

of life is going to be undermined by doing stuff that people of common sense and good will would clearly want to do and every law enforcement official in America telling us to do it.

So, I plead with all of you today, when you leave here to be reinvigorated by this, to be exhilarated by the triumph of Jim and Sarah Brady and all these other folks who didn't let their personal losses defeat them but instead used it to come out here and push us to do better.

And each of you in turn, take your opportunity not to let people ever again in this country use a legitimate part of our American heritage in ways that blinds us to our obligation to the present and the future. If we have broken that, then there is nothing we cannot do. And when I go and sign this bill in a minute, it will be step one in taking our streets back, taking our children back, reclaiming our families and our future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former White House Press Secretary James Brady, who was wounded in the 1981 assassination attempt on President Ronald Reagan; his wife, Sarah, who is head of Hand Gun Control, Inc.; and Melanie Musick, who became a supporter of the Brady bill after her husband was shot and killed in 1990. H.R. 1025, "To provide for a waiting period before the purchase of a handgun, and for the establishment of a national instant criminal background check system to be contacted by firearms dealers before the transfer of any firearm," approved November 30, was assigned Public Law No. 103-159.

Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medals of Freedom

November 30, 1993

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, all. We have Members of Congress here, members and former members of the United States Supreme Court, and a number of distinguished Americans who share in common a friendship with one or more of our distinguished honorees today. I welcome you all here.

One of the greatest pleasures of being President is the authority to choose recipi-

ents of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor given to civilians by the United States. And so today it is my honor to award the Medal of Freedom to five great reformers of the 20th century who changed America for the better: Mrs. Marjory Stoneman Douglas, the late Joseph Rauh, Judge John Minor Wisdom, the late Justice Thurgood Marshall, and Justice William Brennan.

Today they join a distinguished list of citizens in a process initiated by my great predecessor Harry Truman in 1945. Like Harry Truman, all five of them rank among our Nation's great champions of the underdog. Indeed, most of their lives are stories of underdogs themselves. Two of them are sons of immigrants. Justice Brennan's parents came here from Ireland near the time that Mr. Rauh's father and grandfather came here from Germany. One, Justice Marshall, was the great-grandson of slaves. And one, Mrs. Douglas, is descended from a founder of the Underground Railroad. America gave them the freedom to be their best, and they honored our country by becoming five legendary defenders of our freedoms in return.

When this medal was created at the end of World War II, America had great decisions to make about what kind of nation we wanted to be. The postwar years were those which unlocked great forces that would transform our society profoundly and permanently. A baby boom and a development boom brought Americans more mobility and more economic opportunity than they had ever enjoyed before. But this new mobility also opened our eyes to problems we had been previously unwilling to acknowledge: the legal barriers set up to prevent black Americans and working people from sharing in the opportunities afforded to others; the growth that devoured the value of our disappearing regional identities and fragile natural landscapes.

It was during this time in 1947 that Marjory Stoneman Douglas published her best-selling book, "The Everglades: River of Grass," a monumental work on Florida's unique ecosystem, one of our Nation's greatest natural resources. The next year, 1948,

gave us the Democratic National Convention that nominated Harry Truman, where Hubert Humphrey delivered one of the earliest and most impassioned speeches on behalf of civil rights ever given from a national platform. There Joseph Rauh, Jr., won his fight to make civil rights a part of the National Democratic Party platform and an indelible part of our national agenda.

In 1954 Thurgood Marshall won a case before the United States Supreme Court called *Brown v. Board of Education*, the decisive blow against legal segregation, a decision that would have more impact on civil rights in America than any other single action since President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation just upstairs in this White House.

In 1955, Joe Rauh and others celebrated victory over McCarthyism, whose abuses of freedom they had fought so fearlessly.

In 1956, President Eisenhower named New Jersey Supreme Court Justice William Brennan to the United States Supreme Court, launching one of the most influential careers in the Court's entire history. And the following year, in 1957, Eisenhower named John Minor Wisdom to the U.S. Court of Appeals, where he and his colleagues pioneered our Nation's landmark decisions on civil rights. He made a lot of good appointments, Mr. Eisenhower.

We honor these people not for any private success, not for any personal pursuit of glory but for their selfless devotion to the public interest and their tireless lifetime of achievement in the public arena. Because of what they did, our Nation is a better place, and our lives, all of us, are richer. I'd like to briefly review that before the official citations are read.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas, all of 103 years old, has always been ahead of her time. She was born in Minneapolis on April 7th, 1890, raised in Massachusetts, graduated from Wellesley College in 1912, and moved to Florida. She was one of the pioneering women in journalism when she joined the staff of the Miami Herald in 1914. She served the Red Cross in Europe during World War II and returned to the United States to wage a campaign for the passage of the women's suffrage amendment—I said World War II;

I meant World War I—and to continue a career writing about the distinctive regional character of southern Florida.

Her advocacy on behalf of the Everglades in Florida long before there was ever an Earth Day is legendary. It has been an inspiration to generations of conservationists, environmentalists, and preservationists throughout our Nation and especially to my administration, in the work of Vice President Gore and the Administrator of the EPA, another woman from Florida, Carol Browner. She is much admired by the Attorney General who shares her south Florida roots, and I am glad to see her here today, also.

Beyond Florida, Marjory Stoneman Douglas is a mentor for all who desire to preserve what we southerners affectionately call "a sense of place." And Mrs. Douglas, the next time I hear someone mention the timeless wonders and powers of Mother Nature, I'll be thinking about you.

Joseph Rauh grew up in an immigrant family to become America's leading labor lawyer and advocate of civil liberties. He studied under Felix Frankfurter, clerked for Supreme Court Justice Benjamin Cardozo and then Frankfurter when he was named Cardozo's successor by President Franklin Roosevelt. He was a champion of working people and labor movement reforms. Among his clients were Walter Reuther's United Auto Workers, A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and Joseph Yablonski's wing of the United Mine Workers.

When he returned from the Army after the Second World War, he founded Americans for Democratic Action to help stem the influence of communism in the United States, and he was elected its vice chairman, a post once held by Vice President Humphrey, Arthur Schlesinger, and the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr.

Later, as the group's chairman, he called the ADA a group of independent-minded people grappling with the old line machines of both parties on behalf of good government, not a bad slogan. He represented playwright Arthur Miller against the Government intrusion of the McCarthy committee and was an outspoken champion of civil liberties until his death last year. He may have left

us with the most appropriate quotation for this ceremony when he said, "What our generation has done is bring equality into law. The next generation has to bring equality in fact."

John Minor Wisdom, a senior judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals at 88½ years old, still handles a caseload as large as any active judge on the bench. But he stands out among his peers as a truly first-class legal scholar who writes brilliant opinions, including his landmark opinion on voting rights in *United States v. State of Louisiana* in 1963, and his historic opinions to open the University of Mississippi to black students in *Meredith v. Fair* in 1962. He is a son of the Old South who became an architect of the new South. His father attended Washington College in Virginia when its students marched in the funeral of its president, Robert E. Lee. His background makes his progressive decisions all the more remarkable. Because I don't think the South could have made it through those trying times without leaders like Judge Wisdom.

He may be the only medal recipient today who was once a member of the Republican National Committee. He became the father of the modern Republican Party in Louisiana when he moved it away from reactionary isolationism to the moderation of President Eisenhower. His outspoken calls for reform in government and public education and civil rights are something of which all southerners and members of both political parties can justly be proud.

None of our advances in civil rights would have been possible without the indefatigable energy of the late Thurgood Marshall. As an attorney and later as Solicitor General of the United States under President Johnson, he presented the most monumental arguments before the Supreme Court since Daniel Webster in the early years of our Republic, more than a century earlier. If President Kennedy had not named him an appeals court judge in 1961 or President Johnson had not named him the first black Justice on the United States Supreme Court in 1967, his mark on America would still loom very, very large today.

He gave his career to defend black people from violence carried out by mobs in the

name of justice. As founder and chief counsel of the NAACP's Legal Defense and Education Fund, he waged systematic war against laws that kept black people out of voting booths and their children out of publicly funded schools. He did more to make Martin Luther King's dream of equality real in the lives of our people than anyone in our time. Together, he and Justice Brennan became the twin pillars of liberty and equality on the Court.

Justice Marshall's son, Thurgood, Jr., who coordinates legislative affairs in the office of the Vice President, said his father would have been most proud of this award by being honored alongside Justice Brennan, his close friend and colleague through so many years of battles.

Justice Brennan is the author of the most enduring constitutional decisions of our last decades, including *Baker v. Carr* on one person, one vote, and *Times v. Sullivan* which brought the free speech doctrine into the latter half of the 20th century. He's already been acknowledged by friends as well as foes as one of the most pivotal giants in the history of the Court, perhaps its staunchest defender of freedom of the individual against Government intrusions. As he once told Bill Moyers, the role of the Constitution is, and I quote, the protection of the dignity of the human being and the recognition that every individual has fundamental rights which Government cannot deny.

Justice Brennan served longer than any Justice in this century but two, and his impact and legacy have changed the Court in our country for all time.

For all these people here, it must be a great sense of honor to be joined by so many distinguished Americans, members of the Cabinet, former members of the Cabinet, members of the Supreme Court, former members of the Supreme Court, and Members of the Congress. I thank all of you for being here. But I think we should all recognize that the people who should really be grateful to all of them are ordinary Americans, many of whom may not even know their

names but whose lives have been forever changed by their labors.

I'd like now to ask my military aide to read the citations.

[*At this point, Maj. Leo Mercado, Jr., USMC, Marine Corps aide to the President, read the citations.*]

My fellow Americans, we often pay our debts by acknowledging it to our Founders. In the beginning of this country, Thomas Jefferson told us something we dare never forget, which is that we must also pay our debts to our reformers, for all the Founders did was to give us something that has to be recreated in every age and time. Today we have acknowledged that debt to five great reformers. We can only repay it if we follow in their footsteps.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:48 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

Nomination for the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation

November 30, 1993

The President announced today that he has nominated Anne L. Hall to be a member of the Board of Directors of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and he has renominated Andrew C. Hove to be a Board member and Vice Chair.

"With their banking expertise and demonstrable commitments to public service, Anne Hall and Andrew Hove are outstanding choices for the FDIC Board," said the President. "They will work hard to ensure that the American people's savings are secure."

NOTE: Biographies of the nominees were made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Proclamation 6632—World AIDS Day, 1993

November 30, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

AIDS and HIV disease have cut short the lives of many Americans who had so much to contribute. They have plagued our sons and daughters, our mothers and fathers, our brothers and sisters, and our friends and co-workers. The devastating effects of AIDS have touched all of us. More than one million of our fellow citizens are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Since January 1981, more than 340,000 Americans have developed AIDS, and more than 200,000 have died from complications resulting from AIDS.

On this World AIDS Day, we recognize and are humbled by the global impact of HIV disease. The World Health Organization estimates that more than 14 million people worldwide are infected with HIV and that more than 2.5 million have developed AIDS. By the end of this century, more than 30 million people will have been infected with HIV and, of those, more than 10 million adults will have developed AIDS.

The extent of HIV infection is overwhelming, but we must not allow ourselves to despair in the face of these daunting statistics. Instead, we must accelerate our efforts to find effective treatments, a vaccine, and an eventual cure for this scourge that haunts us.

This Administration has undertaken a new commitment to AIDS research and prevention and to the development of improved care and treatment for those with HIV disease. Through the strengthened Office of AIDS Research at the National Institutes of Health, we are increasing our efforts to improve treatments and working more effectively to find a cure for HIV and AIDS.

State governments and public health officials across our Nation have mobilized to educate the public and address the needs, not only of persons with AIDS, but also of their families and loved ones. Community-based organizations throughout the country have provided education, care programs, and