

grandchildren,” like that wonderful little girl that Tip O’Neill held up.

Don’t forget what this is about, folks. And imagine what you want to be remembered for because you were in politics if you get your 5 minutes’ notice. If we take that 5 minutes’ notice to the American people in 1994, we will have a thunderous victory.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:32 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Hugh Westbrook, director of finance, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on the Observance of Earth Day

April 21, 1994

Thank you, Josephine—I saved the environment; did you like that? *[Laughter]* Thank you, Josephine, for that wonderful statement. Thank you, Steve, for your work, and all of you who helped to restore this wonderful park. And thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for coming.

There are so many people here we could introduce, but I do want to mention two others who are here: First of all, the wonderful Representative of the District of Columbia in the United States Congress, Eleanor Holmes Norton, thank you for coming. And the head of our national service movement, which is providing a lot of our foot soldiers in our attempt to merge the community and the environment, Mr. Eli Segal, thank you for coming, sir. I also see in the audience two people that make me wonder if we’re going to be extras in a 1994 movie, Dennis Weaver and Chevy Chase. Thank you for coming, guys. Thank you both for coming. Stand up. *[Applause]* We’re all available for tryouts, aren’t we? *[Laughter]*

I want to say a special word of thanks as I begin to Josephine Butler and to all the people in this community for making this park what it is. I’m proud to say that the Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt has designated this park as a national heritage site, not only because of its beauty but because

of what it represents about what we, as a people, can do.

The people of this community took this park back. They made it a place where families could come and young people could come and children could play. I don’t know how many times in the 1980’s when I was just visiting Washington like any other American, when I went out right by this park, when I would ask people over and over and over again, I said, “That is the most beautiful place I’ve ever seen,” and somebody from Washington would say, “Well, don’t go in there. It’s a dangerous place.” I mean, in broad daylight. I must have asked a half a dozen times.

And now, because of what you have done—look at it, I mean, look at the fountain, the water, the beauty of this place. It’s absolutely unbelievable and a great, incredible tribute to the people in this community. That’s the most important thing I think we can say or do today, just to recognize the power of ordinary citizens to rebuild their own lives, environmentally, responsibly, and make their lives better at the same time. You are a shining example of that.

Today, we honor the community leaders who reclaimed the park: the president of the Friends of Meridian Hill—how many hours have you donated to this, sir?—over 5,000. Reverend Morris Samuel, who courted his wife under a cherry tree not far from here and never stopped visiting this park; Malcolm Peabody, a businessman who helped to bring 150 businesses into the Meridian Hill coalition; Antonio Montes, a community leader and assistant to Congresswoman Norton, who helped to get the first funding increase for this park in the Federal budget in almost 20 years; and Lieutenant Henry Berberich of the U.S. Park Police, who turned down several promotions because he wanted to keep protecting this park and who embodies the spirit of community policing at its best. Where are you, sir? Let’s give him a big hand. *[Applause]*

In just 4 years, crime in this park has declined by 90 percent. That’s a pretty good standard for America to try to emulate. New businesses have moved nearby. I was in the Kalorama Studios just a couple of days ago doing the MTV forum with young people.

Just as this community has restored this park, the park has helped to restore the community.

I am here today because what this community has done is what our country as a whole must do. In restoring a piece of nature, the people here have helped to restore a strong sense of place, of their history, of their roots, a sense of purpose, a sense of pride, and a sense of hope for their children, proving the wisdom of the great American naturalist John Muir, who founded our national parks and whose birthday we celebrate today. He said almost a century ago, "Garden- and park-making goes on everywhere in civilization, for everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to the body and soul."

Each of us has a special place where we can stand silently all alone, except for the presence of nature and the Creator. And if we don't, we need it, and we deserve it. When I was growing up, it was the lakes, the woods, the hills of my native State. For a young man or woman growing up in this community, it may well be this wonderful park. Preserving those things enables us to bring our communities and our country back together.

There is clearly today a hunger in our national spirit not only for more security, for more economic opportunity but for something we can all be involved in that is larger than ourselves and more lasting than the fleeting moment. Reclaiming our rivers, our forests, our beaches, and our urban oases, like this one, is a great purpose worthy of a great people. The love of nature is at the core of our identity as individuals, as communities, and certainly as Americans and increasingly, thankfully, a part of the community of nations.

Preserving the environment is at the core of everything we have to do in our own country, building businesses, creating jobs, fighting crime and drugs and violence, raising our children to know the difference between right and wrong, and restoring the fabric of our society. For we are here today to bear witness to a simple but powerful truth: As we renew our environment, we renew our national community.

Since the first Earth Day 24 years ago, our Nation has been on a journey of national renewal. But as long as 70 million Americans live in communities where the air is dangerous to breathe; as long as half our rivers, our lakes, and our streams are too polluted for fishing and swimming; as long as people in our poorest communities face terrible hazards from lead paint to toxic waste dumps; as long as people around the world are driven from their homelands because what were their fields are now deserts, their fisheries are dying, and their children are stricken by diseases, our journey is far from finished.

That's why we are trying to bring a new spirit of community to the work of protecting and restoring the environment. I have often said in many places that governments don't raise children, parents do. I'm here today because governments alone cannot save the environment, people and communities must.

In everything we do to protect the environment, we must, it seems to me, be guided by four fundamental principles. First, we understand that a healthy economy and a healthy environment go hand-in-hand. In the long run we cannot have one without the other.

Tomorrow people all around the world will celebrate Earth Day, because they care about the air they breathe and the water they drink just as much as we do. That's why there is now a \$200 billion to \$300 billion market for environmentally conscious products, from technologies for cleaning toxic dumps and scrubbers for power plants to energy-efficient air conditioners. Last October we started our strategy to help American companies, large and small, get their share of that market. If your company makes a product or offers a service that will protect the environment, all over the world you can find capital, customers, and expert advice. We Americans can do what we set our minds to do, including slowing down global warming without cooling down our economy.

A year ago on Earth Day, we made a commitment to reduce greenhouse gases which cause climate changes, from global warming to increasingly severe hurricanes. In October, we produced a plan to cut greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the year 2000. Today, thousands of companies have come to Wash-

ington as partners in that goal. Many are causing less pollution because they're using less energy, cutting fuel bills, investing more in new products and new jobs, proving that good environmental policies are, in fact, good business.

Last night, Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary signed an historic agreement with virtually the entire electric utility industry to cut greenhouse gases. That means some of our largest industrial polluters are going to clean up their act and clean up our air.

Our climate change programs help companies and consumers save energy and money with air conditioners, computers, refrigerators, and light bulbs that use less electricity than ever before. And we're helping American companies to build those products and create those jobs.

Anyone who believes that environmental quality threatens jobs can talk to one of the people who has already been introduced. I'd like to ask her to stand again, Fabiola Gonzalez. Stand up. *[Applause]* She came here today from Maybrook, New York, one of 400 workers from the Osram-Sylvania factory who make energy-efficient, compact, fluorescent light bulbs. Now, I have to tell you, to show you that we never do things as quickly as we could, the first time I ever heard that these light bulbs were the wave of the future was in 1978 from Amory Lovins, who is sitting out there today. Thank you, sir. This is a 23-watt replacement for a 90-watt bulb that lasts 10 times as long as the average light bulb and will save \$67 in energy costs, one light bulb. And there is a huge market for them all over America and indeed all over the world, and a job for this fine woman and others who are contributing to our future. Thank you so much.

There are some people who still say that if you protect the environment, you're going to hurt the economy. Well, there are tough choices to be made, but those choices can lead to more opportunity, as we have seen. We can't turn back the clock, and we cannot deny that Government has a role in helping to preserve the natural beauty of our rivers, our forests, our mountains, our beaches, and our parks; and not to create bureaucracies that grow faster than garden weeds.

That's where the second principle comes in: reinventing the way we protect the environment so that Government is a partner, not an overseer. The Vice President has led the charge to make this administration a leader in the global environmental effort, and at the same time, to give us a Government that works better and costs less. He's a proven friend of the environment who's making Government a more effective friend of the environment.

And I must tell you that when we started our partnership back in 1992—and we couldn't have known even then whether we would win the election or not—one of the major reasons that I asked him to be part of a new and different relationship, to be a true partner with me, was because of the phenomenal insight and knowledge he had of environmental issues and how they had to be woven into the fabric of our life and no longer set out as a special problem and a special issue just for Earth Day but needed to be something for every day. And all Americans are in debt to the work that Al Gore has made the work of his lifetime.

This year we're asking Congress to pass new and stronger laws to protect our lakes, our rivers, our beaches, and the water we drink, the "Safe Drinking Water Act" and the "Clean Water Act." And we're offering new approaches to get the job done.

Just a few months ago, folks right here in Washington, maybe a lot of you, had to boil their water just because the experts said it might be contaminated. Just a year ago in Milwaukee, a dangerous microorganism got into the water supply, killing more than 100 people and causing tens of thousands to become ill. In New York and in other cities all across the country, people are afraid they might be next. In this great country we can do better, and we must do better than letting people die from dirty drinking water. That's why we're fighting for a stronger and smarter "Safe Drinking Water Act." We want to keep communities with healthy water systems, so parents won't feel a fear when their children brush their teeth in the morning. We can do it for our children and our families and our future, and we will.

But rather than dictate from Washington, we want to help communities develop their

own plans to clean up their own water supplies without a bureaucrat telling them that water problems in Philadelphia are the same as they are in Phoenix, because they're often just not the same. With a stronger and smarter "Clean Water Act," we can reclaim our waterways, make it safe to eat fish and swim in the rivers and surf in the beaches. And in the process we'll create new jobs, from engineers to pipefitters.

We've proposed changes in the Superfund to make cleanups faster, cheaper, and more effective. Many of these toxic waste dumps cause urgent dangers to public health. And we owe it to communities to make the Superfund work for them.

And we want to give you a Government that leads by example, not just by command and control. You know, the United States Government, for example, is one of the world's leading buyers of goods and services. And we're using that buying power to create a new market for new products that save energy and protect the environment, wasting less of your natural resources and less of your tax dollars.

A year ago on Earth Day I pledged to use the Presidential pen to make our Government the greenest in history. I've signed Executive orders to use recycled products, from paper to retread tires. We're reducing Federal energy consumption by 30 percent and saving the taxpayers a billion dollars a year using more cars and trucks that run on alternative fuel that cause less pollution, from compressed natural gas to electrical power. Our Federal facilities are cutting their own toxic emissions by 50 percent and complying with community right-to-know laws.

The White House is becoming a showcase for energy efficiency and environmental responsibility. Hillary and Chelsea and I have recycling bins in our kitchen. We have a new refrigerator, built in my home State, that uses 50 percent less electricity than most refrigerators and doesn't use gases that deplete the ozone layer. We're using less water on the lawn, fewer pesticides on the ground, and more efficient air conditioners in the big Old Executive Office Building. We're trying to do our part.

Protecting the environment begins in our homes and in our communities. And I came

here to demonstrate that commitment in a third principle: Government should work with local folks, not over them. You did this; we didn't. We provided a little more tax money, but you did it. We're working with communities through our national service program, AmeriCorps. Thousands of young men and women are working in communities while earning money for their education. Starting 2 months from now, a special part of AmeriCorps will work not far from here. The new National Civilian Community Corps, based out of the Aberdeen Army Base in Maryland, will work with community groups to reclaim the Anacostia River, stabilizing its banks, skimming off the trash, redesigning and replanting it.

For too long, this kind of pollution has been associated and concentrated in poor communities, from central cities to small towns. And for too long, Government has been part of the problem, not part of the solution.

I'll never forget a young man named Pernell Brewer, whom I met at our children's town hall meeting last year. He comes from a part of Louisiana now known as "Cancer Alley" because it's filled with chemical plants that may contribute to the unusually high cancer rates found there in Louisiana. And he told me that 20 of his relatives have had cancer; many have died of it, including his 10-year-old brother who died of a rare brain tumor.

We cannot stand by while people are suffering and dying. That's why I signed an Executive order on environmental justice, to make sure that Government controls environmental hazards in every community in this country. And Government should encourage people to work together, not pit business and workers and environmentalists against each other.

When I asked for the Presidency 2 years ago, I met people whose lives were literally torn apart because Government refused to resolve the tensions between protecting our ancient forests and logging on Federal lands. Just over a year ago, at a conference in Portland, Oregon, we brought together loggers, environmentalists, and community leaders from the great Pacific Northwest and Cabi-

net officials responsible for environmental policy, for commerce, and for labor.

I met people like one man who's come all across the country to be with us here today. I'd like to introduce him to you, Mr. Eric Hollenbeck. Eric, stand up. [*Applause*] Eric came here today from Eureka, California. His family business was logging. He cares about his community with all of his heart, and he understands that in order to survive, his industry and his community have to embrace change. That's why when hard times hit the logging industry, Eric changed his company from logging to woodworking. And that's why today he's teaching young people woodworking, masonry, home building, metal working, and printing. He has made a change to help save the environment and preserve the economy of his community. And we owe him a lot for his courage. Thank you, sir.

Most of the people I met out there had differences of opinion on a lot of these issues. But they wanted an end to the posturing, an end to the conflict. They wanted us to make some tough decisions so that people could move on with their lives and move on with the common goal of making a living and preserving the environment.

Our fourth principle is that we have to understand the urgency and magnitude of this environmental issue as a global crisis. We have to work to stop famine and stabilize population growth and prevent further environmental degradation. If we fail, these problems will cause terrorism, tension, and war. None of us can live without fear as long as so many people must live without hope. That's why we're working around the world to protect fresh water resources, to preserve forests, to protect endangered species, leading a fight for strong environmental protection in our global negotiations on trade.

We must never forget that we share the air and the planet and our destiny with all the people of the world. And we must help people in poorer countries to understand that they, too, can find better ways to make a living without destroying their forests and their other natural resources.

The nations of the world are working together to achieve what is now called "sustainable growth," growth that meets the needs

of the present without sacrificing the needs of the future. It's an ethic as modern as microprocessors and as old as the Scriptures. In our homes and houses of worship, we often learn the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Sustainable development is the Golden Rule for our children and our grandchildren and their grandchildren.

And I want to give you the last example of that. Last June I asked 25 leaders from across the country to join the President's Council on Sustainable Development, to look carefully at communities practicing sustainable development with an eye toward developing a strategy that any community in the country could embrace.

And we can all learn from a town called Valmeyer, Illinois. Under the leadership of Mayor Dennis Knobloch, who is also with me here today—stand up, Mayor—[*applause*]*—*this community is literally recreating itself. It was part of the great middle-western flood. They were in a flood plain. And they decided that they would move and recreate a totally sustainable development community. They're building their homes, their stores, and their schools to be energy efficient. They're even thinking about solar-powered street lights and geothermal heating systems.

We can go to this community and watch it grow, keeping the community roots, understanding what happened in the flood, being committed to a sustainable environment for the river, for the land, and for a new community that is as old as the deepest roots in the beginning of Valmeyer, Illinois. We owe a lot to these people. They're setting an example that all of us will be able to learn from, too, for years and years to come.

So today, in this wonderful park, let me end where we began. Let every American look to the example of the people here in this park, to the example of people like Fabiola Gonzalez and Eric Hollenbeck and Mayor Dennis Knobloch and the wonderful people of Valmeyer, Illinois. We can all listen to the love of nature in our hearts and rejoice in our responsibilities to pass along a better and more beautiful country to our children and their children and understand that part of our common responsibility to the future

is preserving the environment and that that will make our present better.

Three decades ago, President Kennedy said, "It is our task in our time and in our generation to hand down, undiminished to those who come after us, as was handed down to us by those who came before, the natural wealth and beauty which is ours." This wonderful community has kept that faith. So must we all.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:21 a.m. in Meridian Hill Park. In his remarks, he referred to Josephine Butler, vice chair, Stephen W. Coleman, founder and president, and Rev. Morris Samuel, vice chair emeritus, Friends of Meridian Hill; actors Dennis Weaver and Chevy Chase; and Amory Lovins, director of research, Rocky Mountain Institute, Snowmass, CO. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks on Presenting the Teacher of the Year Award

April 21, 1994

Thank you very much, Secretary Riley, and thank all of you for being here to recognize Sandra McBrayer, our 1994 Teacher of the Year.

I want to say as I begin that the work in the Senate and the House has kept Senator Boxer and Senator Feinstein and Congresswoman Lynn Schenk from coming here today. But all three of them called and asked to be remembered at this occasion and to say they are proud of and strongly support the work that Sandra McBrayer has done.

One of the things I hoped to do when I ran for President was to increase our national effort to improve education in ways that made sense to grassroots educators who were out there making a difference. After serving for 12 years as a Governor and spending more time on schools and jobs than any other two issues, I have probably spent more time in more different kinds of classrooms than any person who has had the privilege to hold this office. And one of the things that I always believed was that virtually every challenge in American education had been met with genuine excellence by someone somewhere, that there were people committed, good people

all across this country, that were trying to come to grips with the awesome challenges of educating all America's children to world-class standards and that what we had to do at the national level was to clarify what those standards are, to give people some means of measuring whether they were being achieved, and then to support the grassroots reforms and the people who were carrying them out. That's what we're trying to do with Goals 2000, with the school-to-work bill, with all our other educational initiatives.

And that's why I was so pleased, when I first met Sandra McBrayer in California not very long ago and heard about her work, that she was actually chosen as the Teacher of the Year. We met when she came to the Goals 2000 signing when she was just a California Teacher of the Year, and I didn't know she was going to get such a quick promotion, but I sort of suspected it because of what she has done.

I cannot tell you how much it means to me to have someone here who's proved that you could teach homeless kids and that they count and they matter and they can learn and they can achieve great things. She knows that children have to be fed; they need clothes to wear and a place to sleep at night, and it's harder if they don't have those things.

She started the Homeless Outreach School in San Diego in a storefront in 1988. Her school provides, in addition to education, two meals a day, showers, and laundry facilities. Her students don't follow a regular schedule; they come to class between their jobs or when they're not caring for children of their own. But they each fulfill a weekly contract of studies that are completed either at home or in school.

This is very important. This is one of the central ideas of Goals 2000. We should measure our educational effort not by how teachers do everything all day, every day, but by whether certain results are achieved. And then we should allow our teachers and our school principals to devise their own best ways to achieve those results based on the realities that they deal with.

She is living every day what I believe is the central idea that would do more to transform and revolutionize American education than any other single thing in public edu-