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WASHINGTON SEMESTER PROGRAM --WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3RD

2:00 PM, ROOM 1224 N.S.O.B.

Let me begin by thanking Professor Lieberman for the invitation to meet with you this afternoon. I expect that you are going to come up with some sharp, probing questions, but that is how we keep government open to the people, and I am looking forward to answering them.

Successful, humane government is a process of refining and reforming. It cannot survive without constant testing and reassessment. I hope that we can engage in a productive session like that this afternoon. From looking over the list of students participating, I know that I can count on you to have done some heavy thinking about the problems facing American government today.

Before going to the questions, there is one thing I would like to touch on. Participation in the Washington Semester Program gives you a special opportunity to learn about the day-to-day realities of government from within. This is an opportunity that most of your fellow citizens -- whether they are young or old, hardhats or hippies -- do not have. I hope that you will make the most of it because I know it will give you an insight that even the best textbooks and lecturers cannot convey second-hand.

Don't get me wrong! You are bound to run into a lot of hang-ups along the

way. But, believe me, they ~~are~~ not the exclusive monopoly of student interns. Your frustrations, though great at times, will be no greater than ^{those} ~~that~~ of many freshman Senators and Representatives who have come to the Capitol long on ideals but short on practical knowledge.

But, like them, if you take the time, and muster the determination, ~~if~~ you will overcome those initial barriers. And if you do, you will see how real progress and change can be -- and is being -- accomplished, despite the many obvious flaws in the system.

Speaking of the "system", I realize that there is a lot of despairing talk today about how it is breaking down -- and I have had to learn first-hand, as a ~~Freshman Representative~~ freshman in both the House and the Senate, some of the inadequacies of the system.

But I do not believe that there exists today a workable, ~~alternative~~ humane alternative to representative constitutional government. Reviewing the history of the world since 1900 -- a period that has embraced more sudden, drastic change than the last millenium -- we can see that our form of government (with the possible exception of one or two European parliamentary democracies) is the only one to have ~~withstand~~ weathered the storms of the twentieth century without undergoing bloody revolution and dictatorship of the far Right or far Left.

That, I think, is a sound, factual basis for hope, and an irrefutable *argument*
peaceful,
~~for~~ for/evolutionary reform rather than violent, revolutionary disruption.

In case you think I have wandered a little far afield, let me quickly
add that all this relates very closely to the Republican National Committee.

As the official organization of one of our two national parties, the Committee's
success or failure ~~will~~ influences the responsiveness of the Republican Party
to the American people, and, therefore, the effectiveness of the system.

As Chairman of the Republican National Committee, my job has two major
facets: Party building, and Party advocacy.

Each function is vital. Internally, the Committee is the organizational
nerve center of every Republican State, County and Precinct ~~organ~~ committee
across the country. Externally, the Chairman is a national spokesman for
Republicanism and a sort of defensive and offensive end for Republicans in
public office, whether they are state legislators or the President of the United
States.

I think you will agree that these responsibilities cover a lot of ground,
and give you plenty to ask about. And, on that note, it is about time I started
fielding some of your questions.