

Remarks Honoring White House Fellows

October 6, 1993

Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President and my longtime friend Nancy Bekavac, ladies and gentlemen. I want to welcome the White House fellows, their families and friends and the White House Fellowship Commission here.

This program has been largely a secret to the American people for a long time, and yet it has been one of the most important things that has been done to enrich and diversify the work of administrations for decades now.

We have a remarkable array of White House fellows this year. We have an American Indian poet and legal scholar working at the Interior Department, a basketball star and a tax expert at State, an AIDS specialist at Commerce, two doctors at the Pentagon. Several fellows work here at the White House, including an astronomer tackling environmental issues at the National Security Council, a Bronx preacher reviewing domestic policy—sometimes I think we do better praying over these problems than what we do anyway—an author and an illustrator helping to build our national service corps, and we have two heroes of the Persian Gulf war, one working for the Vice President and one for Mack McLarty, my Chief of Staff.

I am very grateful to all the people here behind me and all those who have served on the Fellowship Commission, including our birthday girl, Pauline Gore.

With all of your responsibilities, it's a credit to you that you understand the importance of this program, that you've been willing to give your time, your attention, your energies to it. I hope that you will always be very, very proud of this.

You know, Colin Powell was a White House fellow. Henry Cisneros was a White House fellow. Tim Wirth, our Under Secretary of State for Global Affairs, was a White House fellow. We don't have any idea what these young people here behind me will be doing in 5 or 10 or 15 years. But one thing is for sure, whatever it is they wind up doing, they'll do a better job of it because those of you on this Commission gave them an op-

portunity to serve. And I will certainly be a better President because you gave them an opportunity to serve.

This has been a truly astonishing month. A lot of incredible things have happened in the world and in our country. And all these people have been a part of that remarkable change. We're committed to continuing to do that.

I told a dinner last night there's something to be said just for showing up for work every day. Sooner or later you can make some good things happen. But it's a lot easier when you've got people with the richness, the diversity, the gifts and the commitment of the White House fellows.

So to all of you, I say thank you, and I give you my renewed commitment to this program and to honoring your service and your efforts.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:57 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Nancy Bekavac, president, Scripps College, Claremont, CA.

Proclamation 6605—National Disability Employment Awareness Month, 1993

October 6, 1993

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

The United States has long been a champion of the civil rights of individuals, and it is only natural that we now serve in the forefront of efforts to ensure equal opportunity for persons with disabilities. Inspired by the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on July 26, 1990, other nations have begun to reexamine the challenges faced by their citizens with disabilities. The ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment, public accommodations, government services, transportation, and communications, provides a practical model for people everywhere to ensure that individuals with disabilities will not be excluded from

the social, cultural, and economic mainstream.

Together we have begun shifting disability policy in America from exclusion to inclusion; from dependence to independence; from paternalism to empowerment. And we have made a firm commitment—a national pledge of civil rights for people with disabilities—to enforce the Americans with Disabilities Act. We cannot be satisfied until all citizens with disabilities receive equal treatment under the law, whether in the workplace, in schools, in government, or in the courts. We will not be satisfied as a Nation until we have fully implemented the laws that offer equal opportunity for Americans with disabilities, including the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

We do not have a single person to waste. Citizens with disabilities want to lead full, independent, and productive lives. They want to work; they want to pay their fair share of taxes; they want to be self-supporting citizens. America must enable the 43 million talented Americans with disabilities to contribute by offering them the individualized training and education we offer everyone else.

Our Nation can ill afford to waste this vast and only partially tapped source of knowledge, skills, and talent. In addition to being costly—over \$300 billion is expended annually at the Federal, State, and local levels to financially support potentially independent individuals—this waste of human ability cannot be reconciled with our tradition of individual dignity, self-reliance, and empowerment. As we work to achieve thorough and harmonious implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act, we will open the doors of opportunity for millions of people, thereby expanding, not only the ranks of the employed, but also the ranks of consumers. These individuals and their families will thus be able to pursue the real American Dream.

I congratulate the small business and industry leaders, labor leaders, and community leaders from all walks of life who are working together to implement the ADA and the Rehabilitation Act, and I commit the resources and cooperation of the Federal Government toward that effort. Our ongoing progress at-

tests to the fundamental vitality and openness of our free enterprise system and to our abiding commitment to civil rights for all. Every American needs a chance to contribute. Our work is far from finished. America needs the continued leadership of every citizen to fulfill the promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act and related laws.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved August 11, 1945, as amended (36 U.S.C. 155) has called for the designation of October of each year as “National Disability Employment Awareness Month.” This month is a special time for all Americans to recognize the tremendous potential of citizens with disabilities and to renew our commitment to full inclusion and equal opportunity for them, as for every citizen.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 1993 as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. I call on all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities that affirm our determination to fulfill both the letter and the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:29 p.m., October 6, 1993]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 8.

Message to the Congress Transmitting the Report of the National Institute of Building Sciences

October 6, 1993

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the requirements of section 809 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended (12 U.S.C. 1701j–2(j)), I transmit herewith the