

the task is, the resources of the good Lord and your own leadership are unlimited. I draw upon them and thank you for making this moment possible.

The President. Mr. Vice President, Justice O'Connor, today I'm pleased to say that we welcome aboard someone that I know will be a valuable member of this administration. Now, some have charged that Margaret Heckler was offered the job because this administration is partial to a certain ethnic group in our society—[*laughter*]*—and that I want to keep their favor. [Speaking with an Irish brogue]* Now, let me be telling you—that Margaret Heckler being an Irish colleen has nothing at all to do with this appointment. [*Laughter*]

Seriously, Margaret is the daughter of Irish immigrants, and her first ambition was to play the concert piano. Lucky for us she chose a political career instead, where she might add harmony in a much more difficult place to create it. [*Laughter*] And during the 16 years in Congress, Margaret had been known for her boundless energy, her enthusiasm, and she'll need it in the job that she takes on as of today.

And, Margaret, as Secretary of Health and Human Services, I know that you'll oversee the Federal department with 142,000 employees and an annual budget of \$274 billion. Only two budgets in the world are greater than that—the entire budget of the United States Government and the budget of the Soviet Union. It's a tough job, and I'm happy that a hardworking, dedicated, and thoroughly decent individual has been named as Secretary of that awesome job. And I'm delighted and grateful that Margaret Heckler has accepted this responsibility.

So, welcome to the team, and good luck. And I say that with all my heart.

The Secretary. Thank you, Mr. President.

Note: Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor of the Supreme Court of the United States administered the oath of office to Secretary Heckler at 10:05 a.m. in the ceremony in the Oval Office at the White House. The remarks of the Secretary and the President followed the oath of office.

Budget Deferrals

Message to the Congress. March 9, 1983

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, I herewith report one new deferral of budget authority totaling \$50,000,000 and one revision to a previously reported deferral, increasing the amount deferred by \$1,498,389.

The deferrals affect the Department of Energy and the Department of the Treasury.

The details of each deferral are contained in the attached reports.

Ronald Reagan

The White House,
March 9, 1983.

Note: The attachments detailing the deferrals are printed in the Federal Register of March 16, 1983.

Environmental Protection Agency

Statement on Release of Agency Documents to the Congress. March 9, 1983

As I have previously stated, I asserted executive privilege with respect to a limited number of EPA documents that were considered to be enforcement-sensitive, because I have a constitutional obligation to the people—and to those who have held this office in the past and will hold it in the future—to ensure that the integrity of sensitive law enforcement documents be preserved.

I have recognized also, of course, that the legislative branch has legitimate oversight responsibilities as well. Accordingly, in February, pursuant to the suggestion of the U.S. District Court and consistent with the mandates of history, we sought to work out an agreement to accommodate the legitimate interests of both the executive and legislative branches. This was accomplished by the agreement reached with Chairman Levitas on February 18, 1983, which pro-

vided a means for Congress to have complete access to the documents sought.

Although this was accepted as a reasonable compromise by Chairman Levitas and Speaker O'Neill, and we have been proceeding to provide such complete access, other committees have demanded that the documents be physically turned over to them before they would accept the information. The debate on this issue, for our part, has been essentially legal. But it is now clear that prolonging this legal debate can only result in a slowing down of the release of information to the Congress—thereby fostering suspicion in the public's mind that somehow the important doctrine of executive privilege is being used to shield possible wrongdoing. It is not in the public interest that any such suspicion be fostered.

While we continue to assert executive privilege, our concern is that the Congress have this information as soon as possible, with assurances that the enforcement-sensitive materials will be provided the necessary protection in order that their premature public release will not jeopardize our responsibility to enforce the law. We trust that pursuant to the additional agreement reached today with Chairman Dingell, the documents will be provided that protection. This agreement will be available to any other committee that seeks these EPA documents and is willing to abide by its terms.

Environmental Protection Agency

*Exchange of Letters on the Resignation of
Anne M. Burford as Administrator.
March 9, 1983*

Dear Anne:

It is with deep regret that I am accepting your resignation as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

For the past two years, you have faithfully and honestly carried out your mission of helping this Nation cleanse its air and water and make wiser use of its lands. I am personally very grateful to you for the fine—and often courageous—service you have given, and I share your pride in the prog-

ress we have made during your stewardship at EPA.

Your resignation today is an occasion of sorrow for us all. But it is more than that: it is an act of unselfishness and personal courage that once again demonstrates your loyalty to the Nation.

Over the past several weeks, I have been greatly disappointed that some persons have unjustly attacked you and have made unfair judgments based upon allegations and innuendo alone. You have responded with a grace and straightforwardness that have won you countless admirers across the Nation.

Anne, I join your many friends in saying: you can walk out of the Environmental Protection Agency with your head held high. You have served this Nation well, and I look forward to counting upon you serving as a member of my Administration in the days and years ahead.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

March 9, 1983

Dear Mr. President:

I hereby tender my resignation as Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency effective immediately.

I do so with great regret, but it is now clear that my resignation is essential to termination of the controversy and confusion generated by the outstanding dispute over Congressional access to certain EPA documentary materials. Without an end to these unfortunate difficulties, EPA is disabled from implementing its mandate and you are distracted from pursuing the critical domestic and international goals of your administration.

I came to Washington to serve you, because I believe in you and the direction which you are setting for the country. I know of your strong commitment to the environmental goals of the people of the United States—the protection of their health, and welfare, cleaner air, cleaner water, the wise use of our land. I have endeavored to reach those goals through a four point program: better quality of science; regulatory reform; more authority