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I say thank you. The rest of America is deeply in your debt. This is a very great project.

Now as we close this formal ceremony, let me say again to each and every one of you: I'm proud of you; I'm grateful to you. What you are doing is building America's future. Because of the nature of the economic and social changes going on in the world today, your work is more important to America's success than ever before.

I ask you to leave here with one idea in mind. I ask you to do what you can back in your hometowns, back in your home districts, back in your home States to make sure that every single school in America works to be a Blue Ribbon school.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:54 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jill Mahler, a student at Mainland High School in Daytona Beach, FL.

Statement on the Appointment of the Special Assistant for Civilian Implementation in Bosnia

May 29, 1996

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Richard Sklar as Special Representative of the President and the Secretary of State for Civilian Implementation in Bosnia. This appointment underscores that, with success in meeting the principal military tasks under the Dayton Accords, we must give high priority now to making the peace irreversible by accelerating efforts to rebuild the political and economic fabric of Bosnian society.

Mr. Sklar will be the senior U.S. official resident in Bosnia responsible for coordinating the work of all U.S. civilian agencies involved in the reconstruction effort, under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador to Bosnia. His responsibilities will encompass humanitarian assistance, economic revitalization and reconstruction, the resettlement of refugees, the conduct of elections, and strengthening of public security. He will also serve as liaison to his counterparts from other countries and the heads and staffs of all the international institutions engaged in civilian implementation activities.

I can think of no one more qualified to spearhead this critically important endeavor than Richard Sklar. Mr. Sklar has had a distinguished 35 year career in private and public sector management. Prior to accepting this appointment, he has served as president and chief operating officer of O'Brien-Kreizberg Inc. (OK), the oldest and largest ''pure'' project and construction management firm in the United States. OK is now managing over 100 major construction projects in the United States and abroad, from airports and rail systems to facilities for the Atlanta Olympics. Mr. Sklar served on the administration's transition team for the Agency for International Development during the administration's first 3 months, and then became a member of the Board of Directors of the Russian-American Enterprise Fund. He has continued to serve as an adviser to AID Administrator Brian Atwood and to Richard Morningstar, coordinator for assistance to the New Independent States. Mr. Sklar has built and led two businesses, both world leaders in the construction industry. In addition, he served in major public management roles for the city of San Francisco. Mr. Sklar was an officer in the U.S. Army artillery following his graduation as a mechanical engineer from Cornell University in 1956.

I am deeply grateful that Mr. Sklar has accepted this appointment, and for his willingness to serve our Nation in helping to build an enduring peace in Bosnia.

Remarks on Departure for New Orleans, Louisiana, and an Exchange With Reporters

May 30, 1996

Israeli Election

The President. Good morning. My goodness, the sun is out. I'd like to make just a couple of brief comments about the election in Israel last night.

First of all, it was a cliffhanger. A lot of us were up late waiting for the returns, but I want to just make a couple of points. The United States—first, we don't know how—we don't have final returns. We have to wait for the postal ballots to be cast, counted.