



# LINCOLN CHAFEE

## U.S. SENATOR

### RHODE ISLAND

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June 8, 2004

Mr. President,

I want to pay tribute to President Ronald Reagan, a man for whom I had the utmost respect.

A strong, principled leader, President Reagan used his optimism and humor to help the nation feel better in a post-Vietnam, post-Watergate country coping with an energy crisis and high inflation.

He brought strong leadership and could relate to people from all walks of life very, very easily. Democrats controlled the House during both of his terms, and the Senate during his last two years in office. In order to advance his priorities, he had to bridge the partisan divide and work with members of the other party. He was also very proud of his good personal relations with Tip O'Neill and other Democratic leaders. The proof of his appeal was his ability to carry a Democrat stronghold like my state of Rhode Island in the 1984 election. He was the last Republican Presidential candidate to do so.

With tremendous vision and dignity, President Reagan will ultimately be remembered for ending the Cold War and promoting freedom and democracy throughout the world in a peaceful way.

In closing, I recall a large color photograph on my father's office wall. It is a picture of merriment, Senator Robert Dole having just cracked a joke, with President Reagan, Alan Simpson and John Chafee standing by, smiling from ear-to-ear.

Later, my father obtained a copy of the photo and at a later meeting with the President, slid it down the table towards him and asked if he would sign it. Without even thinking, Reagan penned a line and slid it back.

It read simply, "John--some times it is fun, isn't it?"

Some times it is fun, isn't it? -- Ronald Reagan, with unfailing good humor and optimism, made Americans feel good about their country again. I believe that is his lasting legacy.

The Chafee family offers our sincere condolences to Nancy, and the Reagan family."