

June 15 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1993

Remarks at a Reception for Members of the Diplomatic Corps *June 15, 1993*

Thank you very much. I want to welcome all of you again to the White House, thank the Marine orchestra for providing the wonderful music, and tell you how very glad that Hillary and I are that you could all join us this evening to renew old friendships, begin new ones, and celebrate a new and challenging era in world affairs. I'm especially glad that we could be joined this evening by the Vice President and Mrs. Gore and by Secretary of State and Mrs. Christopher and by the dean of our diplomatic corps, Ambassador and Mrs. Pondi. The gathering of the Washington Diplomatic Corps offers us a good opportunity to become better acquainted and an opportunity to reflect on the state of the world we share.

Standing here, we are within sight, just behind us, of the magnificent memorial to our third President and our first Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson. He acutely understood the value of diplomacy to the United States. He also is the embodiment of our eternal quest for democracy. His words extolling democracy and human dignity still resonate in the hearts of all Americans and of people around the world.

None of us here this evening can say we represent a nation that has arrived at a perfect solution for the problems of human governance. There will never be a perfect solution for the problems of people who themselves are not perfect. But among the many clear facts of the era we all share is the remarkable worldwide movement toward democracy, from Russia to southern Africa, from Eastern Europe to Central and South America. There is great hope today that governments all around the world, beginning with our own, are becoming increasingly

democratic and responsive to those whom they govern. And that is a hope I share. This time of hope is also clearly a time of urgency for the work we will do and must do in the months and years ahead.

Today, billions of people look to us, indeed challenge us, to make progress against one of mankind's oldest enemies: poverty, disease, ignorance, bigotry, or armed strife, and perhaps all of them at once. And they look to us as well to make progress against our new challenges, such as the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the degradation of the global environment. The urgency of these problems is evident, and the complexity and difficulty of them is truly daunting. While none of us has absolute power to make these problems disappear, each of us has far too much power to pretend that we can do nothing or that the problems do not exist. And while each of us here may hold only a piece or two of these troubling puzzles, surely we must remember that together we and the nations we represent hold all the pieces of the puzzles. So this evening, let us talk. And then tomorrow and the months ahead, let us try, for ultimately that is why our nations have sent us here.

I look forward to working with you and the great nations you represent. I thank you again for joining us tonight. And I trust that all of us will always remember that we have been given great obligations and great opportunities and that together we can make a difference for the better.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:01 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Statement on the Death of John Connally *June 15, 1993*

I was saddened to hear of the death today of former Governor and Treasury Secretary John Connally, whose life was one of service to his country and of dedication to the principles in

which he so passionately believed. He will be remembered fondly by his State and his country for the work that he did and the person that he was.