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think the American people will get their balanced budget; they will get these education tax cuts; they will get the next step of welfare reform to create jobs for people who are going to be moving from welfare to work; and it will be a very, very good time. The atmosphere so far feels good to me, and if we just keep working on it, I think we can get there.

Q. Mr. President, have you made all of your final budget decisions? And is there any possibility of your reopening any of those decisions, specifically on Medicare?

The President. Well, let me answer you this way. I have completed sometime ago the work on the budget. We still have to work around the edges from time to time. It is a good budget; it is a credible budget. I also am pleased that the OMB and the Congressional Budget Office have been working together to try to narrow the gaps between them in all these assumptions they have for the budget. And I'm confident that we can produce one that will bring balance under either set of assumptions, and I intend to do that. And the budget will reflect the priorities I laid before the American people in the campaign and will be consistent with what I have said over the last 4 or 5 years about this.

Now, I also expect there to be a negotiating process with the Congress, and I will work with them in good faith, as I have said all along. But I think this budget will show that I am making a clear effort to reach out to them, to meet them halfway, and to get this job done.

Q. In what year will the budget you present in February actually reach a balanced budget?

The President. In 2002, the same year we——

Q. The same year.

The President. ——all along.

Q. Does that mean that on Medicare you are going to go for raising the premiums and so forth? And you spoke in generalities, but is there anything you can——

The President. Well, it means I don't want to remove all the suspense from my budget presentation. [*Laughter*]

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:31 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Fiona Rose, University of Michigan student who introduced the President.

Remarks on Presenting the Arts and Humanities Awards

January 9, 1997

Thank you very much. When Hillary said that, I was so hoping that there wouldn't be even one loud stage whisper saying, "I wish he had made that choice." [*Laughter*]

I am so delighted to be here to honor the 1996 recipients of the National Medal of the Arts and the Charles Frankel Prize. They are men and women whose accomplishments speak to the breadth and depth of our creative and intellectual genius.

I want to begin by thanking Jane Alexander, Sheldon Hackney, Diane Frankel, and John Brademas for their energetic and wise leadership in promoting the arts and humanities across our country. I thank them for what they have done. This cold day is a rather apt metaphor for a lot of what they have labored through the last couple of years, and we are all in their debt for standing firm.

I thank the United States Marine Band for being here. I'm always so proud of them and the work they do for our country. I thank the magnificent Harlem Boys Choir for their wonderful music and for being here. All of you who are supporters of the arts who are here, I thank you for being here, supporters of the humanities. I see Secretary and Mrs. Riley and Congressman Dicks and Congressman Rangel. There may be other Members here; I apologize for not introducing you, but for those of you in other positions of public responsibility, in particular, I thank you for standing up for the arts and humanities.

Each year this ceremony gives us an opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary contributions of individual American artists, writers, and thinkers, to reflect on the role of the arts and humanities in our own lives and in the life of our great democracy. We are a nation whose

strength and greatness are derived from the rich heritage and diversity of our people, from the richness of our artistic and intellectual traditions. For more than 200 years, our freedom has depended not only upon our system of government and the resolve of our people but upon the ferment of ideas that shape our public discourse and on the flow of creative expression that unites us as a people.

Today we are on the eve of a new century. The arts and humanities are more essential than ever to the endurance of our democratic values of tolerance, pluralism, and freedom and to our understanding of where we are and where we need to go. At a momentous time in our history like this, when so much is happening to change the way we work and live, the way we relate to one another, and the way we relate to the rest of the world, we cannot fully understand the past nor envision the future we need to pursue without the arts and humanities.

It is, after all, through the arts and humanities that we unleash our individual and collective imaginations. And imagination is, in the end, the animating force of a democracy committed to constant renewal, the force that allows us to conceive of a brighter future and a better world, that allows us to overcome new challenges and grave difficulties. By imagining a better America and acting to achieve it, we make our greatest progress.

That is why we must sustain our Nation's commitment for the arts and humanities to build that bridge to the 21st century I am so committed to. We must have our theaters, our orchestras, our dance troupes, our exhibits, our lectures, our scholarship. We must have them all to strengthen and preserve our culture and instill in our children the democratic ideals we claim to cherish. And we must have them so that our young people can imagine what their lives might be like if they were better. For all the speeches I might give, the children struggling to overcome difficult circumstances, simply seeing the powerful example of the Harlem Boys Choir is probably more persuasive than any words I could ever utter.

Today the average American spends about 80 cents to support Federal funding of the arts and humanities, about as much as it costs to buy a can of soda pop in a vending machine. In some places it costs more than that. [*Laughter*] This tiny investment means that from Providence to Portland, from Minneapolis to Miami, from Dallas to Des Moines, Americans of all walks of life can share in the great artistic and intellectual life of our Nation.

In America, we should all be able to enjoy art, ideas, and culture, no matter what our station in life. And our children should be able to be exposed to them, no matter what their station in life. For children, Federal support of the arts and humanities is particularly critical. Think of how often we hear stories about children who, unable to find safe outlets for their ideas, their emotions, their enormous physical energy, travel instead down the wrong road to destruction and despair. But across our Nation, Federal support to the arts and humanities has enabled tens of thousands of those children to see their first play, their first ballet, their first Monet. What a transforming experience it can be when a young person discovers his or her own gifts for music, for dance, for painting, for drama, for poetry, photography, or writing.

One man who knows firsthand about the power of art to change young people's lives is the artist who designed the medal that some of our honorees will receive today. Bob Graham is one of our Nation's finest sculptors. After the Los Angeles riots, he decided to hire inner-city gang members as assistants and apprentices in his studio in southern California. These young men have recharted their futures and found that instead of feeling alienated by society, they are now valued for the contributions they are making to society.

The earlier we start developing these creative impulses for artistic and intellectual potential, the better off our children and we will be. As Hillary wrote in her book, we know a great deal more today about the importance of providing such stimulation for children in the very first years of life. We know how important it is for children to hear words, listen to stories, develop their imaginations. That's one reason I'm challenging all of our people to work with us toward a goal of making sure every boy and girl in our country can read a book independently by the third grade.

Perhaps no one has done as much to show the power of the written word on children, not to mention on their parents, as Maurice Sendak, one of our honorees today. I'm delighted that he will join Hillary tomorrow at the Georgetown University Medical Center to read to children who are getting their checkups there. And I thank them both to help to kick off a national

effort to educate Americans about reading even to our very youngest children.

For the better part of this century, the world has looked to the United States not simply for military and economic and political leadership but for cultural leadership as well. So as we embark upon this new century, let us make sure that our Nation remains the cultural oasis it is today. I am optimistic about our prospects because of the commitment and the dedication of those of you who are gathered here and because our Nation is honored and blessed by the artists and thinkers we recognize today.

In an age when words and images and ideas are too often diluted, devalued, and distorted, when what we see and hear is routinely reduced to catch phrases and instant images, the men and women on this stage represent instead the profound, lasting, and transcendent qualities of American cultural life.

Now it gives me great pleasure to present the 1996 National Medal of Arts awards and the Charles Frankel Prize. First, the men and women being awarded the National Medal of Arts.

Last month we paid tribute to our first honoree at the Kennedy Center, and I'm proud to honor him again. For some 40 years, playwright Edward Albee has been a dominate and inspirational figure in American theater. His plays offer raw and provocative portrayals of the human experience. He has challenged actors, audiences, and fellow writers to explore the complexities of our emotions, attitudes, and relationships. A native of Washington, DC, he won the Pulitzer Prize three times for "A Delicate Balance," "Seascape," and most recently for "Three Tall Women." I ask you to join me in congratulating Edward Albee. [*Applause*]

[*At this point, the President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Albee and presented the medal.*]

Audiences from Russia to the Philippines to our own shores have experienced firsthand conductor Sarah Caldwell's passion for music and her commitment to bring some of our world's most difficult yet beautiful operas to the stage. Sarah Caldwell has dedicated her life to promoting and introducing opera to new audiences here and around the world. She conducted her first opera at Tanglewood in 1947, founded the Boston Opera 10 years later, and went on to become the first woman ever to conduct the New York Metropolitan Opera. She is truly opera's First Lady. And if you will forgive me a small amount of parochialism, she has come a long way from our native State of Arkansas—[*laughter*]—and I am very proud of her.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Ms. Caldwell and presented the medal.*]

A photographer whose work has inspired both peers and casual viewers and a teacher whose ideas and methods have influenced university curricula, Harry Callahan is a national treasure. More than 50 years ago, he discovered the camera's power to capture the sublime and seemingly everyday subjects: nature, the city, and people. His subtle, contemplative pictures convey an intensely personal vision of the world. They have graced photography exhibitions in some of the finest museums around the world. A native of Detroit, his work reminds us that there is always much more than meets the eye.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Callahan and presented the medal.*]

I'm delighted to honor a woman who has spent some four decades creating and nurturing one of the leading artistic institutions in our Nation's Capital. The Arena Stage is a living legacy of the vision, the talent, and the creative energies of Zelda Fichandler. The Arena is one of our country's leading regional theaters and under her leadership has brought plays such as "Inherit the Wind," "After the Fall," and "The Crucible" to audiences in Russia, Hong Kong, and Israel. In 1976 she and the Arena became the first company based outside New York to win a Tony.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Ms. Fichandler and presented the medal.*]

Thank you very much for all you have done.

Musician, composer, and bandleader Eduardo (Lalo) Guerrero has spent a creative life celebrating and exploring his Mexican-American heritage in music from mariachis to orchestra pieces. An Arizona native, he began his career while still in his teens, composing what later became the unofficial anthem of Mexico. In the 60 years since, he has been prolific and inspired, composing songs that have topped the charts on both sides of the border. In 1980 the Smithsonian Institution named him a national folk treasure. And we are honored to honor him today.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Guerrero and presented the medal.*]

He still has his salsa, you see. [*Laughter*]

First, let me say that we are glad to see Lionel Hampton here safe and sound. A legendary bandleader, singer, and the first musician to make a vibraphone sing and swing, he has been delighting jazz audiences for over half a century. Anyone who has ever heard his music knows that he is much more than a performer; he is a pioneer. When Louis Armstrong invited him to play the vibraphones at a recording session in 1936, he realized he had found his calling. He mastered the vibes quickly and performed the first jazz vibraphone solo ever recorded. In 1936 he joined the Benny Goodman Trio, but soon he formed his own band and over the years has nurtured the talents of many jazz leaders, including Quincy Jones and Dinah Washington. He is a lion of American music, and he still makes the vibraphone sing.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Hampton and presented the medal.*]

Dancer, choreographer, and teacher Bella Lewitzky first began creating dances in her hometown of Redlands, California, when she was just 7 years old. With Lester Horton, she founded the Dance Theater of Los Angeles in 1946. Twenty years later, she formed the Lewitzky Dance Company, a troupe that has performed to critical acclaim around the world. Now in her 80th year, when it would be just as easy to rest upon her well-deserved laurels, she is eagerly looking to start new projects, and I hope all of you have inspired her here today.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Ms. Lewitzky and presented the medal.*]

Vera List has touched generations of students, teachers, artists, performers, audiences, and artistic institutions across America. For more than half a century, she has lent her vision, energy, and resources to philanthropic efforts to promote the arts at universities, museums, and through artistic endowments. The charitable foundation that she and her husband, Albert, created in 1945 helped to underwrite the construction of the Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center more than three decades ago. She has sponsored an opera performance for under-privileged children, PBS broadcasts highlighting the American artist, and many other varied and worthy arts projects. She has done what private citizens must do if we are going to bring the arts to all the American people, and we thank her for it.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Ms. List and presented the medal.*]

We would be hard-pressed to find any American who doesn't recognize Robert Redford as one of our Nation's most acclaimed actors, directors, and producers. He won an Academy Award for Best Director for ''Ordinary People.'' He's won numerous other awards and made wonderful movies. The most important thing to me about Robert Redford is that he could have been well satisfied to be a movie superstar but instead chose an entirely different life, because for years and years and years, he has supported and encouraged many young and emerging screenwriters and directors through the Sundance Institute in Utah. He's helped to promote nontraditional cinema. He's opened the doors for many new artists and their films. I can say also, in an area not covered by today's awards, he has been a passionate advocate of preserving our natural heritage and protecting our environment. And the Vice President and I were honored to have him with us at the Grand Canyon a few months ago when we set aside 1.7 million acres, the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in southern Utah, a cause that he pressed for for years and years and years. It is very important when a person with immense talent, resources, and fame tries to give the gift of creativity back to people who would otherwise never have a chance to fulfill their own God-given abilities. We honor him for that today and thank him.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Redford and presented the medal.*]

Throughout a lifetime as an author and illustrator, Maurice Sendak has singlehandedly revolutionized children's literature. In works such as ''Where the Wild Things Are,'' he has created heroes and adventures that have captured the imagination of generations of young readers. His books have helped children to explore and resolve their feelings of anger, boredom, fear, frustration, and jealousy. Hillary and I read ''Where the Wild Things Are'' alone to our daughter scores and scores of times. And I can tell you, he helped me to explore my feelings of anger,

boredom, fear, frustration, and jealousy. [*Laughter*] His books have become staples of children's libraries and family bookshelves. They will always be a beloved part of our national culture, and they have done a great deal to help our children find their own imaginations.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Sendak and presented the medal.*]

We were having a picture—Mr. Sendak said that, ''This is my first grown-up award.'' [*Laughter*]

I feel that I should sing about our next honoree—but I won't; relax. [*Laughter*] Stephen Sondheim is one of our Nation's finest composers and lyricists. Not only are his words and melodies timeless, appealing to all generations, they mirror the history and experiences we share as Americans. His work is indelibly etched on our national cultural landscape. Who among us can't rattle off some words from ''West Side Story,'' ''A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum,'' ''Gypsy,'' ''A Little Night Music,'' or ''Sweeney Todd''? Decade after decade, Stephen Sondheim continues to delight audiences here and around the world with his treasured lyrics. He has won five Tony Awards, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1993, received the Kennedy Center Honor for Lifetime Achievement in 1993. But he has given us more than we could ever give to him.

Stephen Sondheim.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Sondheim and presented the medal.*]

In less than 30 years, the Boys Choir of Harlem has become one of the world's finest singing ensembles. The choir gives 100 concerts every year and has performed at the White House, the United Nations, and all around the world. These accomplishments would be enough to merit a medal, but the Boys Choir of Harlem has also changed and saved lives. Over the years it has recognized and nurtured the God-given potential of thousands of young people whose talents might otherwise have gone unnoticed. The 550 boys and girls who attend the Choir Academy of Harlem learn much more than how to sing on key and in harmony. They learn that through discipline, hard work, and cooperation, anything is possible and dreams do come true. I again say they are a powerful, shining symbol to all the young people of this country about what they can become if the rest of us will just do our part to give them the chance.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated choir director Walter Turnbull and presented the medal.*]

I now have the honor of introducing the recipients of the Charles Frankel Prize.

Poet, professor of poems, and activist for poetry Rita Dove helps us to find the extraordinary in the ordinary moments of our lives. She has used her gift for language, her penetrating insight, and her sensitivity to the world around her to mine the richness of the African-American experience as well as the experience of everyday living. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1987 and recently Poet Laureate of the United States, she is considered one of our finest poets, and she truly is a life force of poetry.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Ms. Dove and presented the prize.*]

Best-selling author, historian, and political commentator Doris Kearns Goodwin has enriched our understanding and appreciation of the people and institutions that have shaped American government, American history, and American politics. Her great gift is to tell the story of America through rigorous scholarship, engaging prose, and anecdotes and details that bring alive major events and political figures. She has worked in the White House, taught at Harvard, written books about President Johnson, the Kennedys, and the Roosevelts. Her latest work, ''No Ordinary Time,'' won the Pulitzer Prize in 1994. And I can tell you it made the details of the White House come alive. I actually had the book, walking from room to room, imagining what it all looked like all those long years ago. In that book alone, she did a great service to the United States in helping us to understand our history, our leaders, and what this country is really all about.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Ms. Goodwin and presented the prize.*]

Political philosopher, public servant, builder of civil society Daniel Kemmis has dedicated his life to reawakening America's sense of community, of citizenship, of working together for the common good. In his books and lectures and during his tenure in politics, he has spread

the gospel of community involvement and explored the roots and true meaning of our democracy. He is a welcome and convincing voice against cynicism and social divisiveness. As we look to the next century, with ours the strongest, most vibrant democracy in the world but increasingly more diverse, the question of whether we will learn to identify ourselves in terms of our obligations and our opportunities in the larger community, to learn to work together across the lines that divide us with mutual respect for the common good is perhaps the greatest question facing the American people. Daniel Kemmis has helped to make sure we give the right answer.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Kemmis and presented the prize.*]

Arturo Madrid is pioneering the field of Latino studies in the United States. He's been an advocate for expanding educational opportunities for Hispanic students all across America. As professor of modern Spanish and Latin American literature and founder of the Tomas Rivera Center, the Nation's leading think-tank on Latino issues, he has helped Americans discern and appreciate the impact of Hispanic life on American culture and literature. An entire generation of Latino academics at the Nation's top universities owe some part of their success to Arturo Madrid's work. And now as we see Americans of Hispanic heritage the fastest growing group of our fellow citizens, the full impact of his work is bound to be felt in the future. So we thank him for what he has done and for what he has done that will be felt in generations yet to come.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Madrid and presented the prize.*]

Bill Moyers has received about every award there is in his field, quite simply because he has proved himself a giant in broadcast journalism. For more than 25 years, he has used the power of television to tackle some of the most difficult and complex issues facing our Nation, to explore the world of ideas, and to help millions of viewers better understand each other and the society in which we live. At a time in which the media often is used to truncate, oversimplify, and distort ideas in a way that divides rather than enlighten, the work of Bill Moyers' life is truly and profoundly important and encouraging. Though he is known to most Americans now as a broadcaster, his career has been as wide-ranging as his documentaries. He has been a newspaper reporter and a publisher, a campaign aide, a Deputy Director for the Peace Corps, and when he was still just a child, Presidential Press Secretary to President Johnson. Most important to me, he is a living rebuke to everybody's preconceptions about Baptist preachers. [*Laughter*] He is truly a 20th century renaissance man.

[*The President and the First Lady congratulated Mr. Moyers and presented the prize.*]

When I gave him the award, he said, "Now they'll make us pay for that one." [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you to join me in giving one more hand to every one of these outstanding Americans. They are terrific. [*Applause*] And now, appropriately, our program will close with the Boys Choir of Harlem's rendition of "Amazing Grace."

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the Mellon Auditorium at the Department of Commerce. In his remarks, he referred to Jane Alexander, Chairman, National Endowment for the Arts; Sheldon Hackney, Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities; Diane B. Frankel, Director, Institute of Museum Services; and John Brademas, Chairman, President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.

Remarks at the Arts and Humanities Awards Dinner

January 9, 1997

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the White House. Hillary and I are delighted to have all of your here tonight. This afternoon we had the honor to award 16 men and women and the Harlem Boys Choir our country's highest recognition for achievement in the arts and humanities.