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Reagan Attends Howard Reception

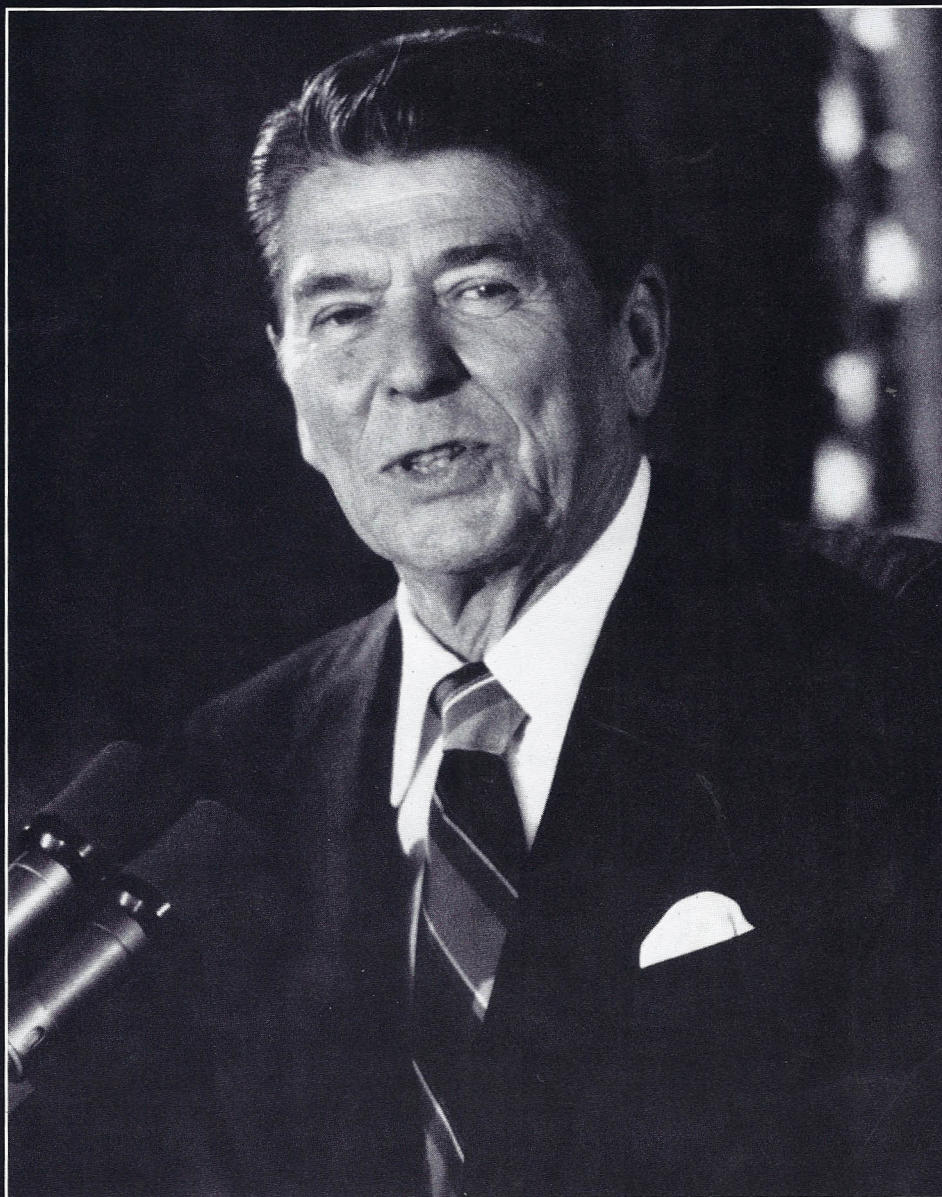
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Reagan Attends Howard Reception



(Excerpts from the President's remarks at a \$1000 per head fundraiser for the university's New Direction Fund on May 20, 1982.)

I know the generosity and the feeling toward this school that has brought you here—and it wouldn't be possible to name all who have been so generous, but maybe I could say that Rawleigh Warner [chairman of Mobil Oil Corp.], I think, epitomizes the kind of spirit that is so supportive of this school. His contribution was \$25,000 and [that of] Rich Devoss, [president of Amway Corp.] \$20,000. I know that there were others that were worthy of mention, but I will just stop with those.

We've been looking forward to this evening, or this afternoon, however you want to describe it. Nancy was lucky enough to get Dr. [James E.] Cheek over to the White House for lunch last fall. Then he returned the favor and had her back for a tour of the campus and the activities of the hospital center, which, being a doctor's daughter, she's very much interested in.

And, of course, Mike Deaver's been personally involved in Howard's fundraising drive. So we couldn't be more pleased than lending a hand, if that's possible, to all that you're doing.

This university has offered all Americans, and particularly our young, Black Americans, invaluable opportunities to develop their talents and skills, training them for service to the professions, their communities and their nation.

Howard is widely recognized as the largest, and certainly, one of the finest Black universities in the world.

Our administration is committed to the future of Howard and to the other historically Black colleges and universities throughout our land. We must never forget that when educational opportunities were denied elsewhere, these institutions offered hope to our fellow Americans—young, Black Americans.

James Madison said that a well-instructed people alone can be permanently a free people. Well, it wasn't until 1867, in the aftermath of a tragic and violent war and Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, that America gave birth to a new era and to Howard University. This would be a center of learning to fulfill the promise of Lincoln—serving the people who had waited so long to enjoy what was theirs by birthright.

Lincoln was a simple man but he spoke great truths. He said, "No man is good enough to govern another man without

that other's consent. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever differs from this is no democracy."

In the years that followed, Howard has fulfilled its mission—sending its trained graduates into the world to practice professions in all walks of life. Fifteen years ago, President Lyndon Johnson came to Howard to mark the celebration of the University's 100th anniversary and he told the students, "The task is to give 20 million Blacks the same chance as every other American—to learn and grow, to work and share in society, to develop their abilities—physical, mental and spiritual, and to pursue their individual happiness." His was a message from the heart and his answer was a program of political action and economic redistribution to lessen the plight of those who had not shared equally the blessings of freedom. But as the wrongs were gradually redressed and barriers broken down, people began questioning whether big government could guarantee economic abundance. It's one thing to ensure everyone's right to buy a ticket on the train—and that government must do. But that ticket isn't worth much if the train then can't leave the station.

Government has an essential role to protect those in need. But it's self-defeating to keep cutting smaller and



smaller slices of pie from an ever shrinking pie. It is time now for all of us together to make a bigger pie for all our citizens and everyone having a bigger slice. That's what we're determined to do.

Howard University, under Dr. Cheek's strong leadership, not only understands this need for a new direction, it has laid out a parallel mission of its own. It's called "The New Direction Fund" and its goal is to raise \$100 million in the private sector within the next five to seven years. The funds will go for endowed chairs and distinguished professorships, increased student aid and scholarships, research, library resources and other capital projects not funded by the federal government.

Howard University seeks to excel, to be the best. There are so many potential areas for growth and development. I spoke of Nancy's visit to the hospital center and I can tell you she was impressed with what she saw being done there in pediatrics and other areas.

Some people see Howard fulfilling a unique role. They see this university as an ideal orientation center for citizens and leaders of Third World nations coming here to learn about democratic institutions and our enterprise system.

Each of you, I know, shares my belief in the principles of the free market, personal initiative, competition, responsibility, reward and stewardship. Your presence and your generosity demonstrate how willing you are to live up to your beliefs. We can't thank you enough for that.

And let's remember that we're working as partners, the public and private sector together. Our administration, I like to think, is also doing its part. On September 15th, 1981, I directed federal agencies to increase the ability of historically Black colleges and universities to participate in federally sponsored programs. We've made significant progress. □