

Good Evening.

I know that I have had a long-standing invitation to visit your reservation so I am happy and honored to finally be here.

However, I do wish that I were standing before you under different circumstances.

On September 10th we were a country confident that a little downturn in our economy would easily be overcome.

On September 10th we were a state that was making plans to meet the challenges of a changing economy and a changing workforce.

On September 10th we were a people full of hope, secure in our freedom, fun loving and free to move about the world with ease.

On September 11th in the span of less than one hour, our sense of freedom and security took a crushing blow.

This is a difficult time.

It is a time that should remind us that people of all cultures and all religions have a right to inhabit this earth and live in peace and comfort.

It is a time that should remind us of the importance of tolerance and inclusion.

Just after the attack on America we held a memorial at the State Capitol in St. Paul.

Thirty-five thousand Minnesotans came together to pay tribute to our fallen heroes.

Thirty-five thousand Minnesotans of all colors, all religions, and all walks of life lifted up our spirits and resolved to overcome the tragedy of September 11.

Thirty-five thousand Minnesotans, who clearly were speaking for all of Minnesota and all of America, said—we will stand united.

Tolerant of each other's beliefs.

Tolerant of each other's individuality.

Respectful laws.

And respectful of the institutions that enforce those laws.

Yes, we will stand together and we will overcome these difficult times.

When Terry and I were in New York last week and visited the World Trade Center site, I knew we would overcome.

I knew it because I saw the resolve in the faces of the rescue workers as they reverently and methodically picked through the debris at ground zero.

Yes, these are difficult times.

But I believe in America.

I believe in the free world.

I believe in the children and young adults I met at the Fond du Lac Ojibway school today.

I believe in the entrepreneurial spirit of the people of America and the people of the Fond du Lac Tribe.

I believe that working together, with respect and tolerance, we are a force of good that will conquer evil.

But it won't be easy.

We are in a war.

A war that threatens our own safety—and we are not used to that.

We are in a recession.

Just yesterday my Department of Finance released the October Economic Update and it wasn't good news.

But we must not give in to the bad news.

We must live free, work hard, have fun and be confident.

We must look beyond the rubble.

We must look beyond the recession.

We must work hard, together, confident that no one can destroy our freedom.

No one said that democracy would be easy.

Thank you.

(Questions)