

workforce that is skilled, flexible, and focused on results and service to the Nation; and

- collaborate with OPM to identify and address emerging human resources management issues.

The Council shall continue to be chaired by the Director of OPM or the Director's designee and shall continue to include the senior human resources management official (or designee) from each executive department or agency, including military departments and defense agencies, and other members as proposed by the Chair. Within 30 days of the issuance of this memorandum, the Director of OPM shall officially redesignate the Interagency Advisory

Group of Personnel Directors as the Human Resources Management Council.

Beginning on October 1, 2000, and annually thereafter, agency heads shall ensure that human resources management objectives and means to accomplish these objectives are incorporated in their Annual Performance Plans. The Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with OPM, will provide the guidance for this requirement as part of its overall guidance on Annual Performance Plans.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 12.

## Remarks at a Millennium Matinee at the White House

June 12, 2000

*[The First Lady opened the program and introduced the event's featured speakers: Marcia McNutt, president and chief executive officer, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute; and Neil de Grasse Tyson, associate astronomer and Frederick P. Rose director, Hayden Planetarium. Dr. McNutt then discussed ocean exploration, and Dr. Tyson discussed space exploration.]*

*The President.* Well. *[Laughter]* I have a hundred questions. Before I open the floor to questions, I just would like to make a couple of points.

First, I want to thank Dr. Tyson and Dr. McNutt for truly fulfilling the spirit of this wonderful old room. It was in this room, on this floor, with maps and books on animal skins, that Thomas Jefferson and Meriwether Lewis planned the Lewis and Clark expedition. They were exploring the far reaches of North America, looking for an ocean no one believed at that time you could reach by land. Today our speakers have taken us on a very different journey of discovery. They have shown us that new evidence is emerging from both the seas and space about so many things but, as you have heard, among other things, about the challenge of global climate change.

Just this morning some of our leading scientists released a draft report that provides some of the most detailed information yet about the

potential impacts of global warming on our Nation. Some of its findings, because it's a draft, may be revised, but essentially this report pulls together an enormous amount of scientific analysis, and as our previous speakers have done, it paints quite a sobering picture of the future. It suggests that changes in climate could mean more extreme weather, more floods, more droughts, disrupted water supplies, loss of species, dangerously rising sea levels.

Now, I have tried for several years to get the United States to respond to do our part. We are the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world. In the next couple of decades, China and India will surpass us, unless we all take advantage of the fundamental changes in the nature of the economy to prove that we can have economic growth and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

So it is—if you'll forgive me, I want to make one earthly plea, which is that the Congress stop blocking our commonsense efforts to combat global warming. We need a climate change on Capitol Hill on this issue. And it should not be a partisan issue. This is about science. This is about evidence. This is about things that are bigger than all of us and very much about our obligation to these children here to give them a future on this planet. We are not yet

prepared to live under the sea, as we have just been told.

I'd also like to make one other announcement about ocean exploration. In spite of all that we learn today and all that is known, more than 95 percent of the underwater world remains unknown and unseen. And what remains to be explored could hold clues to the origins of life on Earth, to links to our maritime history, to cures for diseases. The blood of the horseshoe crab, for example, provides a vital antibacterial agent. A potential anticancer drug may come from a deep sea sponge.

Two years ago today we held the first National Oceans Conference in Monterey, to bring experts together to chart a common agenda for the 21st century. Among the key recommendations that grew out of that Conference was the need to establish a national ocean exploration strategy.

One of the success stories that has come out so far occurred half a world away on the Navy vessel, the *Trieste*, which you saw in the video. In 1960 the *Trieste* went to an area called the Challenger Deep in the Pacific, the deepest spot in any ocean, nearly 7 miles down. Only two people have been there. One of those brave explorers was a young officer named Don Walsh. President Eisenhower gave him the Legion of Merit here in the White House more than 40 years ago. He's here today, and I'd like to ask him to stand up. Mr. Walsh. [Applause] I might say, he looks fit enough to make the journey again. [Laughter]

I would also like to recognize the man who discovered the wreckage of the *Titanic* is here, Dr. Bob Ballard. Can you stand up? [Applause]

I want to announce some new steps we're taking. First, three new, first-of-their-kind expeditions off the Atlantic, Pacific, and gulf coasts, voyages led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in partnership with major research institutions. These expeditions will allow the first detailed exploration of the Hudson Canyon off New York—it's an underwater version of the Grand Canyon, only larger; the Middle Grounds and Big Bend areas off Florida, which include some of the oldest life forms on Earth, giant tube worms—you saw some on the film—up to 250 years old; and the Davidson Seamount, an inactive ocean floor volcano off Monterey. In each expedition, researchers will use cutting-edge deep sea diving technologies

and share their discoveries with schools and the public through the Internet.

Second, to ensure that these voyages are the start of the new era of ocean exploration, I'm directing the Secretary of Commerce to assemble a panel of leading ocean explorers, educators, and scientists to develop recommendations for a national ocean exploration strategy and to report back to me in 120 days. These steps could bring about, quite literally, a sea change in our understanding of the oceans.

We must continue as a nation to set out for new frontiers, whether under the sea or into the heavens. We must continue to try to conquer the seemingly impossible, to discover the unimaginable, to find out more about what's out there and, in the process, about ourselves and what's here.

I would like to ask the first question, and then we'll turn it over to the regular process and the many thousands of questions that must be out there in this room and beyond here. I'd like to ask Dr. McNutt and Dr. Tyson what they think the most likely discovery in the next 10 years in their field is that would have a significant impact on how we live on Earth or what our understanding of our system is.

Thank you.

You go first. [Laughter]

[Dr. McNutt responded that the most important discovery within the next decade, hopefully, would be to learn to preserve the oceans, keeping them healthy and productive rather than depleting them.]

*The President.* If I could just emphasize one thing. The point you just made is related not only to pollution, to additional pollution of the ocean and overfishing but also to climate change. When I was in Monterey Bay, I saw small creatures right in the bay that just 20 years ago were 20 miles south. They had made their way 20 miles in 20 years, these minuscule creatures, because before that it was too cold in Monterey for the creatures to exist.

This is real, and we have got—I hate to keep beating on this, but you know what kids used to say several years ago, that denial is not just a river in Egypt. [Laughter] We have got to come to grips with this. And you were terrific, what you said about it in your presentation. Thank you.

Dr. Tyson.

[Dr. Tyson responded that possibly within the next decade, exploration on Mars or Europa might produce confirmable evidence of extra-terrestrial life. White House Millennium Council Director Ellen Lovell then led the question-and-answer portion of the program. The First Lady read an Internet question asking the President if sending a manned mission to Mars before 2030 would be an appropriate national priority.]

*The President.* Well, let me say, one of the interesting things to me was—about the previous discussion—were the comments that were made by both our speakers about the importance of robotic exploration of the deep sea and outer space and about what could be done now with the technology.

So I would leave the question of that first to the space program. But if Dan Goldin told me that we needed to send a man to Mars to find out what we need to know, then I would strongly support it, because I think the United States would make a terrible mistake to weaken either its space exploration or its undersea exploration. I think we should accelerate it. I think we should invest more money in it, and I think we should keep pushing the frontiers of knowledge.

We just went through a very wrenching period where NASA had to basically learn to do more with less. We were trying to get rid of this terrible deficit. Now we've got a surplus. We're paying down our national debt. We're investing in our future. And I think a big part of that investment ought to be the broadest possible commitment to science and technology, including vigorous, vigorous exploration of outer space and the depths of the ocean.

That's what I believe, and I hope that that will be a commitment the American people will extract from their candidates in this election season and in every one for the foreseeable future, because it's very, very important.

[Dr. Sylvia Earle, explorer in residence, National Geographic Society, and director, Sustainable Seas Expedition, asked about the possibilities for a 21st century focus on further ocean exploration in contrast to the 20th century focus on space exploration. Dr. McNutt responded that the ocean budget was a tenth of the space budget and could not sustain much of an exploration program at its present level.]

*The President.* If I could just say one word to complement that. My Science Adviser, Dr. Neal Lane, is here. We have tried very hard to increase the entire budget for science and technology and especially the research budgets. And basically, what happens is, we get in this debate with Congress. They are more than happy to invest more money in the National Institutes of Health, and that's good. We all want to live forever, even though we're not. [Laughter] But there is a—one of the things that I think needs to be addressed, and we're trying to right it a little here in this last budget process I'll be a part of—but I've been fighting this for 3 years now. It's a terrible mistake to think that the only kind of scientific research we need to be healthy on this planet is in biomedical research. It's very important, but to have just that and to neglect what we should be doing in space, what we should be doing in the oceans, what we should be doing with nanotechnology, what we should be doing with a whole range of other technology-related issues, all of which in the end have to be developed if we're going to know as much as we can about how to live as long and well as we'd like to on this Earth—it's a huge debate. So if any of you can make any contribution to righting that balance, I for one would be very grateful. It's a major, major intellectual challenge that we face in the congressional debate.

Again, I say this should not be a partisan issue. This is a question of what is the right way to do the most for our people in the new century.

[The question-and-answer portion of the program continued. After a final question about the possibility of discovering Earth-like planets associated with other solar systems, Ms. Lovell asked the President to conclude the program.]

*The President.* Well, I don't know what to say. [Laughter] You know, if they're all out there, I hope they have the best of what we have and fewer headaches. [Laughter]

Let me say, Hillary and I have enjoyed every one of these, but this has been very, very special. I think our guests were both terrific and all of you who asked questions. Albert Einstein once said, "The important thing is to not stop questioning," which is just what they said. So you don't have to stop questioning, but you do have to stop doing it right here because we're out of time.

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And I would like to invite all of you to join us in the State Dining Room for a reception in honor of our guests and all the students and everyone else who is here. Let's go in there, and you can continue your questions. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Matinee, entitled "Exploration: Under the Sea, Beyond the

Stars," the ninth in a series of Millennium programs, began at 2:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, Dr. Tyson, Dr. McNutt, Ms. Lovell, and the participants in the question-and-answer portion of the program. The program was cybercast on the Internet.

## Memorandum on a New Era of Ocean Exploration

June 12, 2000

*Memorandum for the Secretary of Commerce*

*Subject:* A New Era of Ocean Exploration

Two years ago, the Vice President and I joined you, other members of my Cabinet, and hundreds of others from across the country at the National Ocean Conference in Monterey. This historic gathering drew together for the first time representatives from government, industry, and the scientific and conservation communities to begin charting a common oceans agenda for the 21st century.

At the Conference, I directed my Cabinet to report back with recommendations for a coordinated, disciplined, long-term Federal ocean policy. In its report to me last year, *Turning to the Sea: America's Ocean Future*, the Cabinet outlined an ambitious and detailed strategy to ensure the protection and sustainable use of our ocean resources. I am proud of the actions my Administration is taking to begin implementing this strategy, including the Executive Order I issued last month to strengthen our national network of marine protected areas.

One of the Cabinet's key recommendations was that the Federal Government establish a national strategy to expand exploration of the oceans. Although we have learned more about our oceans in the past 25 years than during any other period in history, over 95 percent of the underwater world is still unknown and unseen. What remains to be explored may hold clues to the origins of life on Earth, cures for human diseases, answers to how to achieve sustainable use of our oceans, links to our maritime history, and information to protect the endangered species of the sea.

Today, I am announcing steps to immediately enhance our ocean exploration efforts and to develop the long-term exploration strategy recommended by you and the rest of the Cabinet. Together, these actions represent the start of a new era of ocean exploration.

First, I am announcing the launch of three new expeditions off the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts. As you know, these expeditions, led by the Department of Commerce in collaboration with private partners, will allow the first detailed exploration of the Hudson River Canyon off New York, the Middle Grounds and Big Bend areas off central Florida, and the Davidson Seamount off central California. Researchers will employ the latest submersible technologies and will share their discoveries with schoolchildren and the public via the Internet and satellite communications.

Second, to ensure that these new expeditions are only the start of a new era of ocean exploration, I am directing you to convene a panel of leading ocean explorers, educators, and scientists and to report back to me within 120 days with recommendations for a national oceans exploration strategy. In implementing this directive, you shall consult with the National Science Foundation, the National Atmospheric and Space Administration, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other agencies, as appropriate. The strategy should consider the full array of benefits that our oceans provide, and should support our efforts to conserve and ensure the sustainable use of valuable ocean resources. Specifically, the strategy should: