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win four Tony Awards. Then she found television, and "Murder She Wrote," which began in 1984, continued for 12 successful seasons.

Over her career her acting has given us a window into the full range of human emotion and experience. Her inventiveness and courage have inspired her colleagues, and her commitment to charity, especially the fight against AIDS, should inspire us all.

Well, Angela, you earned your perfect score. And we thank you for a wonderful lifetime of gifts.

Well, there they are, ladies and gentlemen: Mikhail Baryshnikov, who soared out of the Soviet Union and into our hearts; Chuck Berry, who rock-and-rolled his way from segregated St. Louis into the American mainstream; Placido Domingo, who brought the songs from Spain and changed the tenor of America's music; Clint Eastwood, who rose out of Depression-era California to earn a place on the Hollywood Walk of Fame; and Angela Lansbury, who left her childhood home in England to become American royalty.

Each one has given us something unique and enriched us beyond measure. Together they bring us closer to President Kennedy's vision of art as a great unifying and humanizing experience. Their triumphs have lifted our Nation and left us a better and richer place.

Again let me say to all of you, this night and every night before, it has been a profound honor for Hillary and me. You may find people who do this night better in the future; you will never find anybody who loves it as much.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Patricia Thompson Lott, wife of Senator Trent Lott.

Remarks on the Establishment of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Ecosystem Reserve

December 4, 2000

Good morning, and thank you, President Fahey, for making us feel so welcome at National Geographic; Secretary Mineta; Under Secretary of NOAA Baker. To all the members of the Coral Reef Task Force and the Ocean Exploration Panel, I welcome you.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to Peter Benchley for the work that he has done for nearly a lifetime now and for the remarks he made. And I thank our two native Hawaiians who are here, Tammy Leilani Harp, who spoke before me, and our Hawaiian elder, who's affectionately known as Uncle Buzzy. Thank you very much for being here.

I want to thank the National Geographic for giving us a place to make this announcement and for all the years of helping people to understand the universe and this small planet. We are fortunate to live in an age of unprecedented discovery, most of it in the biological sciences. It seems that almost every day there is another unlocking of a secret of subatomic particles or the complexities of the human genome. But we're also discovering more and more evidence every day that our human activity is profoundly affecting and, in some cases, overwhelming the natural systems that surround and sustain us on our planet.

For 8 years now we have worked to act on this understanding to better protect our natural resources for future generations. We have created and expanded national parks, established 11 national monuments, saved the California redwoods, protected the Yellowstone National Park from gold mining. We're restoring the Florida Everglades and preserving vistas of the Grand Canyon, and we are setting aside over 40 million roadless acres in our national forests. All together, this amounts to more land protection in the 48 continental States than any administration since that of Teddy Roosevelt a century ago.

But we must recognize that, just as land is an important part of our legacy in the preservation of our ecosystem, so, too, is our water. We launched a nationwide effort to clean up polluted rivers, lakes, and streams. We created

new marine sanctuaries, in Michigan, Massachusetts, Florida, Washington, and Hawaii. We also organized the first National Oceans Conference to develop a strategy to protect the seas. Today the Department of Commerce—and, Secretary Mineta, I thank you for your leadership on this—is releasing a comprehensive report, "Discovering Earth's Final Frontier." It charts a bold course for U.S. ocean exploration in the 21st century. And I want to thank Secretary Mineta, Dr. Marcia McNutt, and the other members of the Ocean Exploration Panel for their work.

We have a lot of work to do. Many, many important ecosystems are disappearing just as we begin to grasp their unique significance, their role in regulating our climate, their potential for producing lifesaving medicines. A lot of people are most familiar with the destruction of the rain forests and worldwide efforts to save them. Today I want to focus on what we're doing with the people of Hawaii to save the rainforests of the sea, our coral reefs.

These remarkable living structures, built cell by cell over millions of years, are at once irreplaceable and valuable. Coral reefs are beautiful, but more than that, they're home to thousands of species of fish and wildlife found nowhere else on Earth. Worldwide reefs generate millions of dollars through fishing and tourism, putting food on our tables and sustaining coastal communities. Coral reefs also protect these same communities from the pounding waves of fierce storms. And like the rain forests, they're providing us new hope for medical breakthroughs.

Unfortunately, the world's reefs are in peril. Pollution, damage from dynamite fishing, coral poachers, unwise coastal development, and global warming already have killed over 25 percent of the world's reefs. In some areas, such as the Central Indian Ocean, 90 percent of the coral reefs have died, bleached as white as dead bone.

Now, this is not an isolated problem. Scientists at last month's International Coral Reef Symposium presented strong evidence that unless we take action now, half the world's coral reefs will disappear within 25 years. Recently, scientists have shown a strong correlation between global warming and the rising ocean temperatures that contribute to reef destruction.

Recognizing the urgency of this challenge, we remain committed to reaching an international agreement to implement the Kyoto Protocol and to cut the production of greenhouse gases. And despite the recent delays, I still believe that we will get a good agreement. The stakes are too high to let this imperative slip away.

We have reached the crossroads in the development of our natural world. How many times in our lives, each of us, have we dismissed something that went wrong, or that we did wrong, with the phrase, "It's just a drop in the ocean"? Now we have solid proof that millions, even billions of these drops in the ocean are having a profound, lasting, and destructive impact on the oceans and the world around us. So we act now to hopefully save our seas and our reefs so that we do not lose their beauty, their bounty, and their protective qualities forever.

What can we do to turn the tide? What steps can we take? Well, at my direction, the Secretaries of Commerce and Interior have been working closely with the scientific, environmental, fishing, and native communities in Hawaii to determine what can be done to save the vast majority of our remaining coral reefs. At the same time, they solicited public comment and received over a thousand comments from concerned citizens. Ultimately, this unprecedented coalition has recommended a bold and visionary initiative. Today I am proud to protect America's greatest unspoiled reefs by creating the single largest nature preserve ever established in the United States, the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands Coral Reef Reserve. [*Applause*] Thank you.

This pristine, largely uninhabited archipelago covers more area than Florida and Georgia combined. Integrated into our National Marine Sanctuary Program, the new reserve will encompass nearly 70 percent of our Nation's coral reefs. This area is a special place where the sea is a living rainbow; the only voices, those of half the world's last remaining monk seals and the cry of sea birds wheeling in the sky.

In creating this unique preserve, we're establishing the strongest level of protection for oceans ever enacted and setting a new global standard for reef and marine wildlife protection. Together, we will safeguard the most sensitive areas, permit sustainable fishing and eco-tourism and others, and enable native Hawaiians to honor their age-old traditions.

The islands and reefs we're protecting today have long played an important role in the history of the Pacific. Archaeologists tell us that more than a thousand years ago, local islanders drew sustenance from their brilliant turquoise waters.

Centuries later, Charles Darwin marveled at the wildlife there during his historic voyage. And none of us can ever forget, for 4 bloody days in 1942, America's bravest heroes drew a line in the sand there, winning the Battle of Midway and changing the course of World War II and history.

Today we renew our commitment to winning the battle to protect our global environment, preserving this natural heritage for a long time—I hope forever.

Let me say, it was nearly a century ago, ironically, when President Roosevelt recognized the same imperative and created the Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Refuge. He knew then that our natural wonders, on land or sea, form an integral part of who we are as a people and that every generation of Americans must do its part to sustain and strengthen this legacy. Today we do just that, incorporating the refuge he created into a new, vast, and wonderful "Yellowstone of the Sea."

By any measure, creating this coral reserve is a big step forward, not just for marine conservation in the United States but for the health of oceans and reefs around the world.

For thousands of years, people have risked their lives to master the ocean. Now, suddenly, the ocean's life is at risk. We have the resources and responsibility to rescue the sea, to renew the very oceans that give us life, and thereby to renew ourselves. Today is an important step on that road.

But there is much, much more to be done in the years ahead. And I hope that no matter who becomes President—[*laughter*]—no matter what the partisan divide of Congress, that those of you who are here in this room will continue this work for the rest of your lives. It is profoundly important, and how our grandchildren live depends upon how well we do this work.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Grosvenor Auditorium at the National Geographic Museum. In his remarks, he referred to John M. Fahey, Jr., president and chief executive officer, National Geographic Society; author Peter Benchley; Tammy Leilani Harp, member, Native and Indigenous Rights Advisory Panel to the Western Pacific Region Fishery Management Council; Louis (Uncle Buzzy) Agard, board member, Native Hawaiian Advisory Council; and Marcia K. McNutt, president and chief executive officer, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. The Executive order establishing the reserve is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Teleconference Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With Team Harmony Rally VII

December 5, 2000

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you, Josh, for that introduction. Your father would be very proud. I also want to thank Jon Jennings, Donna Harris-Lewis, and Joyce Zakim. To Rick Rendon, thank you for helping to organize Team Harmony VII. I also want to send you Hillary's best wishes. As Josh said, she's a big fan of Team Harmony and the great work you do.

And finally, I'd like to thank all the students from throughout New England for taking part in what I am told is the largest gathering of young people against racism, hatred, and bigotry. And of course, I welcome our friends from Belfast and Johannesburg.

The great thing about this modern world we live in is that we can have a conversation like this across the oceans and continents, and it's just the beginning. When I look ahead to your future, I see a time when we'll have unbelievable scientific discoveries. I believe your children will be born, literally, with a life expectancy of about 100 years. We're unlocking the secrets of the human genes. You will be citizens of the world in ways that no one else has ever been because of the way the Internet is bringing us together.

But even though we live in the most modern of worlds, the biggest problem we face, as all of you have been discussing, is perhaps the oldest problem of human society: People are afraid