

do anything for George Mitchell that would be more fitting. It's better than a statue. It's better than a plaque. It's better than an endowment for some other purpose, because what you are doing is giving him a chance in his name to create other George Mitchells, to give other young people a chance to live out their dreams, and to prove that the dream that made him what he is is still alive and real in this country today.

I thank you for that, because I have known very few Americans that remotely embodied the qualities of this country in their purest sense as well as George Mitchell does. And this gift you have given him does that as well.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome Senator Mitchell.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:13 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

### **Remarks Aboard the U.S.S. *Eisenhower* in Norfolk, Virginia**

*October 6, 1994*

Thank you very much, Secretary Perry, Admiral Miller, Admiral Owens, Admiral Flanagan, Admiral Murphy, Captain Gemmill, and to all of you who are here. It's a great honor for me to be here. I asked to see the person responsible for decorating the F-14 with my name and the Vice President's name there. I guess I'm going to have to take flying lessons. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. I told someone to take a picture of that, and I'm going to take it back to the Vice President when I see him this afternoon and suggest that we both take flying lessons. [Laughter] Admiral Miller said, "You understand on that plane, you would still control the eject seat." [Laughter] And I told him, "I don't believe in ejecting. I'd never bail out." But I was glad to know that.

I thank you all for your service. I'm pleased and honored to be with you today. I understand that some of you have actually chosen to come back from your leave to be a part of this ceremony, and I'm deeply grateful for yet another expression of your devotion to your country. I am proud of the job you have done, proud of the great work that all of our troops are doing in Haiti. And on behalf of the American people, the most important

message I have to you today is a simple, straightforward, heartfelt thank you.

I also want to thank, especially, Captain Gemmill and the crew of this magnificent carrier for the "I Like Ike" button. You know, you may think that's funny, since he was a Republican and I'm a Democrat, but—[laughter]—when I was born, President Truman was President. But obviously, I was an infant; I didn't have much consciousness of it. President Eisenhower was elected in the year I went to the first grade, so he was the first President I really ever knew anything about. And all of us, regardless of our party, liked Ike. I can still remember when the country was united in a way that it's not now and when political arguments were a little more civil than they tend to be now. President Eisenhower's life of service to our country and his incredible leadership throughout his military career, culminating in his leadership in World War II and of course ultimately in his election to the Presidency, was an inspiration to me and to every other young American and I know is a continuing inspiration to all of you who are privileged to serve on this great carrier and in this group.

Much has been asked of you, and you have delivered. Thanks to your efforts, the Haitian people are moving from fear to freedom. Thanks to your efforts, the democratically elected government will soon return to power. Thanks to your efforts, the world knows that the United States will stand up for human rights and against slaughter, stand up for democracy, honor our commitments, and expect those who make commitments to us to honor them as well. We gave our word, and you, the men and women of the *Eisenhower* Battle Group, kept the word of the United States. And for that, we are all in your debt.

The stories from Port-au-Prince and elsewhere in Haiti have inspired all Americans. We have seen the moving images of Haitians approaching and thanking American troops for their new-found freedom. We have seen the joy in their eyes and the hope in their faces. Operation Uphold Democracy is not over yet, and you know well that it still presents dangers to the men and women of our Armed Forces.

But look what has happened in less than 3 weeks. In less than 3 weeks, you've disarmed FRAPH, the attachés, and the other militia who terrorized thousands of Haitians. In less than 3 weeks, you took heavy weapons away from the military and made the cities and the towns more secure. In less than 3 weeks, you helped 1,900 refugees return home from Guantanamo, no longer afraid for their lives. In less than 3 weeks, you permitted Parliament once again to open its doors for business. And today, they're having a good, old-fashioned debate down there, about like what happens in Congress every day in Washington. In less than 3 weeks, you returned Port-au-Prince Mayor Evans Paul, a man in hiding in his own country for 3 years, back to his office. In less than 3 weeks, you put state radio and television back into the hands of people who want democracy. In less than 3 weeks, you even turned the lights back on in Cap Haitien after 2 years of darkness. In less than 3 weeks, you showed the world what the men and women of the American military can do.

All of us owe these achievements to the fact that you are the best trained, best prepared, best equipped, most highly motivated fighting force in the world. Your reputation preceded you to Haiti. When the military rulers learned that you were on your way, they agreed to step down. The awesome force you represent is the steel in the sword of America's diplomacy.

The success of the mission in Haiti to date also shows how flexible our military has become. Thanks to careful planning by the U.S. Atlantic Command and the joint task force, we were able to quickly recall the massive assault force that was on its way. In its place, and within just hours of reaching agreement with Mr. Cédras and the other military leaders, we sent in troops, carried by the *Eisenhower* Battle Group, to keep the peace in Haiti.

Operation Uphold Democracy demonstrates the value of mixing our four services together and drawing on the special capabilities of each of them, what Admiral Miller calls adaptive force packaging. You prepared the first-ever infantry air assault from a carrier. Had it not been for such innovation, it would have taken many more hours,

if not days, for our troops to be on the ground there. I salute Admiral Miller and the members of his staff who developed this innovative plan, which will change our military planning and make it possible for us to do remarkable things well into the 21st century. You have laid the groundwork for a dramatic forward movement in a military planning and execution. You should be proud, and the Nation owes Admiral Miller and his staff a great deal.

Of course, even the best strategists can only make a difference if they have the resources to do the job. That's why I was pleased yesterday to sign the fiscal year '95 defense authorization bill, which was passed with strong bipartisan support including the support of Virginia's two fine Senators, Chuck Robb and John Warner, and the two able Congressmen from this area, Norm Sisisky and Bobby Scott. This bill will assure that you remain better trained, better equipped, and better prepared than any other military in the world, and I am determined that it will always be that way. [Applause] Thank you. I know that one piece of this defense bill will be especially welcome news for all of you, the \$3.6 billion we will spend on a new aircraft carrier, CVN-76. That carrier will be built right here in Norfolk by thousands of hard-working Virginians. Like the *Eisenhower*, it will give us the capability to project our power around the world, to support peacekeeping and humanitarian relief missions, and, if necessary, to fight and to win regional conflicts.

In 2 weeks, just 2 weeks, you set sail for the Adriatic, to carry on your work of protecting our country's national interests around the world. I know you will demonstrate the same skill and professionalism on this journey that you have shown in Haiti.

In a few moments, I'll have the distinct honor of presenting Navy commendation medals for meritorious service in Haiti to several of you. But I want every one of you to know that in my book, each and every one of you is a medal winner, an example of what is the very best in our country. You serve with distinction, you serve in a selfless way, you serve in a way that will help us to build a peaceful and freer and stronger world for

yourselves and your children as we move into the next century, and we are all in your debt.

Men and women of the *Ike*, you have proved your capabilities time and again. In Haiti, you brought a new day to a people who thought they would never get it. You answered the call; you did the job; your country is proud of you.

Thank you. God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:51 a.m. In his remarks, he referred to Adm. Paul D. Miller, commander in chief, U.S. Atlantic Command; Adm. William A. Owens, USN, Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Adm. William J. Flanagan, Jr., commander in chief, Atlantic Fleet; Adm. Daniel J. Murphy, Jr., commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group 8; and Capt. Mark Gemmill, commanding officer, U.S.S. *Dwight D. Eisenhower*.

### **Remarks at the Blue Ribbon Schools Ceremony**

*October 7, 1994*

Thank you very much for that wonderful welcome, increasingly rare around here these days. I just wanted to hear the Vice President say those lines from "A Man For All Seasons." [Laughter] They're wonderful, aren't they?

Let me say, as you know, we're about to wind up this session of Congress today, tomorrow, sometime in our lifetime, it will end. That's why I couldn't be here earlier today. But I did want to come by and say a heartfelt congratulations to all of you.

The Vice President and the Secretary of Education have already talked about what we're trying to do here, but I would like to put in a couple of sentences what I think is very important. It's hardly ever discussed in the common discussion, at least, of what goes in Washington. But we have been quietly, but effectively, trying to create a dramatic change in the relationship of the National Government to the schools of this country and to the teachers and to what is going on in education. It is a change rooted in the experiences that Secretary Riley and Deputy Secretary Kunin and I had as Governors and the hours and hours and hours that we all spent in public schools, listening to teachers,

watching people work in the schools, listening to parents.

We have made the Federal Government both more active in education and, yet, less meddlesome in trying to support what you are trying to do. We have tried to put the National Government on record in favor of globally competitive national standards of excellence in education but also in favor of getting out of the way and letting you achieve those standards of excellence in education. And this is a substantial departure. The "Elementary and Secondary Education Act" that just passed the Congress, overcoming the perennial filibuster problem, does just that. It provides targeted funding, more directed toward the areas of real need, but also provides for an enormous amount of flexibility for the schools so that every school can be a blue ribbon school. That, in the end, ought to be our objective in America.

So we will keep trying to do our job here. It will make a real difference that no child should ever walk away from going to college because of the cost, because under this new student loan program, you can have lower interest rates and longer repayment terms, and it can be geared to your salary so that if you want to be a schoolteacher or a police officer, something where you're not going to be rich, you can still afford to pay back that student loan. That will make a difference. It will make a difference in hundreds of thousands of more kids in Head Start; that by 1996, every child in this country under the age of 2 will be immunized; that'll make it easier for the kindergarten and the first grade teachers to do their job. Those things will make a difference.

But in the end, we know what will make the difference is you, the teachers, the parents, the principals, the people at the grass-roots level. All the magic of education is still in the human interplay that is a long way from Washington, DC. So we'll keep trying to do our job, but a big part of our job is making sure that you have, to use the new Washington buzzword, the empowerment necessary to do your job. That is our commitment to you; we will keep it. And I am glad to see your smiling faces here today.

Bless you all, and thank you very much.