

help people undergoing transitions in other companies to move to those new jobs.

The third point I want to make is that both of these companies have proved that you can have the right sort of partnership with the Government. The Secretary mentioned that both of them had done work with NIST, which is our technology division within the Commerce Department. The Commerce Department has done two things better than any predecessor, I believe, thanks to Secretary Brown and the others who work there. First of all, they've done a better job in opening the doors around the world for American businesses and American products. And secondly, they have tried to help, in a very effective way, manage the transition by investing in partnership with the private sector in important emerging areas of technology. And that is very important. That's the sort of thing Government ought to do, not deciding exactly how this economy will grow, not picking winners and losers but working with the private sector to provide that extra added measure of cooperation in the new technologies that will enable us to win.

The final thing I want to say is this. These two companies—and I want to say a special word here about Armstrong. Henry said that, well, Armstrong was not—it was a traditional manufacturing company, not a high-tech company. All manufacturing operations that are going to succeed have to be high performance companies. And they have to get the most out of their people. And they are managing this transition in the same way I'm convinced we

have to manage it here: teamwork. The people who aren't here whose names we'll never know are just as important as the people who are here in the fact that these two companies won these awards today.

And that's something we need to keep in mind here in Washington. If we had more teamwork we would be more successful at giving the American people a higher return on their tax dollar and in moving more quickly through this transition. That is what works. And in a time of transition you simply don't have the luxury of engaging in politics as usual, just like you can't engage in business as usual.

So that's the significance of this day to me. It's the validation of years and years of effort by people who believe in quality management. It's the validation of the proposition that we can create new opportunities for Americans if we work together to move into the future instead of running away from it. It proves that there is a proper role for the Nation's Government in a limited supportive way to help to create new economic opportunities. And most important, it shows that when we work together, we never lose.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to James R. Houghton, chairman and chief executive officer, Corning, Inc., and Henry A. Bradshaw, president, Armstrong World Industries' Building Products Operations.

## Statement on the Report of the White House Conference on Aging *March 6, 1996*

I was gratified today to receive the final report of the White House Conference on Aging, a comprehensive look at aging policy in America developed over 2 years with the input of more than 125,000 men and women. My deep thanks and appreciation go out to all of those Americans who contributed to this incredible grass-roots effort.

These recommendations, which demonstrate strong support for many of the priorities I have been fighting for, including the preservation and protection of Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security, will be given every serious consideration by my administration.