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dreams. Her dedication to her people and, therefore, her contribution to our country is unsurpassed.

When Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus 40 years ago, she ignited the single most significant social movement in American history. When she sat down on the bus, she stood up for the American ideals of equality and justice and demanded that the rest of us do the same. When our descendants look back in time to trace the fight for freedom, Rosa Parks will stand among our Nation's greatest patriots, the legendary figures whose courage sustained us and pushed us forward. She is, and continues to be, a national treasure.

Ginetta Sagan's name is synonymous with the fight for human rights around the world. In World War II, she paid dearly for her dedication to the cause of freedom. For more than a year, she was imprisoned and tortured but not broken. Instead, she devoted her life after the war to saving others from the ordeal she had endured. Through her tireless work with Amnesty International and her Aurora Foundation, she has drawn the world's attention to the plight of prisoners of conscience and of their families. Amnesty International has created a fund named in her honor designed to help stop torture and especially to stop the persecution of women and their children. She represents to all the triumph of the human spirit over tyranny.

Morris Udall represents everything a lawmaker should be: dedicated to seeking common ground, committed to improving the political process, and singularly possessed as no one in my adult lifetime has been of the one trait no Member of Congress should be without, an extraordinary sense of humor.

Mo was fond of quoting Will Rogers, who once advised us that in life you ought to get a few laughs and do the best you can. Well, he got a lot of laughs, and he did better than most. He set a standard few could match by his passionate commitment to preserve our national resources and to leave our children a safer environment. His life is an inspiration and more. His work is a gift to all Americans, and we are especially grateful that his son could be with us today.

Now it is my great honor and privilege to present to each of you the Presidential Medal of Freedom with great respect for your work, your dedication, the example you have set for all your fellow Americans.

I ask now the military aide to read the citations.

[*At this point, Lt. Col. Michael G. Mudd, USA, Army Aide to the President, read the citations, and the President presented the medals.*]

Ladies and gentlemen, we're going in for a reception now. But I wanted to say one thing. Rosa Parks was delayed in Detroit just as many of these people were delayed trying to get here because of the traffic. So we will have another time to give her her medal. We're sorry she couldn't be here. We're delighted everyone else is here. Please come in for the reception.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Remarks After Surveying Flood Damage Along the Potomac River and an Exchange With Reporters

September 9, 1996

The President. Good afternoon. I have just completed a tour by helicopter of flooded areas in nearby Virginia and Maryland, along the Potomac, and the C&O Canal with Interior Secretary Babbitt and FEMA Director James Lee Witt.

Let me first say that our thoughts and prayers are with the people who have suffered losses along our Eastern States because of the effects of Hurricane Fran. Lives have been lost; homes and businesses have been destroyed or badly damaged.

For many of our people, the effects have been truly devastating. I want to reassure the people who have suffered that we will provide quick action to help in their urgent time of need. We will do whatever we can to help them get back on their feet.

Virginia has been severely affected. We can see the flooding along the Potomac, but it has also occurred along the Dan, the James, the Roanoke, the Shenandoah, and the Rap-

pahannock Rivers. On Friday, the day after Virginia Governor George Allen requested a disaster declaration, I authorized FEMA to provide 100 percent funding for direct Federal assistance to help with the cleanup of all counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

In addition, based on visits to the affected areas by Director Witt, additional assistance is being made available to several cities: Danville, Harrisonburg, Staunton, and Waynesboro, and to Augusta, Halifax, Madison, Pittsylvania, and Rockingham Counties through FEMA's individual assistance programs.

Today, five additional counties have been added to that list: Mecklenburg, Page, Rappahannock, Shenandoah, and Warren. This will give help to individuals, including temporary housing, family grants, and low-interest loans. Residents in Virginia counties designated for the individual programs should call FEMA's hotline to receive help.

The FEMA number is 800–462–9029. That's 800–462–9029. In North Carolina, where many lives have been lost, 24 counties have been declared eligible for the individual assistance programs as a result of Hurricane Fran. More than 4,000 people have already registered for help in the State of North Carolina.

FEMA will continue to assess the damage from storms, high winds, and flooding until we're sure that the needs of all the affected populations are met in Virginia, North Carolina, and in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

In disasters such as this, it takes all of us coming together to help our fellow citizens get back on their feet. Many have offered donations. A hotline has been set up for those donations as well. That's 800–747–8920. 800–747–8920. The American Red Cross is also helping to get aid to people in need.

Back in the winter, severe snowstorms caused terrible damage along the C&O Canal, as I saw again today. Those damages were repaired by determined people, and because of their work, our people were able to enjoy the paths and the beauty along the canal through the summer. Much of that work will now have to be done again because it's been undone by the flooding. But our people have always been resilient in the face of disasters, and we know that they will be resilient again.

We will do everything we can to get help to them as quickly as we can, and to stay with them for as long as it takes. Again, let me thank Secretary Babbitt, Secretary Cisneros, Secretary Peña, the others who have worked on this, and especially, as always, Director Witt, for an excellent job. Thank you very much.

Flood Assessment

Q. Mr. President, there's another storm brewing in the Caribbean, Hurricane Hortense. How many—what if that should hit the States, and how many can we afford for emergency relief?

The President. Well, Hortense is brewing in the Caribbean, and of course, our first concern now, as I understand it, is for Puerto Rico. And we will just watch it, but we'll have to afford as many as we have to sustain. We have to put a high priority on this.

I think the thing that impressed me—you asked me if there was any one thing I saw that impressed me—the thing that impressed me today was seeing those areas so heavily flooded around Great Falls that I visited. You remember the Vice President and I went out there—I think it was on Earth Day—and helped to clean away some of the debris with a lot of the young people that were there with the AmeriCorps and local conservation programs. To see it all under water again and the power—the sheer energy and power of the Potomac manifesting itself all the way downriver and the flooding of Old Town in Alexandria, the inundation of Hains Point where I run so many times, and those other places that it really reminds you of the incredible impact that a hurricane and its storm center can have, even in areas where it doesn't directly hit.

Q. Is that area salvageable now, sir? This is the second big hit in——

The President. Absolutely, sure it is. Secretary Babbitt pointed out that actually a lot of the major investments that were approved by the Congress to fix what was done before have not been made yet. So they have almost all their major capital investments still to make. And therefore, the funds have not

been, if you will, wasted or broken, and we'll be able to go forward.

Is that right?

Director James Lee Witt. Absolutely.

Q. Sir, do you see the—to the Republicans—[*inaudible*]——

The President. No, I think Americans, without regard to party, believe in aggressive disaster relief. I would hope they do. We've been through a 500-year flood in the Middle West, the big flooding in the Pacific Northwest, the earthquake, and all the terrible other problems that we had in California, the fires and the floodings. So just about every region of America has been touched in the last 4 years by some form of disaster or another, and I think we all understand our shared responsibilities there.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:39 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel and an Exchange With Reporters

September 9, 1996

The President. Is everybody in? Let me just say very briefly, it's a pleasure to welcome Prime Minister Netanyahu back to the White House; Mr. Gold; our new Ambassador from Israel, welcome, sir. I'm especially glad to have this chance to visit with him so soon after his historic meeting with Mr. Arafat, and I'm looking forward to getting a briefing on that and discussing the issues that are still outstanding.

All of you know the United States is still committed to peace and security, and I think we're making some progress in that direction. And I'm going to do whatever I can to advance it.

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, when do you think you'll pull your occupation troops out of the Golan Heights and Lebanon?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Well, you didn't waste any time. [*Laughter*] First of all, let me say that I'm delighted to be here with President Clinton and Vice President Gore and Secretary Christopher.

We've renewed our commitment to achieving peace with the Palestinians and with the Syrians. I think that we've been greatly assisted by President Clinton and his staff in resuming the negotiations with the Palestinians. It's not an easy road ahead, but it's one we're committed to, and we'll pursue it. And I went over the notes of the conversation that I had with President Clinton a few months ago here, and we've pretty much done what we set out to do, again, with the support—I think the very important support of the United States.

I hope to have the same kind of support as we seek to resume the peace talks with the Syrians. And in fact, we're enjoying American assistance, and so far we're awaiting the Syrian response.

Q. Where do both of you see the process going with, first, with the Palestinians, and with the Syrians?

Prime Minister Netanyahu. Mr. President.

The President. Well, that's what we're going to talk about.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:50 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dore Gold, Policy Adviser to the Prime Minister; Israeli Ambassador to the United States Eliahu Ben-Elissar; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister John Bruton of Ireland and an Exchange With Reporters

September 9, 1996

The President. I'm delighted to have the *Taoiseach* here today and a good day: The talks began again today. Senator Mitchell is over in Belfast, and I just want to talk to him about where we go from here.

Also, I want to note that Ireland is assuming the Presidency of the European Union, and we have a lot of common interests there, a lot of things we have to work on together, including our common interest in the world-