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COMMUNICATOR OF HOPE AWARD

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1976

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KNOWING MY MASTECTOMY

HELPED SAVE LIVES

AND REDUCE FEAR

~~great~~ Tremendous
BROUGHT ME STRENGTH AND HOPE,

AND IT HAS BEEN A VERY SPECIAL PRIVILEGE

TO SHARE THAT HOPE WITH OTHERS.

BREAST CANCER IS SUCH A PERSONAL

AND EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE

FOR ANY WOMAN NO MATTER WHAT HER AGE.

Fortunately
I HAD THE ADVANTAGE

OF BEING MARRIED TO A VERY FINE MAN

AND HAVING FOUR LOVELY CHILDREN.

THEY HELPED ME THROUGH THE DIFFICULTIES

OF REALIZING WHAT I HAD TO FACE IN LIFE.

*And they have never let me down —
I'm proud to say I'm still
their favorite girl —*

WHAT I HAD TO ACCEPT
WAS THAT I HAD ^{had} CANCER
AND THAT IT COULD ^{Possibly} REOCCUR
AT ANY TIME.

I HAD TO LEARN TO LIVE
WITH THE INSIDIOUS DISEASE
WE ARE TRYING TO CONQUEOR
AND WHICH TAKES SO MANY LIVES.

FACING UP TO THIS REALITY
BECOMES A DAILY FACT OF LIFE
FOR ALL CANCER PATIENTS.

*But it is something I have never
dwelled on or let it preoccupy
my mind from my many
other interests or projects in life*

BECAUSE SO MANY HUNDREDS
OF THOUSANDS OF WOMEN
IN THE WORLD HAVE BREAST CANCER,
I FELT I HAD TO SHARE
MY EXPERIENCE WITH THEM,
SO THAT THEY WOULD TAKE PRECAUTIONS. *for them selfs-*

How ever'

IN MY TRAVELS AS FIRST LADY,
MANY WOMEN WHO HAD HAD MASTECTOMIES --
SOME 25 OR 30 YEARS AGO --
SHARED THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH ME.
This was most assuring —

THE SHARING OF THIS EMOTIONAL
AND FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE
WITH OTHER BREAST CANCER PATIENTS
HAS COMMUNICATED HOPE TO ME.

I ACCEPT THIS HONOR

AND YOUR GRACIOUS COMMENTS

WITH GRATITUDE TO ALL

WHO HELPED ME FACE UP TO ~~CANCER~~ my

*In fact you &
the media gave
me tremendous hope
right from my
hospital bed
where I viewed
on television
the lives of
problem*

MY HOPE TODAY

IS THAT THE FIGHT

TO ALERT WOMEN

TO THE NEED FOR SELF-CARE

MOVES AHEAD VIGOROUSLY.

TOO MANY WOMEN STILL DIE,
BECAUSE FEAR DELAYS DIAGNOSIS
AND TREATMENT.

SO MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE,

But ~~AND~~ WE ALL CAN BE
COMMUNICATORS OF HOPE.

~~...the fact that we can do~~
~~...the fact that we can do~~
~~...the fact that we can do~~

I CHALLENGE THOSE OF YOU
IN THE MEDIA
TO USE YOUR TALENTS *constantly*
TO BATTLE IGNORANCE AND FEAR
ABOUT BREAST CANCER. *OR ANY FORM OF CANCER*

This is the least we can do
So let's get on with the job
and educate all these we can.

Our work has only begun!

thank you again for the privilege
of sharing my small role with you.

CANCER CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1976

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I WANT TO ADD MY PERSONAL REPORT
TO YOUR CONFERENCE.

I JUST RECENTLY COMPLETED CHEMOTHERAPY
AND MY LATEST EXAM SHOWS
NO TRACE OF CANCER.

EXCEPT WHEN I TALK TO A GROUP LIKE YOURS,

I RARELY THINK

ABOUT MY MASTECTOMY.

I DO, HOWEVER, THINK OFTEN

ABOUT HOW TO EDUCATE WOMEN

ABOUT BREAST CANCER.

THE SURGE OF INTEREST AND INCREASED CHECKUPS

AFTER MY OPERATION TWO YEARS AGO

HAS DIMINISHED.

I SHARE YOUR CONCERN

ABOUT KEEPING WOMEN ALERT TO THE DISEASE

WHEN THERE ARE NO HEADLINES.

MEDICAL PROGRESS
IN DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT
MUST BE MATCHED BY EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS
AND ACTION BY WOMEN THEMSELVES.

TO THE WOMEN HERE TODAY,

I SAY:

"WE ARE OUR SISTERS' AND OUR DAUGHTERS' KEEPERS,
AND WE SHOULD REMIND OTHERS
OF THE NEED FOR REGULAR CHECKUPS
AND MONTHLY SELF-EXAMINATIONS."

AS THOSE OF YOU IN THE MEDICAL PROFESSION
MAKE PROGRESS
AGAINST THE DISEASE,
ALL OF US CAN HELP
BY FIGHTING THE FEAR
SURROUNDING BREAST CANCER
AND BY EDUCATING OTHERS
TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR OWN SELF-PROTECTION.

— ○ —

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Communicator of Hope Award, American Cancer Society,
Wednesday, December 1, 1976

Knowing my masectomy helped save lives and reduce fear brought me strength and hope, and it has been a very special privilege to share that hope with others.

Breast cancer is such a personal and emotional experience for any woman no matter what her age. I had the advantage of being married to a very fine man and of having four lovely children. They helped me through the difficulties of realizing what I had to face in life.

What I had to accept was that I had cancer and that it could reoccur at any time. I had to learn to live with the insidious disease we are trying to conquer and which takes so many lives. Facing up to this reality becomes a daily fact of life for all cancer patients.

Because so many hundreds of thousands of women in the world have breast cancer, I felt I had to share my experience with them, so that they would take precautions. In my travels as First Lady, many women who had had masectomies--some 25 or 30 years ago--shared their experiences with me.

The sharing of this emotional and frightening experience with other breast cancer patients has communicated hope to me. I accept this honor and your gracious comments with gratitude to all who helped me face up to cancer.

My hope today is that the fight to alert women to the need for self-care moves ahead vigorously. I challenge those of you in the media to use your talents to battle ignorance and fear about breast cancer. Too many women still die, because fear delays diagnosis and treatment. So much remains to be done, and we all can be communicators of hope.

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