

Remarks at a Swearing-In Ceremony for John C. Danforth as United States Representative to the United Nations
July 1, 2004

The President. Please be seated. Good afternoon. It's an honor to welcome Jack and Sally Danforth and their wonderful family to the White House. I want to thank Justice Thomas and Ginny, Deputy Secretary Armitage, and all the other distinguished guests for joining us here today.

In his remarkable career, Jack Danforth has been called Attorney General, Senator, Special Counsel, Special Envoy, and Reverend. [*Laughter*] He's been called "Saint Jack." It's a little beyond my power to confer. [*Laughter*] Today I am very proud to name this good man and superb public servant America's next Ambassador to the United Nations.

As our Ambassador, Jack Danforth will succeed a good man with an important new mission. On Tuesday, former U.N. Ambassador John Negroponte presented his credentials to President al-Yawr as America's first Ambassador to Iraq since 1990. We appreciate his continuing service to our country.

For his own new assignment, Jack Danforth is exceptionally well-prepared. During his years on Capitol Hill, he earned the admiration of colleagues on both sides of the aisle. Jack is a man of strong convictions, unquestioned integrity, and great decency. He is a man of calm and judicious temperament who goes about his work with deliberation and a good will that draws others to his cause. These qualities were evident during his 18 years as Missouri's United States Senator and during his recent assignment in the Sudan. I'm confident that his good judgment and wisdom will serve America well at the United Nations.

Jack Danforth now heads to New York at a critical time, when the United States and the United Nations are facing new tests. We are called to defend the peace against ruthless terrorist networks and against outlaw regimes that support and shelter them. We are called to preserve the peace by building good relations among the great powers. We're called to extend the peace by replacing poverty and repression and resentment around the world, especially in the broader Middle East. America is determined to lead all in these great objectives.

Yet, no nation can achieve them alone. Global challenges must be answered by active, effective, multilateral institutions. So we're working with many nations on the Proliferation Security Initiative, for example, to interdict dangerous weapons and materials in transit. We're helping to transform the NATO Alliance, which is now acting beyond Europe, bringing security to Afghanistan and soon providing training assistance for Iraqi security forces. And we're challenging the United Nations to rise to its responsibilities in a changing world.

The U.N. must fulfill its mission of peace by holding outlaw states to account, by aiding the rise of stable democracies, and by encouraging development and hope as alternatives to stagnation and bitterness. The U.N. is serving these great purposes in many different places. In Iraq, the U.N. is helping that newly sovereign nation to prepare for free and fair elections and will help to draft a new constitution. From Africa to the Caribbean, the U.N. is helping to turn societies away from old conflicts,

to overcome persistent poverty, to fight AIDS and other diseases.

America supports all these efforts, and we know that more will be necessary. So I'm sending Jack Danforth to the U.N. with a clear mandate. America will work closely with the United Nations to confront terror and to fight the suffering and despair that terrorists exploit. In all our work at the U.N., Ambassador John C. Danforth will be a strong voice for the humane and decent conscience of America.

One of Jack's many virtues is an eye for talent. Three decades ago, in Jefferson City, he took a chance on a promising lawyer from Pinpoint, Georgia. Since then, Attor-

ney General Danforth has moved on to some other impressive jobs, and so has his young assistant. Today it is my honor to ask Justice Clarence Thomas to swear in Jack Danforth as the Representative of the United States to the United Nations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. in Room 450 of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Sally Danforth, wife of Ambassador Danforth; and Virginia Thomas, wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Ambassador Danforth.

Remarks on the 40th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 July 1, 2004

Thank you all for coming, and welcome to the White House. I am so pleased you could join us to celebrate a great anniversary of justice and equality in America.

I appreciate members of my Cabinet being here and a lot of members of my administration. I want to thank many of our distinguished guests who have joined us today. I'm so pleased to see Dr. Dorothy Height. Thank you so much for coming.

We've got two Lieutenant Governors, Michael Steele and Jennette Bradley, with us. Thank you both for being here today. Marc Morial—where are you, Marc? He must be somewhere. There he is. Thanks for coming. I didn't recognize you outside the "Big Easy." [*Laughter*]

Lou Sullivan is with us. I'm honored you're here, Lou. Thanks for coming, sir. My friend Bob Woodson, president of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, is here. Thanks for coming, Woody. Glad you're here. Bill Coleman, former Secretary of Transportation, I'm honored you're here. Thurgood Marshall, Jr., is with us today. Thank you so much for being

here. Appreciate—I'm honored you're here. It's pretty neat to have a great father, isn't it? [*Laughter*]

I'm going to save one announcement for a little later, a special announcement. But I do want to recognize Jack Valenti, who was the Special Assistant to President Lyndon Johnson. Jack, we're honored you're here. Thank you for coming.

Forty years ago, in many parts of America, basic rights were observed or denied based entirely on race. Offensive laws regulated every detail of society: where you could get your hair cut; which hospital ward you could be treated in; which park or library you could visit. A person looking for a job or even a place to stay the night could be turned away merely because the color of the skin. And that person had very little recourse under Federal law. Forty years ago this week, that system of indignity and injustice was ended by the Civil Rights Act signed into law in this very room.

As of July the 2d, 1964, no longer could weary travelers be denied a room in a hotel or a table at a restaurant. No longer could