

11/19/93
Joint Armed Forces Wives Lunch

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Internal Use Only

November 19, 1993

THE FIRST LADY
AT THE JOINT ARMED FORCES WIVES' LUNCHEON

A PARTICIPANT: Please be seated. The U.S. Coast Guard Band will now play the Service Medley. Everyone is invited to sing along with all service songs, and please stand when your service song is played.

(Applause)

A PARTICIPANT: Good afternoon. The joint armed forces wives' luncheon is honored to have in attendance today, as our very special guests, the following dignitaries. As I call your name, please stand.

Lee Perry, whose husband is the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

Joyce Downey, whose husband is the Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

Margaret Dalton, whose husband is the Secretary of the Navy.

Bill Widnall, whose wife is the Secretary of the Air Force.

Joan Shalikashvili, whose husband is the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Connie Jeremiah, whose husband is the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Alma Powell, whose husband is the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Landis Kelso, whose husband is the Chief of Naval Operations.

Val Kime, whose husband is the Commandant of the

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Coast Guard.

Victoria Carns, whose husband is the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

Jenny Lou Arthur, whose husband is the Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Sandy Boomer, whose husband is the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Pamela Pea, whose husband is the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army.

And last, but certainly not least, Pat Nelson, whose husband is the Vice Commandant of the Coast Guard.

At this time, I would like to invite Joan Shalikashvili to come forward to the podium to introduce the JAFOWL Committee.

MRS. SHALIKASHVILI: As the new honorary chairman of this committee, I'd like to welcome all of you to this 1993 JAFOWL event. Two years ago, when I first heard the word JAFOWL, I thought it was a bird. (Laughter) But it stands for the Joint Armed Forces Officers' Wives' Committee -- Luncheon. I do know what it stands for.

And now I'd like to introduce my committee. And if you'll please stand as I call your name, and remain standing until I'm through, and please hold your applause until I'm all done.

First of all, we have the overall coordinator for us today, is Betsy Lynn, Navy. The other committee members are Kip Rout, Navy; Jane Radish, Navy; Liz Grasse, Air Force; Sarah Brown, Air Force; Lexalin Hooper, Army; Nancy Deibler, Army -- this is the one I have trouble with -- Janice Sartucci, Coast Guard; Maureen Applebaum, Coast Guard; Helen Aitken, Marine Corps; and Debbie Gordon, Marine Corps.

Our advisors are Connie Jeremiah and Jane Ryan. And I also need to recognize the past honorary chairman, Alma Powell; Alma, would you please stand?

I'd like to thank all of you ladies for planning this wonderful event for us. Thank you. (Applause) And

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again welcome to all of you and I hope you enjoy the day.

A PARTICIPANT: At this time I would like all guests to remain in their seats while Joan Johannsen gives our invocation.

MRS. JOHANNSEN: Almighty Creator, we ask you to be with us today, as we come together from our lives of different experiences, lived in many different places, and representing different channels of service to you and to our country.

We thank you for the strong bonds that bring all here together and join us into one: faith and trust in you; love and pride in our country; support and love for our spouses, whose lives are spent serving this great nation in a variety of ways; the commitment to use our own gifts and talents to help others; a deep concern for families, for our own and for our neighbors'; and the understanding, learned through the years of changes, moves, and travels, that every part of the country and the world is our neighborhood.

Please bless this gathering and open our minds and hearts so that our whole beings will be nourished and revitalized by the warmth of the friendship we now share, the stimulation of the ideas that we will hear, and the goodness of the meal we are about to receive. Amen.

A PARTICIPANT: Now it is my pleasure to call your attention to a special musical presentation by the United States Coast Guard Band, from New London, Connecticut, directed by Commander Lou Buckley.

(End of side 1, tape 1.)

A PARTICIPANT: Good afternoon, ladies. If you could please be seated, we'll proceed with our program.

Good afternoon, ladies, Dr. Widnall, and honored guests. On behalf of the 1993 Joint Armed Forces Officers' Wives' Luncheon Committee, I would like to welcome each and every one of you here today to this luncheon.

This has truly become a greatly anticipated annual event, and I'm sorry to say we could not accommodate all of those who wished to participate. I know we will all have much to recount to our friends, and I would like to recognize

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all those on the committee who have spent endless hours, volunteered much time and effort, to make this such an outstanding event.

All the military wives here today share a common bond that is at times difficult to express. However, our most obvious commonality is the support we have for our husband's career, and his significant contribution to the security of America.

Thomas Paine told us that those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must undergo the fatigues of supporting it. We understand that fatigue, and in fact quite often feel that he has the easy job. (Laughter)

We're especially excited today to have with us a very special guest speaker, someone with whom we can relate about support for her husband and his unique career. We sincerely appreciate the time she's taken to be with us today to give us the opportunity to personally meet with her and to tell her firsthand what it's like to be a military spouse and dependent in the '90s.

It's my distinct pleasure and honor to introduce the First Lady of the United States of America, Hillary Rodham Clinton.

(Applause)

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you all so much. Thank you. This has been so much fun. I don't usually get to say that when I go to events.

I am very grateful for the invitation to be here, and I have certainly enjoyed my visits at lunch with a number of you, particularly at my table, and in the rest room. And I also enjoyed my visit earlier in the day to the Pentagon, where I got to meet some of your husbands who were there, and had a chance to do a very quick, a much too quick, tour that I look forward to going back and expanding on.

And I have really enjoyed the opportunity that I have been given in the last months to get to know some of you personally. And I look forward to being able to build on some of those relationships and to expand them.

This has been a remarkable year in my life, and I

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had the feeling, when I was asked to speak some months ago, that I would probably have more in common with this group than many groups with whom I would speak.

Because, in many ways, those of us who are in positions that are committed to our country, that have no real set hours or even days or months it seems, who are on call twenty four hours a day often, who raise families and deal with the stresses and strains of everyday life from this kind of unusual perspective, maybe have some common experiences that can be very useful to share and to learn from.

And I enjoyed, particularly, my involvement, over the years, with the Jacksonville Air Force Base that was down the road from Little Rock, and the opportunities that I had to attend some of the activities of the officers' wives' club there. And then today, again, I was reminded about the ways that all of us have to become accustomed to supporting spouses who lead the kind of lives that yours do.

I was struck, when I picked up and moved from Little Rock, that it was a very difficult move for my family, but you all do that two or three times a year.

You pack up and you take off. You make sacrifices that many of the rest of America cannot even really imagine, and you move your children and have to resettle them. And I had to go through the same thing. And for me it was a difficult transition, one that took some months to get used to.

What I should have done is called and asked you to give me some lessons. The idea that this would ever be easy -- and I've had the opportunity to hear some of the women at my table talk about how much they've enjoyed the challenge of a new place -- was very heartening to me, because in politics nothing is secure. So, you know, I've got to learn these lessons and be ready to pick up and move nearly at any time.

The kinds of changes that have gone on in my life are ones that I wanted to spend just a few minutes filling you in on, because they are not something that I usually talk about, but I feel very comfortable with all of you, and we have all of these things in common, I believe. And many of you have asked me, since I have come over today, some of the

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questions that I would like to try to answer for everybody.

The two most common questions that I'm asked, and they were asked today, are how is Chelsea and how is Socks. That is what I am always asked, no matter what group I'm in, and Chelsea is fine, but it was a hard transition. And I don't know, maybe there's a breakdown between moving under-13-year-old children and moving 13-year-old children and older. Yes, I see lots of heads nodding.

Again, you all need to publish a book about this, because it was a rocky transition, leaving friends, leaving home, leaving grandparents, leaving all of that, and moving to Washington. But I knew that we had finally gotten over the hump when we were talking about Thanksgiving plans a few weeks ago, and we were in what I call our kitchen now.

This is on the second floor of the White House, and it is what is a serving kitchen, or used to be. Before the Kennedys, you had to eat all your meals downstairs. And that's on the ground floor, either in the State Dining Room, or in a little room called the Family Dining Room.

Now, the idea of having to dress for every single meal as though you might be photographed and have your image imprinted in the minds of your countrymen and women must have done the same thing to Mrs. Kennedy that it would have done to me. So she took a bedroom, and she divided it, and she put up the second floor dining room, which is a lovely room, pretty formal, and then had a serving kitchen.

And that's how then it went from the Kennedys until the Clintons. So that you could eat on the second floor, but you had to eat in the formal dining room. So we would get there for our meals, when we first got to the White House, and we would be sitting around, just the three of us, or maybe the three of us and our family members, and it was like being at a formal dinner, for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.

You'd get finger bowls. (Laughter) And Chelsea kind of looked around, and you could just see this look on her face like "I'll never be able to bring any new friends home here."

So I sort of said, you know, "That serving kitchen; it's got that great big butcher block in the middle. Do you think we could pull that out and maybe put a table in,

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and actually have a kitchen?"

I don't know what it's like when you have a question in the military that has never been asked before. (Applause) But I can tell you, there were probably more meetings about turning the serving pantry kitchen into a workable family kitchen than anything that's happened in this administration from its inception.

We finally did. I bought a table and chairs, and we put it in there. And we actually began eating there as a family when it was just the three of us, or maybe my mother or somebody was there with us. And it has made all the difference in the world. And it made all the difference to her, that we could be a family, that we didn't have to sit there, straight, on our best behavior with each other, which is hard.

And finally I knew we had it -- we were sitting in the kitchen, we were talking about Thanksgiving, and we were having dinner together, and I said, "Well, you know, should we ask Grandma and Ginger, which is what we call Bill's mother, and everybody to come up here, or should we go to Arkansas?"

And Chelsea said, "Well, we can do either, but you know, I'm getting to like Washington." And you know what that's like when you hear that as a mother. It's like, "Oh, thank you, thank you, Lord." I mean, it's just the most wonderful feeling. So she's doing fine.

Socks, there's a mixed report. You know I was trying to explain to Lexalin and some of the others at the table -- she's a big cat lover, as I am -- that this has been the most traumatic part of the move for us.

Because before, he could range freely and do anything. And now he has to be confined, because we're worried if we let him loose, he might get cat-napped. And this is a very serious concern. I don't think I can get away with assigning secret service agents to watch Socks, so the alternative is that we have to kind of keep him on that leash, and those are terrible pictures, I know.

You know, those of you who love cats, to see this beautiful cat, who is really descended from cat nobility going back to the Egyptians, on this leash. But you will

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be -- I mean, even with cats, things finally get better.

You will be happy to know he does finally have some friends. And they are coming to visit him. There are two gray cats, and they kind of hang out with him. But it's a good thing that Socks doesn't read regularly. It's a good thing that nobody in our family reads newspapers and magazines regularly, but particularly Socks. (Applause)

Because there was an article that I found just incredible, that was published in some magazine, which somebody clipped out for me, which said that this family that had been touring around the White House had counted 250 rats.

Now, I've been outside the White House a lot, and I've walked around, and there are rats. I don't think we can deny we do have some rats. But there aren't that many. But what I thought about, was think how Socks would feel. Socks, who is this great hunter.

If he knew that he was not fulfilling his most fundamental responsibility to our country, which is to keep the rats out of the White House. So we've kept that from him, but he seems to be adjusting. And I'm so grateful.

And my husband, you can read about him. He's doing great. Every day it gets better and better and I'm so proud of him. But, generally, we have made the transition. But I could have used some advice.

And so one of the things JAFOWL should really consider, and I think it would be a big, big moneymaker, are hints for moving and for adjusting and for transitions. Because I certainly would have bought up the entire stock and passed them out to everybody who came with us.

The biggest things that we have really enjoyed, though, are getting to know people, and particularly people from all walks of life and from different kinds of experiences. And many of our most interesting and, for us, personally gratifying moments have been the times that we have spent getting to know some of your spouses, your husbands primarily, except for Bill, who is here. And I think that deserves a big round of applause, Bill. (Applause)

The only thing that I was a little sad about was

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when the Coast Guard band started playing that wonderful music that made everybody want to dance, I couldn't figure out how we could organize it so that Bill could dance with all of us. You know, sort of seriatim. We'd line up, and he'd do a little spin, and we'd go on.

But to get to know, and to really share with so many of you and your husbands the kind of common commitment that we have to this country. And it is a commitment that has certainly withstood the test of history and challenge and all kinds of crises. But it is one that in every generation has to be renewed and has to be put into a new context.

The challenges facing us today are not the same as those that faced our parents and our grandparents. There are common threads which run through them, that demand the best from us. And the answers, I believe, are rooted in the same values and attitudes that really have created the climate of change that America has always been able to respond to.

But in this time and at this moment in our history, we have some new and some different challenges. And for those of you in the military, you know that the military mission is changing. After we had the cold war come to that end, which it did, thank goodness, there were those who said, "Oh, my goodness, now we have such a great opportunity!" And we do.

But we also have some continuing and new dangers and new threats and new problems that we have to deal with. So our time now today gives us the opportunity to shape what America's present and future will be like. And if we look at every area of our life, we can see what is out there waiting for us, what are really the kind of generational challenges that we confront.

We are, with the wonderful leadership of people like Retired General Powell, and now General Shalikashvili, and the others, we are shaping a new military in America. We are figuring out how we can continue to be the best, and to continue to lead, and to know where to use our military strength, and where to partner it with economic and other kinds of opportunities.

And on the domestic front, we see also what is clearly facing us as a people. We know that we have to do better at dealing with some of the problems that are

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undermining our strength and productivity here at home. We can't turn our backs on them.

And I often think, as my husband talks about the challenges, that they really do all fall under a broad rubric -- you might call it "Security and Responsibility" -- both on the domestic and the international front.

But we have to redefine what those words mean here at home. And for me, security means that we have to rebuild the sense of security that Americans have, so that they can be equipped to deal with the challenges that confront them.

It is very difficult to tell people who don't have some of the basics of their lives taken care of, that they should go out and be productive and future oriented and responsible.

And there are three areas that are of particular concern. One is economic security. We have to a better job making it possible for people to have good jobs. It used to be that, if you had a job, you could kind of count on it for the rest of your life if you did what you were supposed to do. And we all know that's no longer the case.

And so for many people, what they had thought they had worked for, or what they had taken for granted, is no longer there. So we have to think about how do we make people economically secure? How do we get jobs back into places where there aren't enough? Or how do we try to provide opportunities for the people to move out of places to take jobs where they can be creative?

How do we invest in making new jobs, so that we can begin to see wages rise again? Because in the private sector, most wages for most working people have stayed stagnant now for fifteen years. They've not had very many increases. And for many people who have lost what were once good paying jobs, they find it difficult to match those wages in the job market.

And many of the kinds of stories that you read about now, with layoffs and other things occurring, that is probably a necessary part of the changes that are going on. But it's not enough to just say, "Fine, those people will find something else." Unless we make some of the changes that we are making, that may not be the case. So economic

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security is very important.

Another kind of security which is critical is physical security. It is not an accident that finally we are focusing on crime and violence, because it has gotten to such a point that none of us can ignore it any longer. It has been a growing problem in many regions of our country, particularly in our inner cities, for a number of years.

But it hadn't quite spilled over, so that it brought the attention of the entire country the way it has now. And I think that much of the reason for its finally grabbing center stage is because of the number of children being killed, the number of innocent children being shot on playgrounds, shot in schools, being the victims of drive by shootings, and the number of children who are killing other children.

Somehow that has pierced our consciousness unlike any of the rest of the violence that has been occurring. And I am so grateful that finally it looks like we are on the brink of addressing that. (Applause) We are on the brink of finally saying, "Enough is enough." The most basic duty of a society, and certainly of a government, is to provide for the safety of its citizens.

That's what your husbands spend their lives doing, to protect us around the globe. And yet we can't protect ourselves in our own country. And I think that the combination of more police officers, which is very important. You know, in the 1950s we had three police officers on the street for every serious crime.

Today we have one police officer for every three serious crimes. So increasing the number of police will make a difference. Using different kinds of punishment --boot camps, which many of your husbands know a lot about, is something that, if we get young people early enough and we really give them the right combination of discipline and focus, can make a difference.

The kinds of programs that General Powell worked on when he was at the Pentagon, to try to reach young people, particularly in their 13, 14 year period, and get them interested in Junior ROTC. That's a symbolic effort that can be multiplied across the country if adults will take the time to go into some of these ravaged areas and work with these

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youngsters.

And doing something about a different way of combatting the drug war. Yes, doing everything we can to keep the drugs out, but beginning to focus more on the demand side. Trying to get these people not to be addicted by using some of the treatments that we know work.

There's a drug court in Miami that has had a phenomenal success rate. It takes drug offenders and it says, "We will postpone punishing you by sending you to jail if you will go into drug treatment." And it's a little controversial because it uses acupuncture. But it works.

And so we need to be creative and try some things to break the cycle of drug addiction.

And then finally, and this I am so grateful for, and I think all of us should be, we are finally beginning to do something about taking the guns off the streets of our cities. (Applause) So working on physical security so that we can all feel safe again.

You know, this came through to me, as often these things do in personal ways, one day about a year and a half ago, when I was still in Arkansas. And Chelsea came to me and she said, "Can I ride my bike with so-and-so up to the library?"

The library was only about eight blocks away, and we were a lot freer to get around in Arkansas than we are now, but I stopped and I said, "No, I'll drive you," because I was scared to let her get on a bike in the middle of the day, with a friend, and ride to the library.

And I thought about the countless days, when I would run into the house and I would yell, "Mom, we're going to the library. We're going to the park. We're going to the movie." We'd get on our bikes, and she'd yell as we drove out the driveway, "Just be back in time for dinner."

And she didn't worry, and we didn't worry. And look what we have done to our children. We have robbed them of their childhoods; we have taken away the opportunity for them to explore and to learn, that all of us took for granted.

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And the third area of security, which is one that I have worked on now for a number of months, is health security. It is very hard to imagine what it is like for the millions of Americans who do not have the guarantee of health coverage.

But even for those who do, it is hard for any of us to know for sure that we will have it next year at this time, because nobody is entitled to it in our country. It depends upon what you can pay, and who you are, and where you live, and who you work for, and whether you've ever been sick. And as I have travelled around the country, I have these indelible images stuck in my mind of the faces of people all over who have told me their stories.

And every one that I hear convinces me even more that, until every American has health care security, none of us is secure. And I know that for many people this whole health care debate seems very complicated. But that's because it's a big, big issue. It's one that has a lot of various aspects to it.

But there are some simple, fundamental principles that I think everybody can agree on. The first is that you ought to be able to get health care coverage, no matter who you are, as long as you're an American. And that means, no matter where you live. And that means, no matter whether you've had a pre-existing condition.

And it ought to be health care coverage that takes care of you, not that disappears when you read the fine print, not that is not accessible to you.

It's one thing -- and I know it's one of the complaints that I learned about as I studied the military and the VA systems -- is that sometime we say there's health care, but, in effect, we make it very difficult to access. We tell people, "Oh it's there, but you're going to have to go through 900 hoops, and wait forever before you get it."

That's in effect, for many people, being told it's not accessible to them. And what we have tried to provide, in the President's plan, for everybody, is a series of plans that you can choose. And this is going to be true, also, for military dependents and retirees and for VA-eligible people, because we want all of you to have choice that means something.

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And we're going to be creating networks of military and civilian health care providers, so that we can honestly tell you, "You not only have coverage, you can access that coverage." And I think that will make a big difference to a lot of military dependents and retirees.

So security is key, and every time I think that I have kind of hardened to the stories that I hear, I hear another one. And last Friday I heard one that I can't get out of my mind. I was at the Rainbow Babies and Children Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio, which I think is a great name for a children's hospital. All the doctors have little rainbows on their pockets, and it's a very happy place.

And I was meeting with the families of chronically ill children, you know, the children with cystic fibrosis and cerebral palsy and diabetes and arthritis and leukemia and the kinds of things that make you have to go back to the doctor all the time.

And there was a family, a mother and a father with their three children, their healthy son, and their two daughters who had cystic fibrosis. And the mother was holding the younger of the two daughters on her lap.

And she said, "I want you to know how hard my husband and I have tried to be able to buy insurance to take care of our daughters. He's a small businessman. We're more than willing to pay our fair share. We have coverage for ourselves and our son, but we can't get insurance for our daughters."

And she said, "I didn't realize how my family was viewed, really, until recently, when I sat across the table at an insurance company office, trying to work out a way to have some kind of insurance for these girls. When finally this person across this table from me looked at me and said, 'I'm sorry, but we don't insure burning houses.'"

And, you know, I was sitting there when this mother said it. And she just said it in a way that just pierced my heart. You know, I thought, "What if I were in that position, with my daughter?" I don't know that I would be so calm. I'm not sure I could tell my story one more time.

And yet she wanted to, with the hope that we could do something for her and her family and the millions of

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families like her. And I'm hoping that we can, too.

I remember talking to some of your husbands a few months ago, when we were at an event at the White House. And we were talking about health care, because I was excited about what we were proposing for DOD and VA, and they had been briefed, and they seemed very happy and satisfied about it.

And one of them said to me, "You know, I never really stopped to think about this until I realized that of course we provide health security for our military members. I mean, how could we send people off on missions or into battle if they weren't sure they'd be taken care of? How could we do that?"

And he said, "And I suddenly realized that everyday, in the civilian sector, most people don't know that they will be taken care of." Some of them who are insured think they will, but you have such things like lifetime limits and other kinds of obstacles that all of a sudden pop up. And then millions more who aren't."

And I remember telling him about a family I had met who had told me that had finally had to tell their sons they had to quit sports, because they couldn't afford insurance, and they didn't want the boys taking a chance of being hurt.

And that little story -- it wasn't about a tragic illness -- but that little story was as meaningful to me as the big stories that I hear.

So trying to provide health security to everybody is absolutely fundamental. So security and responsibility, two words that have meant a lot to you and your families and to your husbands over the years, are two words that need to mean a lot again to Americans.

Yes, we want to provide better security, economic, physical, and health. And, yes, we want people to begin to be more responsible for themselves and their families, particularly their children. And that two-edged message, we have to get out, and talk about with everyone.

And you have, in many ways, lived that. You've demonstrated what it means to put yourselves on the line, to make sacrifices, to stand behind what you believe and what

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our country needs.

And as we approach Thanksgiving, I would not only just thank you for what you have done, but challenge you to also reach out to those beyond, those who also need to know what it means to be responsible in today's world. And what kind of changes America must make if we are to remain strong and leading this extremely complicated planet that we find ourselves on.

I have every confidence that we are going to emerge, in the 21st century, stronger than ever, because we're going to live up to the challenges we face. But it's going to take a lot of hard work and a lot of individual commitment to get us there. And I salute all of you for symbolizing what I mean when I talk about that, and ask you to be part of helping us make the changes we know our country needs to have made.

Thank you all very much.

(Applause.)

A PARTICIPANT: Mrs. Clinton, we are so very, very, very honored that you're here, and I didn't have that written down. We want to thank you for attending the 16th annual Joint Armed Forces Officers' Wives' Luncheon. And the committee is pleased to present you with a small token of our appreciation.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. Can I look?

A PARTICIPANT: Oh, certainly. The committee is also pleased to donate this year's charitable contribution, as chosen by Mrs. Clinton, to Army Emergency Relief, Navy Marine Corps Relief Society, Air Force Aid Society, and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance.

Again, thank you very much.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. (Applause)

A PARTICIPANT: Mrs. Clinton, it became apparent from your first days in Washington that you would keep a hectic schedule, and so we are honored that you chose to spend a few hours with us today. (Applause)

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We are grateful for this opportunity to get to know each other better and to hear about your interest in security and responsibility, a message that we promise to pass on to the others of our members who couldn't be here today.

To our honored guests, we thank you for being here today too, and we appreciate your support of our 16th annual luncheon.

To the officer wives of Washington, we are here today to celebrate the sisterhood of military wives. All around the globe, 24 hours a day, our families live the life of service to country and sacrifice. The two are inseparable, and that is what unites us.

I hope all of you have had a chance to reach out and meet someone from another service. That's part of what this day is all about. We thank you for coming, and we look forward to being together again next year.

I would now like to introduce Chris Oster, a marine wife, who will offer the benediction. Following that, may I ask you to remain seated until the dining room doors have been opened, at which time you are welcome to leave.

Mrs. Oster.

MRS. OSTER: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for the men and women of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, who have faithfully served this great nation throughout history. We are a chosen nation, we love our God. We love and support those who defend our precious freedoms.

Thank you, Lord, for providing us with families who sustain our servicemen and women as they perform difficult duties around the globe. Thank you, Father, for the women here today, and for others like them, throughout the world, who make defending this nation a blessed and honorable task.

Guide and direct us as we strive to uphold the moral values that you taught us are important. And let us not become weary of doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Even in this time of great change, we, as a family, represent a most powerful force for good. Heavenly Father,

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we humbly pray that you work your perfect will in the lives of our leaders. We pray especially for President Clinton and Mrs. Clinton and for our great nation.

Help us always remember the psalmist, who wrote, "Blessed is the nation whose God is Lord. The people He chose for His inheritance."

We offer this prayer according to the tradition of our individual faith, and I pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

(End of proceedings.)

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