

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 13, 1982

Dear Bob:

A few days ago, I returned from a memorable three-state visit to America's heartland. In Iowa, Minnesota and Indiana, time and again I was inspired by the commitment and resolve of average citizens from all walks of life -- farmers, factory workers, small businessmen and professionals pulling together through difficult times to make our country great again.

Thanks to their support -- and the cooperation of the Congress -- last year we were able to put in place the first phase of a program for economic recovery. We gave the American people the biggest tax relief package in this century, we cut the increase in government spending nearly in half, and we dramatically reduced inflation.

Together, we have won the opening battle in the war for economic recovery. But the struggle goes on. The economic mess that piled up over 50 years is not going to evaporate overnight.

I believe that the American people understand this, and at every stop on my trip through the heartland, they urged me to hold firm to the course we have charted for recovery. That course is as clear as it is essential. There will always be room for improvement in any budget and any economic policy. Where further savings can be found, or a better way of meeting agreed upon goals can be worked out, I pledge my full cooperation to you, and I want to hear from you. But my first and foremost obligation is to keep faith with the American people. When it comes to holding down taxes and insuring a strengthened national defense to protect the peace, there must be no such thing as retreat.

There's an old mountaineer saying that heroism is endurance for one moment more. I understand the nervousness that some members of Congress may feel in an election year. The temptation is always strong to go for the easy option, the quick fix that may buy a little time but solves nothing in the long run. Well, it was decades of quick fixes and time-buying that landed our country in the economic crisis we are now working to overcome. It will take courage and endurance -- heroism and statesmanship -- to see us through.

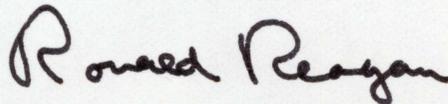
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So, while you are home this week, I urge you to listen to the real voices of the American people, not just the squeaky wheels. May you draw strength from them, as I have.

We are bringing the budget under control. We are winning the battle against inflation. We are bringing interest rates down. And we are returning resources and responsibilities to the people that will mean more savings, more freedom, more economic opportunity and more jobs for all Americans.

Where we have honest differences, you can count on me to be a willing listener and a sincere partner. But this is no time for turning back. Nothing should sway us from our basic commitments to the people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald Reagan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "R" at the beginning.

The Honorable Robert Dole
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510