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November 5, 1975

MRS. FORD'S REMARKS TO THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1975

I'm very glad to be here tonight, and that's not a line borrowed from a campaign speech.

I feel absolutely marvelous. I just had my annual checkup and all my tests are completely clear. There is no sign whatsoever of a cancerous reoccurrence at this point. I'm convinced that I am completely cured.

Thanks to that checkup last September, good doctors, a loving supporting husband and understanding children -- I can truly say this past year as been one of the richest and happiest of my life.

When I went into the operating room that morning I was pretty sure it was going to turn out to be a malignancy and that my breast would have to be removed. But once the operation was over, I was really very relieved. I felt the doctors had gotten the cancer at such an early stage that I was very lucky.

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The most difficult moments were trying to pull my family through my cancer operation. I really had to pull them through, and to try to make them happy because they were so sad and upset.

The malignancy was something my husband never expected, and he couldn't believe it was happening to me. The whole family felt that way.

I think their surprise was a very natural reaction, because one day I appeared to be fine and the next day I was in the hospital for a masectomy. It made me realize how many women in the country could be in the same situation.

That realization made me decide to discuss my breast cancer operation openly, because I thought of all the lives in jeopardy. My experience and frank discussion of breast cancer did prompt many women to learn about self-examination, regular checkups and such detection techniques as mammography.

I certainly don't mean to minimize the emotional impact of the operation for me and my family. But knowing I helped educate other women to the dangers of breast cancer did encourage me in some dark moments.

Too many women are so afraid of breast cancer they endanger their lives. These fears of being scarred and of being "less" of a woman are very real, and it's very important to talk about the emotional side effects honestly.

It was easier for me to accept the operation, because I had been married for 26 years and we had our four children. There was no problem of lack of love, affection and attention.

But some women don't have these same emotional resources, and it's very necessary to deal realistically with the fears about breast cancer.

It isn't vanity to worry about disfigurement. It is an honest concern. I started wearing low-cut dresses as soon as the scar healed, and my

worries about my appearance are now just the normal ones of staying slim and keeping my hair fixed. When I asked myself whether I would rather lose a right arm or a breast? I'd rather have lost a breast.

What is important is life--and good health.

Last year I had that critical checkup at the insistence of a friend, and I've tried to repay that act of friendship by talking about how important regular checkups are for early detection of breast cancer and, of course, other types of cancer.

~~But cancer is not only a disease that takes many forms. It often~~ also produces ~~the disease of~~ fear -- and much of that fear comes from ignorance about the progress already made and ignorance of the need for preventive medicine for men and women alike.

Cancer wherever it strikes the body, also strikes the spirit, and the best doctors in the world can't cure the spirit, only love and understanding can.

All of us can give love and support to our friends who have cancer. We can open our hearts and our minds to dealing with the fears ~~that cripple the spirit.~~ ~~that~~ not only ~~of the~~ victims have, but, unfortunately so many of us have of this disease

There are people in this audience working to find cures for cancer, and many of you help fund these research efforts. I thank you personally for your contributions to the detection and the eradication of this disease.

The cure rates and the numbers in so many different types of cancer are encouraging. But the most important number of all is one--that one person you may know who needs your understanding when faced ~~with~~ this disease.

I believe we are all here to help each other and that our lives have patterns and purposes. My illness turned out to have a very special purpose -- helping save other lives, and I'm grateful that it did.

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Pullen / 2nd November 5, 1975

Mrs. Ford American Cancer Society, November 7, 1975

I'm very ~~gx~~ glad ~~xxthex and thankful~~ to be here tonight, and that's not a line borrowed from a campaign speech.

I feel ~~xxxxxxxx~~ absolutely marvelous. I just had my annual checkup and all my tests are completely clear. There is no sign whatsoever of a cancerous ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ reoccurrence at this point. I'm convinced that I am completely cured.

Thanks to that ~~very important~~ checkup last September, good doctors, a loving supporting husband and understanding children -- I can truly say this past year as been one of the richest and happiest of my life.

When I went into the operating room that morning I was pretty sure it was going to turn out to be a malignancy and that my breast would have to be removed. But once the operation was over, I was really very relieved. I felt the doctors had gotten the cancer at such an ~~sx~~ early ~~xtxxge~~ stage that I was very lucky. ~~one of the fortunate ones~~.

The most difficult moments were trying to pull my family through my cancer operation. I really had to pull them through, ~~xxxxxxxxx

I think their surprise was a very natural reaction, because ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ one day I appeared to be fine and the next day I was in the hospital for ~~xxxxxx~~ a masectomy. It made me realize how many women in the country could be in the same situation.

That ~~really~~ realization made me decide to discuss my breast cancer operation openly, because I thought of all the lives in jeopardy. ~~The open discussion did prompt~~ ~~This~~ My experience and ~~the open~~ frank discussion of breast cancer did prompt many women to learn ~~about the value of~~ about self-examination, regular ~~xxxx~~ checkups and such ~~new~~ detection techniques as ~~xxxxx~~ mammography.

I certainly don't mean to minimize the emotional impact of the operation for me and my family. But knowing I helped educate other women to the dangers of ~~xxxxx~~ breast cancer did encourage me in some dark moments.

Too many women are so afraid of breast cancer they endanger their lives. ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ These fears of being scarred and of being "less" of a woman are very real, and it's very important to talk about the emotional side effects ~~openly and~~ honestly.

It was easier for me to accept the ~~xxxxxx~~ operation, because I had been married for 26 years and we had our four children. There was no problem of lack of love, affection and attention. ~~But some women don't have these same emotional resources, and this~~ it's so ~~important for us to [illegible] words to eradicate~~ recognize ~~that fear can be as dangerous as~~ cancer.

But some women don't have these same emotional resources, and ~~[illegible]~~ it's very ~~important~~ necessary to ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ deal ~~honestly~~ realistically with ~~[illegible]~~ the fears ~~[illegible]~~ about breast cancer.

It isn't vanity to worry about disfigurement. It is an honest concern. I started wearing low-cut dresses as soon as the scar healed, and my ~~concerns~~ worries about my appearance are now just the normal ones ~~all of us have~~ of staying slim and keeping my ~~[illegible]~~ hair fixed. When I asked myself whether I would rather lose a right arm or a breast? I rather have lost a breast. ~~What I've tried to say when I discussed this operation is that what is really important is good health. Our health is something we have to ~~[illegible]~~ guard with regular checkups and attention to the way we live.~~ What is important to me is life and good health.

Last year I had that critical checkup at the insistence of a friend, and I've tried to repay that act of friendship by talking about how ~~[illegible]~~ important regular checkups are for early ~~[illegible]~~ detection ~~is for~~ of breast cancer and, of course, other ~~[illegible]~~ types of cancer.

But cancer is not only a disease that takes many forms. ~~[illegible]~~ It often produces the disease of fear---and much of that fear comes from ignorance about the progress already made and ignorance of the need for preventive medicine.

Cancer wherever it strikes the body, also strikes the spirit, and the best doctors in the world can't cure the spirit, ~~like~~ only love and understanding can.

All of us can give love and support to our friends who have cancer. We can open our hearts ~~to helping deal with the fear and minds~~ and our minds to ~~helping deal~~ dealing with the fears that cripple the spirit.

~~I would not have accepted to~~

There are people in this audience working to find cures for cancer, and many of you ~~are working to~~ help fund these research efforts. I ~~[illegible]~~ thank you personally for your contributions to the detection and the eradication of this disease.

The cure rates and the numbers in so many different types of cancer are encouraging. But the most important number of all is one--that one person you may know who needs your understanding when faced with this disease.

I believe ~~[illegible]~~ we are all here to help each other and that our lives have patterns and purposes. My illness turned out to have a ~~[illegible]~~ very special purpose--helping save other lives, and I'm grateful that ~~[illegible]~~ it did.

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(Pullen) November 3, 1975

MRS. FORD, AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY, NOVEMBER 7, 1975

I'm very glad to be here tonight, and that's not just a line I borrowed from one of my husband's political speeches. Thanks to a regular medical checkup, good doctors, a loving supporting husband and understanding children -- I can truly say this past year has been one of the richest and happiest of my life.

I'm pleased that the removal of my right breast because of a malignancy produced an open discussion of the problem. It truly made my own painful experience easier to bear to know how many women were prompted to get medical treatment.

I certainly don't mean to minimize the emotional impact of the operation for me and my family, but knowing I helped educate other women to the dangers of breast cancer sustained me through a difficult period.

So many women are afraid of breast cancer to the point of endangering their lives that it is particularly important for sensible, straight forward discussions.

Cancer is not only a disease that takes many forms. It can also produce the disease of fear. And much of the fear comes from ignorance--ignorance about the progress already made and ignorance of the importance of preventive medicine.

I've always been a believer in the importance of regular checkups, and I hope to convert those of you who are too casual about your own health. As a mother, I've supervised my children's health, but sometimes mothers and fathers who always get their children checked regularly neglect themselves.

You'll forgive me for sounding just a little preachy on this subject, but I do have some first-hand experience.

The best doctors in the world can't cure the spirit like love can, and all of us can give love and support to our friends who have cancer.

I could not have accepted a masectomy as well without a strong marriage and a husband's love. Cancer wherever it strikes in the body, also strikes the spirit. easier to take / sympathy

There are people in this audience working to find cures for cancer, and many of you are working to fund these efforts. I commend you for your contributions to the eradication of this disease.

The cure rates and the numbers in so many different types of cancer are encouraging. But the most important number of all is one--that one person you may know who needs your understanding when faced with this disease.

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So many women are afraid of ~~breast cancer~~ breast cancer to the point of endangering their lives that it is particularly important for sensible, straight forward discussions ~~that this type of cancer be discussed frankly~~.

Cancer is not only a disease that takes many forms. It can also produce ~~a~~ the disease of ~~the spirit~~ fear. And much of the fear comes from ~~in~~ ignorance---ignorance about the progress already made and ignorance of the ~~ex~~ importance of preventive medicine.

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