

Nomination for Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

October 6, 1993

The President announced today that he intends to nominate John D. Holum to be the Director of the United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

“My administration has placed the highest importance on arms control and combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,” said the President. “A revitalized Arms Control and Disarmament Agency will play an important role in achieving new arms control agreements and fighting weapons proliferation. I can think

of no finer and more dedicated person to lead ACDA than John Holum, whom I have known for 20 years and who has close working relationships with many senior officials at the State and Defense Departments, the NSC, and throughout my administration. John will be a strong voice for arms control and nonproliferation policies within the councils of Government.”

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Nomination for a Special Counsel at the Department of Justice

October 6, 1993

The President announced today that he has nominated Gerald Stern, an experienced corporate attorney and former Justice Department civil rights attorney, to be the Special Counsel for Financial Institutions Fraud at the Department of Justice.

“To preserve our people’s trust in their financial institutions, it is imperative that we aggressively

enforce the laws governing them,” said the President. “Gerald Stern has the business experience and prosecutorial skill to make sure that we do just that.”

NOTE: A biography of the nominee was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary.

Remarks on Presenting Arts and Humanities Awards

October 7, 1993

Thank you very much. To our distinguished honorees and all of you in the audience; I want to say a special word of thanks to Jane Alexander and to Dr. Sheldon Hackney for their leadership of our administration’s efforts in the arts and humanities.

As a person who at various times in his life has been a frustrated writer and a frustrated musician, this is an extremely humbling event for me today. [Laughter] But I’ve been getting a lot of training in humility lately. I have a Vice President who humbles me all the time by all the things he teaches me about things great and insignificant and who unlike me actually got to go on David Letterman to prove

how funny he was. [Laughter] And I have a wife who swept the television ratings last week talking about the arcana of health care with a passion and an eloquence. As if that weren’t bad enough, USA Today had the bad grace to go out and poll the American people, and 40 percent of them said she was smarter than I am. [Laughter] To which I reply, “Of course, what kind of dummy do you think I am? How else would I have gotten elected President?”

And just to drive this humility home—this is the actual true part of this wonderful story—I went to southern California last week, or the first of this week, and I was looking forward to staying in the Beverly Hilton. It seemed like

an exotic sort of place. And I showed up, and Merv Griffin, who owns it, shook hands with me and took me up to the floor where I was staying. There is only one person who is a permanent resident of the floor where I stayed in the Beverly Hilton, Rodney Dangerfield, who said they had put me there because we seem to belong together—[laughter]—and gave me 12 roses with “a little respect” on a gift card.

I am delighted to be here to honor this year’s winners of the National Medal of the Arts and the Charles Frankel Prize, men and women whose achievements represent the enduring power of the arts and humanities and, in a larger sense, of the creative spirit in all of our lives.

Throughout history, the arts and humanities have been the cultural signature of this great Nation. They have enabled Americans of all backgrounds and walks of life to gain a deeper appreciation of who they are as individuals and who we all are as a society, stirring our minds and our senses, stimulating learning and collective discourse, the arts and humanities teach us in ways that nothing else can about the vastness and the depth of human experience. They are our great equalizers. We inherit them, and we can all participate in them.

Whether or not one plays an instrument, reads poetry, learns to pirouette, or spends hours alone in a local art gallery, we all have the capacity to be moved by a song, a poem, a story, a dance, a painting. We can feel our spirits soar when we see an intriguing film or the sudden illumination of a new idea or an old idea put in a new way.

At a time when our society faces new and profound challenges, at a time when we are losing so many of our children, at a time when so many of our people feel insecure in the face of change, the arts and humanities must remain a vital part of our lives as individuals and as a Nation.

For 200 years, the freedom of our artistic and intellectual imagination has contributed to the quality of our civic life. It has helped to shape American ideas of democracy, of pluralism, of tolerance. Three decades ago, President Kennedy said this: There’s a connection, hard to explain logically but easy to feel, between achievement in public life and progress in the arts. The Jeffersonian era gave birth not only to the Declaration of Independence but also to beautiful Monticello. The age of Lincoln produced the Emancipation Proclamation, along

with the Hudson River school of painting and the writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. The first half of this century gave us universal suffrage and the empowerment of American workers, as well as Charlie Chaplin, Frank Lloyd Wright, William Faulkner, Marian Anderson, and Duke Ellington. The same unbridled energy and potent imagination that took Americans to the moon inspired rock and roll, Motown, modern dance, and a new emphasis on civil and human rights.

Those of you gathered with us today are reminders that the human imagination is still the most powerful tool we have in moving forward as a civilization. You provoke our minds, you enliven our senses, endow our souls, help us to give our lives meaning. That’s why public support for the arts and humanities remains essential today and for the generations to come.

Today, we are indeed fortunate to have inspiring new leaders working in Government to expand our artistic and humanistic endeavors, to carry on our heritage to future generations. I’m very proud of the work and the life that Sheldon Hackney and that Jane Alexander have lived before they came to this work. I thank them for their work here. And I tell you that we welcome all of you to give us your ideas, your suggestions, and your energy as we try to move forward together. Now it is a privilege to call forward the following recipients of the National Medal of Arts.

First, the contributions of Walter and Leonore Annenberg to American culture can literally not be overstated. The Annenbergs have enriched our appreciation of the arts through public service, publishing, and as board members of major arts institutions. They have given generously of their time and their money. And they provided among other things the magnificent portrait of Benjamin Franklin, which hangs in the Green Room at the White House, one of the most prized possessions of this, your American home.

[At this point, the President congratulated Mr. and Mrs. Annenberg, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

The legendary vocalist and bandleader, Cab Calloway, has had indeed a remarkable career, one of the originators of American jazz. An enduring figure in popular music, Cab Calloway added “Hi-dee-ho” and the scat sound to our musical vocabulary. And for those of us who

have lived a while, we can enjoy seeing the brightness of his smile in our memories going back for decades. He is an American original, and I am deeply honored that he's here with us today.

[The President congratulated Mr. Calloway, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Literally for decades, Ray Charles has been one of America's favorite singers. From his roots in Georgia, he became one of the first great truly American singers, one of the first to combine the dynamic energy of gospel music with rhythm and blues. His songs are indelibly etched in the hearts of millions of Americans.

I can tell you that it's a particular honor for me to give him this award today, because I suppose no singer ever had a bigger impact on my musical life than Ray Charles. I still remember over there in Constitution Hall a concert I attended on June 24th, 1967. I was notable for being one of a few members of my race in the audience. And Ray Charles electrified that crowd so much that that night I literally could not go to sleep until 5 o'clock in the morning. I went out and ran 3 miles to get the energy out. And I still remember to this day the date of the concert. That is testament to the enduring impact of this phenomenal American original.

[The President congratulated Mr. Charles, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Our next honoree, I believe, is part of the only brother-sister team ever to receive this great award. Bess Lomax Hawes has played a major role in the American folk movement since the 1940's as a singer, a teacher, a composer, an author of articles and books that help bring the folk arts into the lives of countless Americans. At a time when our native folk arts are largely lost to millions of our younger people, she has performed an invaluable service to our Nation in helping us to remember who we are and how we got here.

[The President congratulated Ms. Hawes, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

You know what she said? She said, "I wish all the beautiful artists I've recorded and seen across the years in this country were here to receive this award for me. They were the inspiration for what I did." Thank you.

Poet and educator Stanley Kunitz has spent a life opening America's eyes and ears to poetry.

He makes the ordinary become extraordinary, the everyday become timeless and significant. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1959, and his works grace us still.

Welcome, Stanley Kunitz.

[The President congratulated Mr. Kunitz, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Robert Merrill has been acclaimed by critics as one of the great natural baritones of the century. He's appeared in 787 performances at the Metropolitan Opera over a 31-year operatic career. He's also sung on Broadway and many solo recitals and on television. And all of us who have ever heard him sing wish, as I tried to persuade him to do today, that this would be the 787th performance. He turned me down, but I still think we should give him the medal. Mr. Robert Merrill.

[The President congratulated Mr. Merrill, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Arthur Miller has given our Nation some of the finest plays of this century. His character, Willy Loman in "Death of a Salesman," caught the public's imagination by conveying the tension and drama of a common man's life. In "The Crucible," he focused on issues of conscience by probing the Salem witch trials of the late 17th century. He won the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1949. The thing that has always impressed me about him was the continuing energy he has brought to his work over such a long period of time, seeming forever young with something always new to say. Please welcome Arthur Miller.

[The President congratulated Mr. Miller, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Robert Rauschenberg is one of America's most innovative artists whose remarkable works have been displayed in museums and galleries around the world, and who has really helped to transform our notions of contemporary art. Modern art is often inaccessible to a lot of people who don't go to art galleries and often don't understand it. I have personally been impressed by how many people I know who don't count themselves as connoisseurs, who have seen and been moved by the works of our next honoree, Robert Rauschenberg.

[The President congratulated Mr. Rauschenberg, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

He's also a pretty good comic. I said, "It's great to see you here today." He said, "Oh, I'll show up for this anytime." [Laughter]

Lloyd Richards has devoted his career to promoting theater in America. As dean of the Yale school of drama and artistic director of the Yale Repertory Theater, he has trained some of our Nation's finest young talents, many of whom have turned into our finest, not so young talents, helping to make for him a remarkable legacy for which we are all grateful. Lloyd Richards.

[The President congratulated Mr. Richards, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Well, I got another little lesson in humility back there. He said, "You both have said some nice things today." And then he looked at me and he said, "And you did something for stand-up comedy also." And then he said, "Well, at least you didn't set it back." [Laughter]

William Styron's haunting works, including "Lie Down in Darkness," "The Confessions of Nat Turner," and "Sophie's Choice," capture our history and character with a passion and insight few others have ever achieved. His compelling prose as a fiction writer and essayist has won him readers around the world, those of us who anxiously await each new word.

I can tell you that as a young southerner, the impact of "The Confessions of Nat Turner" on me was truly stunning. And I can say that for a whole generation of us who had never quite found words to give expression to many of the things we had imagined until we read the works of William Styron.

[The President congratulated Mr. Styron, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Paul Taylor has been one of our Nation's pre-eminent dancers and choreographers for more than three decades. And I might say, he looks as if he could outdance most of us in this country still today. His more than 80 works explore the richness, the complexity of the American character, and graphically demonstrate the deep undercurrents of human relations in a way few other choreographers have ever been able to do. Please join me in welcoming Paul Taylor.

[The President congratulated Mr. Taylor, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Since coming to this country in the 1930's, Billy Wilder has helped to transform the American motion picture industry. As a writer, direc-

tor, and producer, his name attached to many classics of American film. He's won six Academy Awards and millions of fans. And perhaps most important, he's given us a lot of moving movie moments. If you've never laughed at a funny Billy Wilder picture, you have never laughed. Mr. Billy Wilder.

[The President congratulated Mr. Wilder, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Now, it is my great honor to introduce the winners of the Charles Frankel Prize. Ricardo E. Alegria is an historian and anthropologist who has dedicated his career to the study and public appreciation of Caribbean culture. I'm glad to see so many of his supporters from his native Puerto Rico here today, and I thank him for coming this long way to be with us. Mr. Alegria.

[The President congratulated Mr. Alegria, and Hillary Clinton presented the award.]

In a 50-year career as a writer and a teacher, historian John Hope Franklin has been a leading scholar of African-American studies and an active voice in the social transformation of America. He's won nearly 100 honorary degrees. He's served on the National Council of Humanities. His writings have illuminated his subject for a whole generation after generation of young readers. I was once one of them—a reader, and young—reading John Hope Franklin. And I'd like to say that one of the great moments of our 1992 campaign was when John Hope Franklin came on one of our bus trips with us; and Al Gore and Tipper and Hillary and I sat and had a chance to visit with him and really learn something from a man who has mastered the mystery of America. John Hope Franklin.

[The President congratulated Mr. Franklin, and Hillary Clinton presented the award.]

Hanna Holborn Gray has had a truly remarkable career. She served for 15 years as president of the University of Chicago, where she became a highly visible and widely acclaimed advocate for higher education. She has been honored for her scholarship, her words, and her work in many ways, especially in receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, our country's highest civilian award. She deserves greatly the award she receives today. Hanna Gray.

[The President congratulated Ms. Gray, and Hillary Clinton presented the award.]

After a distinguished career as chairman and chief executive officer of Time Incorporated, Andrew Heiskell was appointed founding chairman of the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities in 1982. As a leader in promoting the arts and humanities, he energetically, and I echo energetically, persuaded cultural leaders and business executives to support cultural activities and institutions. He filled a void in American life at a time when we needed him. And today we thank him for that. Andrew Heiskell.

[The President congratulated Mr. Heiskell, and Hillary Clinton presented the award.]

There are a lot of funny people. He said "All this and dinner, too?" *[Laughter]*

Historian Laurel T. Ulrich has introduced both scholarly and public audiences to the lives of ordinary people in New England's past. Her recent book "A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, based on her diary," won the 1991 Pulitzer Prize for History, among other honors.

Now that I have become President, perhaps I can say this with greater authority than would otherwise be the case: We oftentimes tend to see our history too much through the lives and works of the famous and not enough through the remarkable lives of the people who are not famous. She has made a truly significant contribution to our understanding of our roots. And for that we thank her.

[The President congratulated Ms. Ulrich, and Hillary Clinton presented the award.]

And now I have one last special honor, and that is to present to Congressman Sidney Yates the Presidential Citizens Medal for his exem-

plary deeds of service in the area of arts and humanities. The last time Congressman Yates was here for an occasion at the White House, it happened to be on the day he and his wife were celebrating their 58th wedding anniversary. And today, we honor him for that many years and more of dedication to our common cause. Congressman Yates, please come forward.

[The President congratulated Mr. Yates, and Hillary Clinton presented the medal.]

Again, let me thank the honorees for being here today, thank all of you in the audience who have come to support them and to support the arts.

Before we go, I just can't resist saying this. Just before I came out here, I learned today that a great American writer and a friend of Hillary's and mine, Toni Morrison, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature today. I hope that in the years and struggles ahead we will work hard together to keep the arts and humanities alive and flourishing, not just here in the Nation's Capital or in the cultural capitals of this great land but in every community and in every neighborhood.

Remember, all the people we honor today were once in an ordinary community in an ordinary neighborhood living only with the imagination they had that brought them to this day and this honor. We have to find that imagination and fire it in the children all over America.

Thank you all, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:46 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to former television talk show host Merv Griffin and comedian Rodney Dangerfield.

Address to the Nation on Somalia October 7, 1993

Today I want to talk with you about our Nation's military involvement in Somalia. A year ago, we all watched with horror as Somali children and their families lay dying by the tens of thousands, dying the slow, agonizing death of starvation, a starvation brought on not only by drought, but also by the anarchy that then prevailed in that country.

This past weekend we all reacted with anger and horror as an armed Somali gang desecrated the bodies of our American soldiers and displayed a captured American pilot, all of them soldiers who were taking part in an international effort to end the starvation of the Somali people themselves. These tragic events raise hard questions about our effort in Somalia. Why are we