMS RACE: AND WHO STOPS INVESTING SO MUCH IN
THE ARMS RACE AND STARTS INVESTING MORE IN THE HUMAN RACE.

THAT KIND OF PRESIDENT WILL STRENGTHEN AMERICA.
FOR THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE COUNTRY. ~~AND THERE~~
~~ARE MANY WAYS TO SERVE THIS COUNTRY.~~

~~IN DALLAS LAST WEEK THE MAJORITY WASTED A LONG TIME~~
~~TALKING ABOUT PATRIOTISM. BUT I DON'T THINK PEOPLE BUY A~~
~~SELF CONSCIOUS PATRIOTISM MADE ON MADISON AVENUE. THEY PREFER~~
~~THE SILENT PATRIOTISM OF MAIN STREET AMERICA.~~

~~WHEN WE FIND JOBS FOR THE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE STILL~~

I BELIEVE WE STRENGTHEN AMERICA WHEN WE ~~BELIEVE AS CARING,~~
~~COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE.~~ DON'T DIVIDE INTO HAVES & HAVE NOT.
WHEN WE DON'T FOCUS ON US & THEM

IN THE LAST FOUR YEARS, FIVE MILLION AMERICANS HAVE JOINED THE RANKS OF THE POOR. EIGHT AND A HALF MILLION AMERICANS ARE OUT OF WORK. AND ONE OUT OF FOUR SMALL CHILDREN LIVES IN POVERTY. THE RESPONSE OF THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TO THIS HUMAN DISASTER HAS BEEN TO CUT FOOD STAMPS, THROW PEOPLE OFF SOCIAL SECURITY, MAKE MEDICARE RECIPIENTS PAY MORE, AND REDUCE NEARLY EVERY SINGLE PROGRAM THAT HELPS POOR MOTHERS AND INFANTS. MY QUESTION TO MR. REAGAN~~M~~ IS, WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE DOES ~~HE~~ THINK WE ARE?

I AM NOT SEEKING THE VICE PRESIDENT~~T~~ SO THAT I CAN HELP MAKE IT HARDER FOR THE HUNGRY TO EAT, THE COLD TO KEEP WARM, AND THE HOMELESS TO FIND SHELTER. I GOT INTO POLITICS IN THE FIRST PLACE SO I COULD HELP THE DISADVANTAGED -- NOT HARM THEM. AND THE BEST WAY YOU AND I CAN HELP THEM IN 1984 IS TO DEFEAT RONALD REAGAN AND ELECT WALTER MONDALE.

WHEN WE TREAT EACH ~~OTHER~~ RIGHT, WE ARE A STRONGER, BETTER COUNTRY. THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO ~~EXXENXMMX~~ SERVE THIS COUNTRY, AND BEING DECENT TO EACH ~~OTHER~~ OTHER IS ONE.

IN DALLAS LAST WEEK THE REPUBLICANS SPENT A LONG TIME TALKING ABOUT PATRIOTISM. BUT I DON'T THINK PEOPLE BUY A SELF CONSCIOUS PATRIOTISM MADE ON MADISON AVENUE. THEY FEEL THE SELFLESS PATRIOTISM OF MAIN STREET AMERICA.

WHEN WE FIND JOBS FOR THE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE STILL

UNEMPLOYED IN OHIO - THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE PROVIDE TEACHERS WITH THE TOOLS THEY NEED
TO EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN - THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE STOP SELLING OUR NATURAL HERITAGE TO THE
HIGHEST BIDDER - THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE FULLY ENFORCE OUR CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND MAKE
THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT A PART OF THE U.S. CONSTITUTION -
THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

MR. RHAGAN PREACHES LOVE OF COUNTRY, AND I AGREE.
BUT I SAY LET'S LOVE OUR COUNTRYMEN AND WOMEN TOO. LET'S
HELP FARMERS, THE UNEMPLOYED, THE YOUNG AND THE OLD. LET'S
PUT PEOPLE TO WORK AND KEEP THE PEACE. THAT'S THE BEST WAY
TO HONOR THE AMERICAN FLAG.

THIS IS THE DIRECTION THAT POINTS TO A STRONGER
FUTURE. AND THE TIME TO BEGIN THAT JOURNEY IS NOT LATER.
IT'S NOW.

THE TIME HAS COME TO ELECT A PRESIDENT WHO WILL ACCEPT
THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIS OFFICE, NOT JUST THE TRAPPINGS.

THE TIME HAS COME TO ELECT A PRESIDENT WHO WILL ROLL
UP HIS SLEEVES AND TACKLE THE CHALLENGES WE FACE, NOT ROLL
DOWN HIS JODPERS AND RIDE OFF INTO THE SUNSET.

THE TIME HAS COME TO SEND RONALD REAGAN BACK TO CALIFOR-
NIA AND PUT FRITZ MONDALE IN THE WHITE HOUSE.

TOGETHER, WE CAN CHANGE AMERICA'S DIRECTION.

TOGETHER, WE CAN RESTORE AMERICA'S FAITH IN THEIR
GOVERNMENT.

TOGETHER, WE CAN SEIZE THE FUTURE AND MAKE IT OURS.