

verse we are because we share the same values, then we have to keep in mind two things. First of all, we have to give every American the capacity to make good choices and be rewarded for work; everybody's got to have the ability to do it. There's a lot of talk about empowerment in Washington. It's a buzzword today. I love that word. But it means more than choice. It means the ability to seize the choice you want to make. And the second thing we've got to do is to do it together.

We are moving into a new age. The old categories in which we divided ourselves do not give us easy answers to these new challenges. As I said before, there's not a country in the world that solved the problem of economic growth that gives everybody a chance to participate in it, that deals with the downsizing, the areas that don't get investment, the stagnation of wages among people that don't have a lot of education. We're trying to come to grips with that.

But we cannot do it in the old, highly intensely partisan way. That is doomed to failure. Because we are moving into a new era, we have to break new ground. We have to be willing to give up on some of the things that we used to hold on to and grab on to each other and work together and solve these problems. And we have to be animated by the vision we have of what we want America to look like. Homeownership has to be a part of it. A growing economy has to be a part of it. A more unified sense of our ability to work together through our diversity has to be a part of it. But it begins by saying we have to put the public interest ahead of short-term politics. I ask for your support as Americans for that goal.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:45 p.m. in the ballroom at the Sheraton Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Art Godi, president, Michael Graeper, chair, and Robert Galiano, vice chair, Public Policy Forum, and Russ Booth, 1996 president-elect, National Association of Realtors.

### **Remarks at the 25th Anniversary Reception for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**

*April 27, 1996*

That's the most attractive introduction I've ever had. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome, welcome to the White House and welcome here for this occasion. We're delighted to join in the 25th anniversary celebration, and I want to say a special word of welcome to the members of the Kennedy family and to thank them for remaining tireless in their efforts to preserve, promote, and honor our Nation's culture.

The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts prospers today as our national cultural institution, thanks to so many people who are committed to that ideal, the ideal that art and culture are not so much a pastime as a definer, a clarifier, a representation of America.

Recently, the First Lady and I returned from a trip to the Far East and to Russia, and, as in other visits, we saw how prized an export our culture is. It's not just coincidence that it is embraced and adapted by a world increasingly sharing our democratic ideals. Visit almost any part of the world and there can be no doubt, our art, our music, our dance and theater are among our greatest ambassadors.

Here in America the Kennedy Center is the Nation's stage. It's hard to believe that just a quarter century ago it was only a goal. President and Mrs. Kennedy realized the significance of a national cultural center. They even held a telethon to raise funds for the center. Of course, President Kennedy could not have known that he would be the center's greatest inspiration and its namesake. But there could not be a more fitting living memorial, for at the Kennedy Center each night we enjoy great performances, each year we honor great performing artists. Every day we work to commission and create new works and to reach and educate a new generation.

The Kennedy Center makes our culture accessible as it never was before. Last year more than 2 million people attended performances at the center. Another 20 million saw its touring and broadcast productions. And many of these people who could not otherwise afford the price of admission took advantage of free and low-cost performances.

The Kennedy Center is truly a place for all Americans. It is promise and proof of our shared values. It offers a forum to an amazing variety of God-given talents. The best of art endures, enriches, and enlivens the human condition far beyond the horizon of any of our tomorrows. Our art is the best record of who we are, what we have been, and what we hope to become.

President Kennedy said it best in words inscribed in the marble walls of his memorial: "There is a connection, hard to explain logically, but easy to feel between achievement in public life and progress in the arts. The age of Pericles was also the age of Phidias. The age of Lorenzo de Medici was also the age of Leonardo da Vinci. The age of Elizabeth was also the age of Shakespeare."

Tonight we pause and pay tribute to the deeper sources of our strength, the expressions of the human spirit that light up not only our stages, but our national life. We celebrate 25 years of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and we look forward in joyful expectation to new generations of performances. The best of the Kennedy Center is yet to come.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House.

### **Statement on Exports of Alaska North Slope Crude Oil** *April 28, 1996*

Today I am taking action that will allow, for the first time, exports of Alaska North Slope (ANS) crude oil. Permitting this oil to move freely in international commerce will contribute to economic growth, reduce dependence on imported oil, and create new jobs for American workers. It will not adversely affect oil supplies or gasoline prices on the West Coast, in Hawaii, or in the rest of the Nation.

I am also announcing additional measures to address safety concerns relating to oil tankers and other commercial vessels in Puget Sound-area waters in Washington State.

I want to express my appreciation to Congress, led by the Alaska congressional delegation, for its bipartisan support of the legislation that has made exports possible. In addition, I want to express my appreciation to Alaska Governor Tony Knowles. It has been a pleasure to work with him to make ANS exports a reality.

After careful consideration, I have determined that ending the 23-year ban against exporting ANS oil is in the national interest, subject to four important conditions:

1. Tankers exporting ANS crude oil must remain outside of the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone. This will ensure that tankers in the ANS export trade remain far from the U.S. coastline and the environmentally sensitive areas along the Aleutian Islands.
2. ANS export tankers must be equipped with a satellite communications system to permit the Coast Guard to monitor the tankers' positions.
3. ANS export tankers must be inspected annually, in accordance with U.S. Coast Guard policies and procedures. This condition will ensure that the tankers are kept in safe working order.
4. ANS export tankers will be required to exchange their ballast water in deep ocean water prior to entering Alaska's Prince William Sound. Ship logs will record ballast exchanges and will be checked periodically by the Coast Guard. This condition will help prevent the introduction into Alaskan fisheries of nonindigenous, aquatic nuisance species.

These requirements, which will be applied to ANS oil exports as export license conditions, will protect Alaska's unique environment and abundant natural resources. A fifth requirement—that exports be carried in U.S.-flag tankers, crewed by U.S. merchant seamen—is already in place under PL 104-58, the oil export legislation I supported and signed into law last November. That law is