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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE UNVEILING OF THE PORTRAIT
OF HOUSE MERCHANT MARINE AND FISHERIES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN
LEONOR SULLIVAN

LONGWORTH OFFICE BUILDING

Dick, Mr. Speaker, our honored guest,
Leonor, my many, many former colleagues and friends.

I have been accused of coming up to Capitol Hill so frequently lately that some people have suggested I was trying to build up my attendance record. (Laughter)

I think all of us know that my friendship with Leonor Sullivan goes back a long, long way. I had the privilege and honor of serving with her husband, John Sullivan, from 1948 until 1952. Leonor became a Member, as all of you know, in 1952, and ever since then, for 22 years, Leonor, we have been good friends and I have valued and have been most grateful for that friendship.

We discussed legislation on the floor of the House and we have discussed it in the corridors, and we have discussed it in committees. We have shared thoughts and ideas on many other matters in the Longworth Building and in the Members Dining Room.

And so, after all these years, I come to this ceremony with a very special message, and Leonor, let me put it this way, Leonor. We can't go on meeting like this. (Laughter) Betty is getting suspicious. (Laughter)

But in this very busy day, I am particularly proud to be here and I have looked forward to attending this ceremony, this very special and very well deserved occasion in your honor.

I think most of you know that I don't pretend to be an expert in the field of art. In fact, back in my home town of Grand Rapids, Michigan, we have a very large, modernistic piece of sculpture by the great Alexander Calder. He has several here in the District of Columbia. And every time I try to describe it to somebody or interpret it for somebody, poor Mr. Calder doesn't know whether to smile or sue. (Laughter)

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(OVER)

But you don't have to be an expert to appreciate this wonderful portrait of Leonor. I have been impressed by what I have seen on the program and I can't help but admire it in reality.

I have heard that a good painting is a mirror held to the soul of the subject. And Charles Fox, the portrait painter, has certainly captured the richness of Leonor Sullivan's character and her wonderful personality.

I understand that Mr. Fox has previously painted three Presidents -- Eisenhower, Kennedy and Nixon -- as well as many other prominent people in public life, and I know that his portrait of Leonor will be a credit to his career as much as the career of Leonor Sullivan has been a credit to the Congress of the United States.

I don't have to repeat here all of the achievements, the accomplishments, the superb record of Leonor. She has been an outstanding Chairman of the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries.

I think it is significant to point out, however, that -- I think it was last year, Leonor -- when the American maritime industry awarded her for her dedication, her success on behalf of the maritime industry, and made her an admiral of the ocean seas. This, I think, is unbelievable for someone who comes from the heartland of America to be so recognized by the maritime industry, an industry that I am sure watches and husbands that award for only those who have done superb work on behalf of our Merchant Marine.

So what I would like to say, Leonor, whether it was on the Committee of Banking and Currency or whether it was on the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, or whether it was on the floor of the House, there have been no other Members who I think enjoys the respect and admiration, Democratic or Republican, more than you.

But most of all, I am proud to call you a friend and to wish you the very best as you leave the Congress at the end of this session.

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