

June 17 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

almost always gets it right when they have enough time, and they've got plenty of time.

So I think we need to do this.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles.

Remarks at the Pritzker Architecture Prize Dinner

June 17, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Piano, congratulations, and thank you for your marvelous remarks. Professor Scully, thank you for the almost breathtaking education in such a short few moments. I thank J. Carter Brown and the prize jury and Jay and Cindy Pritzker and indeed the entire Pritzker family for this prize and for their many contributions to our Nation.

Frank Lloyd Wright once said that every great architect is necessarily a poet. He must be a great original interpreter of his time, his day, his age. Renzo Piano has certainly done that, and we congratulate him and thank him for his many gifts to our age.

Your creations will endure as some of our century's most timeless gifts to the future. As Hillary said, we have invited all the American people to take part in a national celebration of the coming millennium, challenging individuals and communities across our country to think about what values and heritage we carry with us into the future, what gifts we want to leave to the future, what kind of millennium we want to build. I invite all of you to lead us in that celebration.

Professor Scully once said that architecture is the continuing dialog between the generations. Well, tonight I thank all of you who have shaped that dialog, and I ask you to help to tell the American story in a new century. Our buildings, our monuments embody our frontier spirit, our exuberance, our optimism, our determination. In honoring the past, you can help us to imagine the future that will continue to be full of all those good qualities.

Let me say, tonight I listened carefully to what everyone else said. I couldn't remember—I couldn't believe that Professor Scully remembered the story I told him about the Jefferson Monument. I don't believe anyone pointed out that while James Hoban as a relatively unknown

young Irish architect actually built this White House, he did it by defeating an anonymous plan presented by Thomas Jefferson. [Laughter] But it is just as well, because Mr. Jefferson was the architect of something even more important than the White House. He built the American creed.

I might say parenthetically, in America ever since then, all politicians have tried to convince people that they were architects. If you listen to them speak long enough, you will be convinced that we were all born in log houses that we built ourselves. [Laughter]

But on a serious note, think of the American creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that we are all created equal, endowed by God with the right to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. We have banded together ourselves because we cannot fully pursue, protect, or enhance these rights alone as individuals. And we dedicate ourselves to form a more perfect Union.

In other words, we dedicate ourselves to an act of creating and building that will never be finished. An architect conceived of that.

And I say that to you tonight on the edge of the millennium because Hillary and I and the members of our administration who are here, many in the Congress, and others, we've worked very hard these last 5½ years to build a good house for America where everybody has a home, where we share the same foundation and the protection of the same roof and the same walls, where we respect our differences and value our unity.

And now together we have to build at least the foundations for America's home and the world's home in a new century. Yes, it will need steel and stone and wood and glass and light and air and trees and garden, music and quiet; it also will need a lot of vision and hope.

The longer I serve in public life, in many ways, the more idealistic I become, but I see day-in and day-out that the world is composed of builders, wreckers, and idlers. And most people in politics are either builders or wreckers. All of you are, by nature, instinct, training, and will, builders. The country and the world needs its builders, those with imagination and hope and heart who understand that with all the differences that exist in the world, our common humanity and our common relationship to the eternal and to our earthly home is far, far more important.

In the end, that is what we have honored tonight, and America is in your debt. Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:55 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Renzo Piano, 1998 Pritzker Architecture Prize laureate; Vincent J. Scully, Jr., Sterling professor emeritus, Yale University; J. Carter Brown, chairman, Pritzker Prize jury; and Jay A. Pritzker, president, Hyatt Foundation, and his wife, Cindy.

Remarks on the Nominations of Bill Richardson To Be Secretary of Energy and Richard C. Holbrooke To Be United Nations Ambassador and an Exchange With Reporters

June 18, 1998

The President. Senator Bingaman and Congressman Becerra, ladies and gentlemen, I welcome you all here today as I announce my intent to nominate Ambassador Bill Richardson to become our Secretary of Energy, Ambassador Richard Holbrooke to assume the portfolio of America's Representative to the United Nations. I'm especially pleased that their families could join me and the Vice President and, as you can see, our entire national security team.

Over the last 2 years, Bill Richardson's experience, energy, and tenacity have made a real difference in advancing our interests in the United Nations and around the world. With diplomatic skills honed in one of the most diverse congressional districts in our country, negotiating ability tested in some of the toughest hot spots on our planet, and a personal touch evidenced from his first day on the job, Bill Richardson has brought creativity and drive to our leadership at the U.N.

He has served the Secretary of State and me by tackling some of the toughest negotiating challenges from the Congo to Zaire to Afghanistan. He helped to rally the international community to speak and act as one in the crisis in Iraq. Today, the international inspectors are back on the job, working to end Iraq's nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons threat, thanks in no small measure to his efforts. He has been a vigorous and articulate proponent of our en-

agement around the world and the importance of leveraging that engagement by living up to our United Nations obligations.

In short, if there's one word that comes to mind when I think of Bill Richardson, it really is "energy." But that is hardly the only reason I am appointing him to this job. [Laughter] For 14 years representing New Mexico, an energy-rich State that is home to two of our national Department of Energy labs, and his long service as an active member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, he has gotten extensive, firsthand experience in issues ranging from deregulating the oil and gas industries, to promoting alternative sources of energy, to ensuring that energy development meets tough standards of environmental safety. I thank him for his willingness to serve.

Let me also say that Secretary Pena has left a very impressive legacy upon which to build. I appreciate his 5 years of service to our Nation as both Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Energy, where he surprised, I might say, even his greatest admirers with the speed with which he mastered the incredible complex issues of the Department and the leadership he demonstrated in supporting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, in coming out with an electricity deregulation plan that will save consumers \$20 billion a year, in helping to open all kinds of opportunities for energy conservation