President's Committee (1994): Speech 02

John Brademas

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Remarks of Dr. John Brademas  
President Emeritus, New York University  

The White House  
Wednesday, September 21, 1994

Mr. President, Mrs. Clinton, at the outset, let me put you both at ease. I am a child of the United States House of Representatives and not the Senate and, therefore, I shall be very brief (laughter).

Mr. President, you do great honor to all of us whom you have asked to serve as members of the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, and I am grateful to you for having done me the honor of asking me to chair the Committee.

AN EXTRAORDINARY GROUP OF CITIZENS
You have chosen an extraordinary group of private citizens to serve on the Committee even as the public members are outstanding leaders of government, most of whom are friends and former colleagues of mine.

I am also glad that the able executive director of the President's Committee is someone who for several years led the Vermont State Arts Council and was for ten years chief of staff to the distinguished senior Senator from Vermont, Senator Patrick Leahy—Ellen McCulloch-Lovell.

Mr. President, that with all the other issues, foreign and domestic, on your mind, you should have taken time to meet with us today to charge us with the mission of encouraging greater support, private and public, of the arts and the humanities in American life, is a powerful demonstration of the commitment you and the First Lady bring to our purpose.

And, Mr. President, that you have asked the First Lady to serve as Honorary Chair of the President's Committee reinforces that commitment.

REPORT ON THE STATE OF CULTURE
You have asked us, Mr. President, to give you a report on the state of the culture in our country, to consider the implications for the arts and the humanities of the information infrastructure, to encourage greater access for the American people to the arts and the humanities and to look at international cultural exchanges.

So, Mr. President, you have given us a tall order. I am confident, however, that with this superb group of Americans and the support of the President of the United States and the First Lady, we will respond constructively and effectively to your challenge.

Thank you again, Mr. President, for the honor that you do us.