

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 13, 1976

OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE RECEPTION
FOR THE
WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS

THE STATE FLOOR

5:58 P.M. EDT

Well, let me just welcome all of you on behalf of Betty and myself. We are delighted to have the White House Fellows Alumni here and their spouses. I have had some experience with them over the years. Obviously, more recently, more intimately than I did when I was either Vice President or up on the Hill as the Minority Leader.

I do see some familiar faces here and I am delighted to see them as well as all of you.

I was talking to Tom, asking him how long this program had actually been in operation and I understand it goes back to 1965 with 170-some -- Tom, is it -- alumni. Tom was showing me how so many of you have spread out, assumed positions of responsibility in business, professions, as well as in government, and I know that if a catalog of all the places of great esteem and public service and otherwise it would be a real foundation for a tremendous impact on this country, both locally, at the State level and federally, and an impact for good.

I suspect there is a good cross-section here of Democrats, Republicans, Independents, but all of you having gone through the experience of what goes on in the Federal Government, whether it is in the White House or in the many departments, can really be missionaries for the 215 million other Americans who I think want a better understanding of how it works.

There is, I think we all know, a sort of an anti-Washington feeling, but a lot of it is unfair, not justified, and I think if you who have gone through it can explain can be missionaries in trying to justify what we do well and to explain why we have some chores that are not really of our own asking, they are forced upon us. But at least you can explain in depth because you have gone through it: what the trials and tribulations and the burdens are of trying to be responsible both in the execution of policy and the explanation of policy.

MORE

The opportunity for people to come from the private sector into government and to go back, or those from one branch of the government to come into the White House and then go back to another department or agency or commission I think is a great opportunity in this cross-fertilization that is so necessary to improve not only our image, but our execution and the understanding of the processes of government and what we are seeking to do.

We have five of your alumni working in the White House on my staff at the present time, and that's not a bad percentage. (Laughter) We are, of course, delighted with all of them and the job that they do, and let me assure you they are outstanding, as I am sure all of you are in your respective areas at the present time.

Betty and I would like to wander around and say hello and meet some we have not met before, and then, like all of you know, at the White House there is always something else we have to do. So if we slip out after a few minutes, I hope you will understand.

In the meantime, would you please enjoy yourselves, and we look forward to seeing you next year and maybe a couple of years after that. (Laughter)

END (AT 6:02 P.M. EDT)