

this time of mourning with the people of Ohio. Jim was a dedicated, honorable public servant. His distinguished career included representing Ohio and its people longer than any other Governor in the State's history. Our thoughts and prayers are with his daughters, Suzanne and Sharon, and his entire family.

**Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Joe M. Allbaugh as Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency**

*March 5, 2001*

Thank you all very much. It's an honor to be here to swear in my friend. I first want to say it's a treat to see Mr. and Mrs. Allbaugh from the great State of Oklahoma, and his brother, most importantly, Diane and Taylor. Thank you all for being here. Of course, you wouldn't have missed it. [*Laughter*]

When I was a Governor, Joe and I used to travel a lot together, and a lot of times people would come up and say, "Is he your bodyguard?" [*Laughter*] He wasn't, but I always felt a little safer when he was around. And that's the kind of man he is, and that's the kind of man I wanted to run FEMA.

When the worst happens anywhere in America, I can assure you folks will be confident when Joe Allbaugh arrives on the scene. He's not just a commanding presence, or his stylish hair cut—[*laughter*—it's his confidence, his character, and his calm when trouble comes. This isn't mere speculation.

Last Wednesday at 10:54 in the morning, an earthquake rocked the State of Washington, injuring hundreds of people and causing billion dollars of property damage. By 11:30 that night, Joe Allbaugh was on the scene ready to assist people in need. That's the kind of man he is.

I couldn't have made it to Washington without him. And I can't tell you how honored I am that he has come to Washington to serve his country.

We never know where FEMA will be needed next, but we do know what makes this Agency so effective: more than 2,000 dedicated employees all across America;

4,000 standby employees, ready if needed; an ethic of professionalism and a willingness to work with State and local officials to help people in need.

As Governor I worked with FEMA officials. Joe and I have great respect for the outgoing Director, James Lee Witt, and for the acting Director, John Magaw. A lot of change is needed in Washington, but in this Agency the standards are already high. Every year, many thousands of Americans live through floods and hurricanes and fires. They know from personal experience that FEMA is an example of the Federal Government at its best. And I'll tell you from personal experience that FEMA has a new Director that speaks to America at its best.

When he acts, he'll have my full confidence. When he speaks, it will inspire confidence in others. This Agency is in strong and steady hands. Joe will be at the White House many times in the next few years. In the nature of his job, they won't always be the happiest of times. But Joe will help Americans deal with the worst in the best, most compassionate way possible.

Thank you for accepting this responsibility.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. in the Columbia Room at the Holiday Inn Capitol At The Smithsonian. In his remarks, he referred to Director Allbaugh's parents, Marvin and Peggy, his brother, Jay, wife, Diane, and daughter, Taylor. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Director Allbaugh.

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Congressional Leaders and an Exchange With Reporters**

*March 5, 2001*

***Santana High School Shootings***

**The President.** Before I talk about the business at hand here, I want to say how saddened we all are to know that two students lost their lives in southern California, others have been injured, in a disgraceful act of cowardice.

When America teaches their children right from wrong and teaches values to respect life and the values that respect life in our country, our country will be better off.