

I'm honored you all are here. Congratulations on your elections. We look forward to working with you, and God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Donald H. Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense

January 26, 2001

It's a great honor to welcome Secretary Rumsfeld and his wife and family here to the Oval Office. Thank you all for coming.

In swearing in Don Rumsfeld, we have just sworn in a leader of exceptional strength and ability and vision. And I'm grateful that he has returned to service to our country.

Don and I have set three clear goals to guide American defense policy. First, we will strengthen the bond of trust between the American people and those who wear our Nation's uniform. We'll give them the tools they need and the respect they deserve.

Second, we will work to defend our people and our allies against growing threats: the threats of missiles; information warfare; the threats of biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons. We will confront the new threats of a new century.

Third, we will begin creating the military of the future, one that takes full advantage of revolutionary new technologies. We will promote the peace by redefining the way wars will be fought. These are great and exciting objectives, and our new Secretary of Defense is uniquely qualified to accomplish them.

As a former Navy pilot, Don Rumsfeld understands that if we ever send our forces into harm's way, we must send them fully prepared and equipped for the dangers they face. As a highly successful businessman, he understands that we must modernize and transform the business of defense, getting the value for our taxpayers' money. He is willing to challenge the status quo inside the Pentagon.

As the head of the National Commission on Ballistic Missile Threats, he is the among

the country's most informed experts on this vital issue. As a former Congressman, he understands the need to work closely with the Congress. As a former White House Chief of Staff, as a former Secretary of Defense, he understands what it takes to be a leader.

This is an exceptional history of service, and Don Rumsfeld is an exceptional man with integrity and honesty as a cornerstone of his foundation.

Mr. Secretary, congratulations.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:23 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of Secretary Rumsfeld. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary Rumsfeld.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Governors and an Exchange With Reporters

January 26, 2001

Legislative Agenda on Education

The President. Let me—first of all, I want to thank my Governor friends for coming. From all around the country, people came—from Idaho, from the South. The head of the National Governors is here, and of course, the soon-to-be-head of the National Governors. I'm honored you all came. It's good to see you in a new setting—for me, at least. And we had a long discussion about education.

These Governors made education their number one priority in their State, and obviously they're keenly aware of the role of Federal Government. And we've had a really good discussion about how to make their jobs easier. And their job is to make sure every child gets educated, which is the noblest of all calling in America.

So I appreciate your coming. It's always good to be talking to people who know what they're talking about. And when it comes to public education, Governors really understand the subject. So I'm grateful you're here.

I'll be glad to answer a few questions.

Vandalism

Q. Mr. President, are you offended, sir, by the reports of vandal—acts of vandalism