

Remarks at a “Take Our Daughters to Work” Luncheon

April 28, 1994

Well, first, let me join the First Lady and the Vice President in welcoming you here. It’s delightful to look out at this sea of faces, to see the daughters of members of the White House staff, people who work for the National Government, people who work for the press, people who have come in from various schools around the Washington area and from other places. I know we’ve got a group here from Chicago over here, and I just had some pictures taken and shook hands with them.

When I was a much younger man, I was Governor of my State. And my daughter went to school one day, and she was 5 or 6 years old, and they said, “What does your father do for a living?” And she said, “He makes speeches”—which she pronounced “peaches” then—[*laughter*]—“drinks coffee, and talks on the telephone.” And you know, that’s about it. [*Laughter*] That’s a pretty good description of it. And that’s when she told me she wanted to be a scientist. [*Laughter*]

I am so pleased to see all of you here, and I especially want to thank the people who’ve come in from other places, too, to bring their children. I thank the Ms. Foundation and People magazine and everyone who is responsible for this lunch. The real message of this day, I think, is twofold: One is that we have to find a way to make it possible for all Americans to be successful as workers and successful as parents at the same time. We don’t want there to be a division between our obligations to our children and our obligations to our work. And the second is, we want to say to the young women of our society: You can grow up to do anything, to be anything, to achieve anything that your imagination and your effort and your talent will let you achieve.

And so, I hope you have a wonderful day today. I hope this is something you’ll always remember. And at the very least, I can say what this young lady, who is the daughter of one of our White House photographers and is working here—I said, “Are you having

a good day today?” She said, “Sure, I got out of school.” [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 12:45 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Remarks on Presentation of the Presidential Awards for Design Excellence

April 28, 1994

Thank you very much. I’d like to first acknowledge the work of the jury, including the chair, Michael Vanderbyl, and the Members of Congress who have supported this endeavor, including Senator Pell, Congressmen de la Garza, Regula, Swett, and Yates.

We are here to honor the genius and skill of men and women whose work represents the highest level of excellence in American design, which consists of more than mere beauty; it is also at its best inspirational, enduring, functional and cost-effective. Design, at its best, can enrich our lives, beautify our surroundings, improve our productivity and performance, and even help to effect social change.

We see these qualities reflected in Federal design projects all across our Nation, from the wonderful monuments here in the Nation’s Capital, to the simple elegance of Dulles Airport, to the highways of the Southwest, the day care centers in Baltimore, the secure telephones in Federal agencies, even to some of our Government catalogs.

The Federal Government is the largest purchaser of design services in the world. And the designs we commission should reflect not only the best artistic execution available but also taxpayers’ money well spent. Each of the eight projects chosen for the Presidential Awards for Design Excellence combine beauty, utility, and economy in a truly unique way.

The Army Corps of Engineers’ novel navigational channel system, Bendway Weirs, will save millions of dollars every year on dredging and reduce navigational delays along a 180-mile stretch of the Mississippi River. That’s something, because of my previous life, I know a little about.

The Farmers Home Administration's Mer Rouge low income rural housing was cited for, quote, "its poetic and uplifting architecture, and its cost-saving construction." Why can't we do that with all publicly supported housing?

EGIS explosives detector, commissioned by the State Department and the Federal Aviation Administration, is a brilliant design that showcases handsome artistry along with modern innovation and technology.

By blending nature, science, technology, and human expression, these and the other designs we honor today will be lasting monuments to the innovative spirit of Americans, and to the diversity and breadth of our culture. I salute the designers of these outstanding Federal projects and recognize those Departments who had the foresight to commission and oversee them. And I'm especially glad to see the Secretary of Agriculture here today, Secretary Espy, thank you very much.

At this time, I'm also pleased to announce the call for entries for the next round of Presidential Design Awards. I hope there will be many more entrants; I hope we will be able to highlight them. I can't help but say that I think that if we could get these award winners that we're recognizing today and the next round of entrants widely publicized around the United States, it could have a dramatic impact on having the American people feel that their tax dollars are being better spend. It could have in the aggregate a really positive way of connecting the American people to their Government again. And if you can do that, after all we have been through over these last decades that have alienated the American people from their Government, you will have helped us to do something profoundly important.

I'd like now to call upon the Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts to implement the awards program. She has done a terrific job, and I'm sure this will be one of her more enjoyable duties. Ms. Jane Alexander.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:40 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Michael Vanderbyl, chair, Presidential Design Awards.

Statement on the Presidential Awards for Design Excellence

April 28, 1994

Quality design is essential if we are to compete effectively in the world marketplace, create more jobs, make our cities more livable, protect our environment, and enrich our cultural life.

The Nation is indebted to the designers and the Federal Government partners responsible for these exemplary projects. As we strive for first-rate quality for every tax dollar spent, theirs is an example of excellence we want others to emulate.

NOTE: This statement was part of a White House press release announcing the recipients of the Presidential Awards for Design Excellence.

Remarks to the National Conference of Black Mayors

April 28, 1994

Thank you so much. I didn't know where Henry was going with that story. I thought it was going to get down to where he couldn't think of anything to thank me for but giving his brother a good job. [Laughter] My imagination was running wild, and so was yours. [Laughter]

Mayor Kelly, thank you for being with us and for giving such leadership to what is now my hometown. I've enjoyed being a citizen of Washington, DC, and going to schools and walking streets and doing things that Presidents often overlook. You can be in a cocoon here and forget you live in a city full of people and promise and problems. I've enjoyed that.

I want to thank Mayor Espy for his leadership and for his friendship. I want to say a special word of appreciation to Secretary Cisneros, who's agreed to be our administration's main link to you, for the outstanding leadership he has provided at Housing and Urban Development, the things that he's doing that have needed doing for so many years, some of which have immediate pay-offs, some of which may have years to go before we fully see the benefits of them. But we have somebody in that job now who's full of ideas and heart and who works hard, who