

## Remarks at a Testimonial Dinner for H. Ross Perot

Good evening.

Midshipman Byam, in the film classic, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, observed that the word, 'friend,' is 'the finest in any language.'

Ross Perot is a *friend* ever-faithful to America's veterans. His commitment not only comes from a gracious and giving heart ... but from the depths of great personal generosity. It comes, too, from a midshipman's profound regard for those extraordinary Americans in uniform—past, present, and future—who, like Ross, are called to protect and preserve Freedom ... inspired by the blood of patriots ... and graced by the goodness of a higher power.

Yesterday, as today, America's sons and daughters defended our precious legacy of Liberty from unbridled aggression ... oppression ... tyranny ... and terror.

They held high the burning torch of Freedom, its light kindled by their abiding bonds as brothers-in-arms ... fanned by their unwavering faith ... and fueled by their unshakable fidelity to this great Nation we so proudly call our own.

Ross is the steadfast *friend* who stands by their side long after the guns have silenced ... long after the confetti-filled parades celebrating their victories have passed by ... and long after the tears, mourning their agonizing losses, have dried.

This evening, I pay tribute to at least four people— An American patriot ... a proud veteran .... a foremost philanthropist ... and, a resolute *friend* of those who served Freedom's cause.

Ross is all four of those people, and more. A man whose life reflects the bedrock values and quiet virtues of our National character ... and whose selfless concern for others represents the very best of what it means to be an American.

Ross ... tonight, with veterans across the Nation, I salute you, sir. On their behalf ... with their gratitude ... and in their collective voice, I thank you with the simple words of the poet, William Butler Yeats—

"Count where man's glory begins and ends  
And I say my glory was I had such a friend."

And now, ladies and gentlemen, I am honored to present—on film—the measure of the man ... the measure of our dear *friend*— H. Ross Perot.