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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.

AS GOVERNMENT WORKERS, YOU UNDERSTAND, PERHAPS BETTER 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 FERRETED 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 CUTS 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 WASTE AND FRAUD IN DOMESTIC PROGRAMS WITH A BULLDOZER, BUT HARDLY TURNS THE SOIL 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 LEVEL WITH THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ABOUT THE CHALLENGES BEFORE OUR NATION.

WE DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO TELLS THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT \$200 BILLION DEFICITS AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE ARE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

WE NEED A PRESIDENT WHO HAS ENOUGH RESPECT FOR THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO TELL THEM THE TRUTH: THAT IF THESE DEFICITS DON'T COME DOWN WE ARE HEADED FOR TROUBLE; THAT THEY WON'T COME DOWN UNLESS WE MAKE SOME HARD DECISIONS ABOUT TAXES AND SPENDING; AND THAT WE'LL NEVER MAKE THAT PROGRESS AS LONG AS WE HAVE A PRESIDENT WHO IS LIVING ON FANTASY ISLAND.

WE DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO TELLS THE STEELWORKERS AND AUTOWORKERS AND MACHINISTS OF OHIO THAT THEIR DAY HAS PASSED.

WE NEED A PRESIDENT WHO WILL BRING BUSINESS AND LABOR AND GOVERNMENT TOGETHER IN A NEW SPIRIT OF COOPERATION, NOT SO GOVERNMENT CAN IMPOSE ITS WILL, BUT SO THAT WE CAN ALL WORK TOGETHER TO REBUILD AMERICA'S INDUSTRIAL ENGINE AND ONCE AGAIN LEAD THE WORLD.

WE DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO TELLS THE WOMEN OF THIS COUNTRY THAT THEIR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT WAS TO GET THE CAVEMEN TO STAND UP STRAIGHT.

WE NEED A PRESIDENT WHO WILL STAND WITH THE WOMEN OF THIS COUNTRY AS THEY STAND UP STRAIGHT -- WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND EQUAL RIGHTS AND EQUAL PAY.

WE DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO IS UNWILLING TO COMMIT HIS OWN TIME OR PERSONAL PRESTIGE TO THE WORK OF BUILDING A MORE DURABLE PEACE. THIS PRESIDENT INHERITED A VITAL MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS AND LET IT LANGUISH. HE SENT AMERICAN MARINES INTO THE LEBANESE CROSS-FIRE WITH NO CLEAR PLAN OR PURPOSE. HE HAS SHUNNED SERIOUS DIPLOMACY IN CENTRAL AMERICA, AND SLID US DEEPER INTO ITS MILITARY ENTANGLEMENTS.

WE NEED A PRESIDENT WHO WILL ONCE AGAIN PLACE AMERICA AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE SEARCH FOR PEACE, WHO WILL WORK WITH OTHERS TO CALM TROUBLED WATERS AND WHO ONCE AGAIN WILL CHAMPION THE CAUSE OF LIBERTY AND HUMAN PROGRESS THAT DISTINGUISHES US FROM OUR ADVERSARIES.

MOST OF ALL, WE DON'T NEED A PRESIDENT WHO THINKS  
NUCLEAR WAR IS A JOKE AND ARMS CONTROL IS A DIVERSION.

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.

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, THAN IT'S TIME TO EXCHANGE THIS PRESIDENT  
FOR 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.

FOR THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO STRENGTHEN AMERICA, JUST AS THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO SERVE AMERICA.

IN DALLAS LAST WEEK, THE REPUBLICANS SPENT A LOT OF TIME TALKING ABOUT PATRIOTISM.

BUT THEIRS IS THE SELF-CONSCIOUS PATRIOTISM OF MADISON AVENUE, NOT 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 AND PLACE THOSE RESOURCES IN THE HANDS OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO WILL PRESERVE THEM FOR TOMORROW -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

WHEN WE FINALLY STOP THE NUCLEAR ARMS RACE -- THAT WILL BE A PATRIOTIC ACT.

MR. REAGAN 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 BACK TO WORK. FOR THAT IS 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 CALIFORNIA 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.