

REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
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 SOUTHERN GOP
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It is such a pleasure to be with you today. Your service to our party and the nation represents a personal commitment which stands as a model for all of us here. What a joy to be back in my old stomping ground --the South -- in one of my favorite cities. I've just celebrated my third anniversary as Secretary of Transportation -- this reminded me of the early days just after my nomination when a number of newspapers and magazines wanted to do an interview on the dual career marriage.

Bob will be delighted with the enthusiasm of this group today, and I know he is looking forward to visiting with you tomorrow. This conference is a wonderful demonstration of the remarkable growth of our party throughout the South.

Yes, thanks to you, the South has become a two-party region. The other party can no longer take the South for granted. For 30 years, people have talked about the dawning of the New South. Well that dawn has come, and it's the beginning of a brand new day for the entire Sun Belt. You can see it in the phenomenal population shift, the booming economy, and the new political landscape. The South has become the center of the political battleground and will play a pivotal role in American politics for decades to come.

The fact that we now have such fine leaders in the White House and the U.S. Senate is due in no small part to those who give to the political process their heart, as well as their material resources -- who share their time, their energy, their commitment. And we know it takes all that to win elections.

I'm looking at just such a gathering today, and if I impart nothing else, I want to express the personal gratitude I feel, along with so many others in the Reagan Administration, for all you do to make what we do possible. You remind us -- as if we needed any reminding -- that a country is like a tree, strongest at its grassroots. Certainly that's the hallmark of Ronald Reagan's Presidency.

America in 1986 is experiencing a different kind of miracle -- the rebirth of our economy and our national spirit. Five and a half years ago, when Ronald Reagan became President, our country was in both economic shambles and psychological doldrums. Double digit inflation, as you so well know, interest rates the highest since the Civil War, and the lowest annual rate of growth in productivity of any major industrial nation. All that has changed.

Thanks to our Republican policies, we're enjoying a new wave of popular support all across this country. The Republican Party is a growing party across America because it favors growth and opportunity for all Americans. And Americans of all walks of life are finding a new home in the Republican Party.

Like President Reagan, I too was once a Democrat. When I grew up in Salisbury, North Carolina, everyone at that time was a Democrat. In fact, I think I was about 12 before I learned there was another party. The President likes to say, when he was 12, there was no other party!

Our party is a growing party because we've restored hope to the vocabulary of American life. Events are not beyond our control. Our energy supplies are not doomed to wither away. Our people are not without a future. For we were not meant to be victims of fate, but masters of destiny.

I won't forget a Cabinet meeting at which I spelled out the political costs of pursuing a line of policy. The President looked at me and thanked me for doing my job, trying to protect him insofar as I could. He said something that goes to the heart of our mission: "Elizabeth, forget what's the best thing to do politically. What do you think is the right thing to do?"

Wasn't easy to bring inflation under control in two years instead of ten -- it was the right thing to do... we Republicans did it!

Wasn't easy to create almost 10 million new jobs, over half filled by working women -- it was the right thing to do... we Republicans did it!

Wasn't easy to cut taxes across the board so all Americans could keep more of what they earned -- it was the right thing to do... Republicans did it!

Wasn't easy to bring justice to the thugs who hijacked the Achille Lauro -- it was the right thing to do... our Republican president did it!

We've done a lot. Much remains. For the sake of America, it's not whether our new direction should be carved in stone, but how. It's not whether we should reduce the federal deficit, but how.

The Gramm-Rudman-Hollings legislation imposes some dawn tough discipline. It mandates that Congress reduce the federal deficit to zero by 1991. That's a tall order. And it closes the escape hatch, by threatening across-the-board cuts if we don't reach those deficit goals. In fact, the first round of cuts take effect tomorrow. It gives everybody an opportunity, a choice. Two roads. One puts the government on automatic pilot, who these across-the-board cuts in nearly every program, cutting both the fat and the meat. That's the garden path to disaster.

The "road less traveled," is a more difficult course, requiring more courage, more imagination, longer hours of grueling work... but it's the way to go.

We've charted a course: Make taxes simpler so that all Americans know that they are paying their fair share; eliminate the complexities that confuse us; get rid of the preferences that enrage many of us; and most of all, achieve fairer taxes.

And that's just the beginning. We have the opportunity, the obligation, to get the government out of businesses that should be run by the private sector. The word "privatization," -- an awkward word at best -- was associated with Margaret Thatcher's splendid program in Great Britain. The time has come to use the British model here. I am presiding over the sale of Conrail, our government freight railroad, and it's the flagship for privatization. Norfolk-Southern will give us the equivalent of 10 percent of what Gramm-Rudman-Hollings requires for fiscal year 1986 and bring great strength to Conrail, a fragile entity with marginal profitability. We've already transferred the Alaska Railroad to the state. We're asking Congress to approve the sale of the last two federally owned airports, Washington National and Dulles, to an independent regional commission. We'll sunset the Interstate Commerce Commission, like we did the Civil Aeronautics Board and complete deregulation of the trucking industry and others.

Next week I will testify before Congress on our new four-year highway reauthorization bill. It continues a high level of funding for repair of roads and bridges. That's important for safety and efficiency, and a major feature is the flexibility it will give the states -- and cities -- to better meet local needs through a block grant for urban and secondary highway systems, bridges and transit projects. We must cut out subsidies for mass transit and Amtrak, which carries only one percent of intercity travel.

The important theme of my budget is the need to reduce the federal deficit, while at the same time ensuring a safe and efficient national transportation system. We've had to reassess the federal role in transportation policy. Can't continue to drop all we've been doing! My \$27 billion drops to \$5 billion. I am especially pleased that as Secretary of Transportation I can make a difference through safety programs, a positive difference -- in the lives of millions of Americans.

We've just put into place requirements that address drinking and drugs on our railroads, a significant problem that has been debated for 12 years.

Air safety is a top priority. Despite tragedies of last year, we find no common thread in the causes of these tragic accidents. About 70 percent of these 1985 fatalities occurred in accidents of foreign airlines -- the 520 people who lost their lives in the Japan Air Lines crash and the Air India crash, where sabotage took 329 lives. Each day in the U.S., some 15,000 scheduled airline flights carry an average of one million passengers, and 99.999 percent of these flights reach their destinations without accident. In a system where even one accident is one too many, I am determined that the safest air system in the world will become even safer.

Ninety-two percent of fatalities taking place on our highways -- buckling seat belts and reducing drunk driving would enormously reduce the 44,000 fatalities -- and I'll continue to fight until every last drunk driver is off the roads and highways of this country.

Our approach to highway safety includes the design of the vehicle itself. Let me offer one example of what we've done. As a result of a regulation I required high-mounted stop lamps -- placed near the rear window of all passenger cars. These appeared on 1986 model year cars last fall. The cost of this light is only a few dollars, but it is expected to prevent about 900,000 accidents and \$434 million in property damage a year when it is installed on all cars.

We've got some big challenges ahead of us, some tough choices. With them comes the opportunity to put our stamp on history. Within our grasp are permanent solutions to problems that have plagued us for decades.

In November of 1984, the American people set the course for this country by overwhelmingly endorsing our party's message of hope and opportunity. The message was bold enough, believable enough to attract a solid majority of women, a significant number of minority voters and over 60 percent of the young.

In the 1984 election, the American people affirmed the direction in which this country is headed, and they signalled a fundamental realignment of political loyalties which has brought us closer than at any time in the last half century to true majority party status. The tide of affairs is indeed at flood stage. But let's not deceive ourselves. In politics as

elsewhere, those who rest on their laurels soon find themselves pretty uncomfortable. Ronald Reagan opened a lot of doors in 1984. Now it's up to us to walk through them.

Which brings me to the 1986 election. For the Republican resurgence to continue, for economic expansion and deficit reduction to continue, it is absolutely crucial that Republicans maintain control of the Senate. If we fail, it will bring about profound changes in the U.S. Senate; changes that none of us want to see. I heard one Senator say recently on the Senate floor, "Gentlemen, let me tax your memories." Ted Kennedy then leapt to his feet and said, "Why haven't I thought of that before?" If we lose control of the Senate, Ted Kennedy will become Chairman of the Labor and Human Resources Committee. No way we want that to happen! Claiborne Pell as Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. No way we want that to happen! And Joe Biden as Chairman of the Judiciary committee? No thank you! We must all work together to keep our majority in the Senate.

It is in our power to gain a Republican majority in both Houses of Congress in the not-too-distant future. It's incredible that of all the votes cast in the 1984 Congressional races, Republican House candidates came within 70,000 votes of a national majority. In other words, the popular support for Republicans in the House of Representatives, as expressed by the people who vote, nearly equals that of the Democrats. Yet we didn't do nearly so well in individual races. Why? Because many districts were purposefully drawn by Democratic legislators, or approved by Democratic governors, in the hope of diluting or denying such popular Republican support.

In the 1990 census, officials predict as many as 19 House seats will be added in the South and West, which will increase our opportunities to become the majority party in the House of Representatives.

So we're embarked on a long-range effort to increase our strength in state legislatures and governors' mansions in 1986, 1988, 1990 and beyond. In 1984, in states like Texas and North Carolina, we showed how much could be achieved when a lot of people, of all ages and backgrounds, pooled their idealism and sacrificed their shoe leather to persuade their friends and neighbors that Republican ideas should not be restricted to the White House. Indeed, there isn't a single state in the Union that we can't win -- nor a single state the Democrats can take for granted.

During the past five years, our party has established a benchmark of leadership that will require those who follow not merely to piece together a mosaic of political and special interests, but to assemble a constellation of ideas that weave together the aspirations of the people themselves. And to get the job done, we must renew our moral commitment to that spirit of service and selflessness that "flows like a deep and mighty river through the history of our nation."

Recently, a Washington cab driver was taking some tourists past the National Archives Building, where words carved over the door read, "What is Past is Prologue." The little girl in the family asked her father what it meant. Before he could reply, the cabbie said, "Honey, that means you ain't seen nothing yet!"

Ladies and gentlemen, I suggest folks we ain't seen nothing yet! Together, we can secure the promise we made back in 1980, to give America back to the American people, to restore her will, to raise her spirits, renew her sense of destiny and reach out to all those who have yet to share in her abundance.

From this point on, which will it be for us as a party? A time of uncertainty -- or a time to seize our window of opportunity -- to solidify our gains and move into the future with a solid majority?

The future of our party and our nation begins here and now. Sometimes it seems as if the challenges are insurmountable -- it's at times like this I think of President Reagan's comment about his early days as Governor of California. "Each morning began," he said, "with someone standing before my desk describing yet another disaster. The feeling of stress became unbearable. I had the urge to look over my shoulder for someone I could pass the problem to. One day it came to me that I was looking in the wrong direction. I looked up instead of back. I'm still looking up. I couldn't face one day in this office if I didn't know I could ask God's help!" Let us never forget the source of our strength and our courage.

Ours is neither the time nor is this the place for men or women with faint hearts, feeble courage, weak commitment or selfish motives. We will pursue our vision, and complete the task. Our party deserves it, history demands it, and our children will reward it.