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REMARKS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY BY
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION ELIZABETH HANFORD DOLE
AMERICAN ASSEMBLY SERVICE TO DEMOCRACY AWARD RECEPTION
NOVEMBER 4, 1985
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

What a joy to be among so many good friends and colleagues and to have the pleasure of sharing the honors with Jim Robinson, Chairman of American Express.

Secretary Dillon, I want you to know that your distinguished career in the public sector -- first as Ambassador to France and Under Secretary of State under President Eisenhower and later as Secretary of the Treasury -- has been an inspiration in my life and my career -- and I am deeply honored to accept this award from you, a man for whom I have such great admiration and respect. I am so very grateful to you, Bill Sullivan, and to the Board of Trustees for this tribute. I will cherish this award for many reasons, not the least of which is that it comes from the American Assembly, an organization committed to preserving one of the most sacred of American principles: the ability to achieve compromise and consensus in a democratic society.

I feel very humble at this hour. For it is I who should be honoring you. You who are the American Assembly have stood four square for the balance our founding fathers held so dear that they built it into our constitution. When President Eisenhower founded this organization, he was concerned about the risks of a stalemate in our government. Eisenhower had fought in two World Wars and seen first hand the temptations that deadlocks in a democratic society hold for those who might favor authoritarian rule. So he created the American Assembly to aid in the practice of democracy. , And he assured its nonpartisan character and therefore, it's success by enlisting the support of one of America's most beloved statesmen -- W. Averell Harriman.

Thirty-five years later we still have stalemates in government and we always will. But it is reassuring to know that a strong institution is committed to giving Americans the facts with which to resolve our differences.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have done a truly remarkable job in accomplishing President Eisenhower's purpose. Through the years, you have illuminated many issues of crucial national concern, and in many cases your conclusions became the national policy.

Commitment such as yours inspired me to decide upon a career in public service because I wanted to make a difference in people's lives. It was back in my student days when I chose public service. I sensed then, as I do now, that there is no higher calling. And as you know so well, public service finds its greatest fulfillment when fueled by personal commitment and forged through consensus building.

It's sometimes difficult for those of us in government to assess the potential for consensus. Fortunately the Assembly does that very well indeed, as you delve in-depth into vital issues such as East-West tension in the Third World, a subject scheduled for later this month. At this special moment in history, when President Reagan will be meeting with Soviet Leader Gorbachev, you will be examining, on a citizen's level, our hope for the future in East-West relations.

Your assemblies last year enlightened both the public and private sector with findings on "Alcoholism and Related Problems," conclusions on "Improving American Innovation" or rekindling the creative spirit in America, and your very sensitive study of "The Art and Public Policies in the United States." Indeed, your studies give depth and substance to America's convictions. And in the end, society is judged by how it acts on its deepest convictions.

All of your studies have epitomized an earnest desire to make a difference, for the better, in people's lives -- a yearning to return to our first principles. Under President Reagan's leadership, our people have renewed their confidence in our institutions, in our system of free enterprise and our belief in God and traditional values.

The President recently remarked that when he first became Governor of California he was confronted with what seemed to be insoluble problems. It was then, he said, that he learned how to deal with stress.

"Each morning began with someone standing before my desk describing another newly-discovered disaster," he recalls. "The feeling of stress became unbearable. I had the urge to look over my shoulder for someone I could pass the problem to. Suddenly, one day, it came to me that I was looking in the wrong direction. I looked up instead of back. I'm still looking up. I couldn't face one day in this office if I didn't know I could ask God's help and it would be given."

In accepting this award, I do so with the knowledge that it is an honor and a privilege to serve, that if I have made any small contribution, it came through God's help, and that my efforts are just a tiny part of the work of so many dedicated Americans. And as we look to the future, indeed, the only certainty in our fast-paced world is change. So let us be guided by the words of President Eisenhower in his second inaugural address:

"May we pursue the right without self-righteousness.

"May we know unity without conformity.

"May we grow in strength without pride in self.

"May we, in our dealings with all peoples of the earth, ever speak truth and serve justice.

"And so shall America -- in the sight of all men of good will -- prove true to the honorable purposes that bind and rule us as a people..."

For 35 years the American Assembly has helped sustain that creed by shedding light on the complex and often divisive issues of our time. May your future endeavors continue to be blessed with great success.

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