

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY  
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COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN VICTORY LUNCHEON  
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Thank you so much, Renee, for your generous words -- and, above all, for your generous spirit. I want you to know how deeply appreciative I am of both. And I know I speak for everyone in this room -- indeed, for everyone who lives in Washington -- when I express the gratitude we in the community feel for your continuing contributions to the life of the city and her people. In a sense, if this luncheon counted for nothing else, it would be most important for the opportunity it provides to thank so many individuals and organizations for their unselfish efforts on behalf of those for whom life has been a troubled voyage. I could stand here all day and name names -- the President and my Cabinet colleagues who have inspired so much enthusiasm among the federal workforce, the men and women of organized labor, who, in an unassuming way, have rolled up their sleeves and called upon generous employees to give even more than their usual excellent standard provides. And of course we aren't there yet!

I could single out departments and agencies represented here, some as large as the Postal Service and Pentagon, others as numerically small as the Panama Canal Commission or U.S. Advisory Conference. But whatever the size of the department or agency represented here today, there is an enormous heart and a profound spirit of enthusiasm prevalent in this room. This is a gathering of conscience, an assembly not just of leaders in the formal sense, but of men and women whose commitment to a better life for their neighbors does not rest on any formal title or GS rating. You can hardly put a number on such qualities as those that motivate you, the Combined Federal Campaign team. Nor can any words of mine adequately assess the gift presented by such participants in this ceremony as those marvelous Ambassadors of Jazz from the U.S. Army Band, here for their fifth consecutive year, the Color Guard, or the creative souls whose imagination and hard work have won them special recognition for communicating the purposes of this Campaign to their fellow employees.

You know, I'm fond of quoting some words written by Alexis de Tocqueville, the French observer of democratic government who visited these shores more than a century and a half ago, and whose insights remain as fresh and relevant today as when they were first put down on paper. "If I were asked... to what the prosperity and growing strength of that people ought mainly to be attributed," wrote the visitor from abroad of the Americans, "I should reply: to the superiority of its women... and the voluntary association -- that unique American institution whereby people associate to strengthen their cause as well as their voice."

I hope you'll forgive the special plug on behalf of the women of America. I always like to see them receive a recognition well-deserved and



long-overdue. But the voluntary association -- well, that's something universal in its meaning. Something still unique to America. Something developed to the highest possible form by the millions of men and women who come together to give voice to their conscience by giving generously of their abundance. That's what this country is all about. That's what this city stands for. And that's what the CFC and every single person in this room has achieved, to the lasting credit of all.

Now, this year, as you all know, is the first ever when our goal topped \$20 million. That's an extraordinary sum of money by any measurement. Even as I speak, there are still campaigns within a campaign going on. There is still a large amount of giving to be tabulated and collected. Last year, for instances, more than a million dollars in additional contributions came in after the Victory Luncheon was held. And so, this is no time for any of us to rest on our laurels or indulge ourselves in too much back-patting. The need is greater than ever -- and our response must continue to match that need.

But in the meantime, let me simply say this: that whatever the precise final dollar figure raised in this year's Campaign, we have already won for ourselves a magnificent victory -- a victory over the forces of indifference and self-centeredness, a victory on behalf of the underprivileged, a victory which refutes all those cynical enough to question the heart or humanity of the people who work for Uncle Sam. Having spent the better part of my life in public service, I long ago discovered just how selfless were my colleagues, just how committed they were to improving the lives of those around them. So none of this comes as any surprise to me. But it does serve as a source of renewed inspiration. And it reminds me anew of some words carved in a cool Gothic bay, above the Crusader's Cross which marks the final resting place of a great American prophet named Woodrow Wilson.

"We grow great by dreams," said Wilson. "Some of us let these great dreams die, but others nourish and protect them; nurse them through bad days 'til they bring them to the sunshine and light which comes always to those who sincerely hope that their dreams will come true."

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow government employees, fellow dreamers: the greatest dream of America is that of a nation whose greatness rests upon her innate goodness. Both find voice in a generous response to need, wherever it exists.

Though we have accomplished much to date, there is still more to do.

The money is there, we must now get it; to assist the needy, we must reach our goal of \$20.5 million. On the table today: \$17.7 million.

This is our victory lunch, but now is not the time to declare victory and halt our efforts. It is a time for rededication, for renewed determination.

And when we reach that goal, we will all have the knowledge that we have made a difference -- a positive difference -- in nurturing the dreams and bettering the lives of others. For their sake, and on their behalf... I can only say again... a heartfelt thank you.

God bless you all.

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