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THE WHITE HOUSE

EXCHANGE OF REMARKS  
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT  
AND

CARLA A. HILLS  
AT THE SWEARING-IN CEREMONY  
OF

CARLA A. HILLS  
AS  
SECRETARY OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

THE EAST ROOM

12:07 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Carla, Rod Hills, Mr. Justice White, members of the Cabinet, Members of Congress, the Hills family, and distinguished guests:

I am in very good company welcoming Carla into the Cabinet as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Carla, Mr. Justice White -- who is about to administer the oath -- HUD Under Secretary Jim Mitchell and I are all graduates of Yale Law School.

Maybe I better not say that too loudly. I can imagine a dozen other prospects starting to practice the Wiffenpoof Song. (Laughter)

The job facing the new Secretary, of course, is an immense responsibility. She assumes that great responsibility of administering this important department at a time of recession in the housing industry.

However, she has the unique skills and dedication which are vital in helping us move through a very difficult time in the productivity and the vitality in the housing and urban development areas.

Carla has a tough act to follow. Her very capable predecessor at HUD, Jim Lynn, was instrumental in achieving, with the Members of Congress, passage of the historic Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, which I was privileged to sign into law last August.

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One of Carla's major jobs will be to implement this massive and, I believe, progressive program. Incidentally, Carla's budget for fiscal 1976 will be \$7.1 billion. That is \$1.6 billion more than was given to her predecessor Jim Lynn. Now, if that does not dispose of male chauvinism, nothing will. (Laughter)

Senator Sparkman, who in the last Congress was Chairman of the Senate Committee on Banking and Currency, calls this act the most significant in the field of housing legislation since 1934. It will be of tremendous value in restoring to our locally elected officials, decision-making authority in the housing and community development fields, and in broadening the opportunities for individual home ownership.

Restoration of the housing market is imperative. I am convinced that our new Cabinet officer is equal to that difficult challenge and others which will confront her.

She is a distinguished attorney and author, and has served us most ably as Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Division of the Department of Justice. She earned unanimous praise for her administrative ability, as well as her legal talents. Her intellectual credentials have been demonstrated by her achievements in professional and civic affairs.

Of course, Carla will not be alone in the task facing her -- spending all of that money. She has an excellent department to work with at HUD, and I am completely optimistic about the future of that agency under her leadership.

So, from this moment on, let me make one final suggestion. If you have any questions, any problems or any concerns about housing and urban development, don't come to me -- head for the Hills. (Laughter)

Carla, we welcome you aboard, and Mr. Justice White will now proceed with the administering of the oath.

(Mr. Justice White administered the oath of office.)

SECRETARY HILLS: Mr. President, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Justice White, Senators Cranston and Tunney from California, and distinguished Congressional leaders, distinguished guests and my loving and very supportive family:

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I embark upon this new assignment in government with warm appreciation for the confidence that the President has placed in me. With great pride to become a part of his Cabinet, and with a firm determination that we shall make substantial strides toward that goal of achieving for every American family decent shelter and a proper living environment, and with a sharp awareness that the work to accomplish this goal will be very hard, I believe that we will succeed.

I have had the privilege of serving in the Department of Justice with a group of very talented and highly professional people, for whom I have the highest regard and very deep affection. I believe that my regard and my affection will be just as strong in working with those persons with whom I will have the privilege of working at HUD, and I believe the members of this Administration -- of which I am so proud and honored to become a part -- by working together, can solve these very tough economic problems that we face.

Those who fear that we will not succeed do not appreciate the strength of a **group** of dedicated persons all pulling toward the same goal.

My sentiments at this moment are well summarized by a statement that you, Mr. President, made to the Congress early in your Administration: "We have a lot of work to do, and I am ready to begin."

Thank you.

END (12:14 P.M. EDT)