

## Remarks at the Democratic Governors' Association Dinner February 1, 1993

Thank you very much, Governor Walters. And thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for that wonderful welcome.

I am full of gratitude tonight as I remember that just a year ago when I was at this banquet, I came in from the cold of New Hampshire, cold in more ways than one—[laughter]—and received from the leadership of this organization a white scarf, which I wore for the remainder of the campaign in New Hampshire to stay warm, a cap which I still have, and a renewed sense that the battle in which I was engaged was worth the effort.

I want to thank every one of you who had anything to do with that. I noticed in the audience tonight the Secretary of Commerce, Ron Brown, who did such a brilliant job as the head of our party and keeping us going; representatives of many groups, teachers, working people, and others out here in this audience, that have worked so hard to give us a chance to put our children first in this country again; and many others who raised money, knocked on doors, and walked along roads.

I want to pay a particular tribute tonight to my good friend the Governor of Hawaii, not only for his leadership as the chair of the Democratic Governors' Association but for being my friend and supporter and for giving us a model of what an aggressive, active Democratic leader ought to be. Under John's leadership, the Democratic Governors' Association had one of its busiest and most successful years. There are now two more Democratic Governors. The DGA worked closely with our campaign, and largely as a result of that teamwork we won 8 of the 12 races in which we were engaged last year, the best showing by the Democratic Governors since 1982 when I, as the youngest ex-Governor in the history of America, made my comeback. [Laughter] Now we have Democratic Governors in 30 of the 50 States, our best margin since 1985.

I've also been impressed by John's extraordinary political leadership in Hawaii. When he was supporting me in the primary campaign last year, I kept angling for an invitation to Hawaii. I kept saying, "You know, I need to carry Hawaii. I haven't carried any western States. Don't

you think I ought to show up out there?" And he said, "If I can't carry Hawaii for you without your presence, I shouldn't be the Governor out here." And sure enough, we did. I think it has something to do with his native Hawaiian heritage. We were playing golf once together in Hawaii, John and I, and we played on a course on which there were no sand traps; there were only lava flows—[laughter]—so that the ball simply disappeared, never to be seen again. And we both hit long drives that sliced slightly into the lava flows. Mine disappeared; his hit a rock and bounced into the middle of the fairway. He informed me that his ancestors, who included King Kamehameha, who united the Hawaiian Islands, believed in a form of ancestor worship. And now, surely I can see the ultimate truth of his faith. Anyway, I think John and Lynne are great, and I hope that they will have many more years in public service. This country would be a lot better off if that happens.

I also want to salute the new chair of the DGA, my friend David Walters from Oklahoma. He and Rhonda were among those who were in the snows of New Hampshire with me. I told them the other day when I saw them that I just looked at a picture of us a year ago; here we are now in Washington celebrating a new inauguration. A year ago, I have a picture of us with Mike Sullivan; the former Governor of Vermont, Madeleine Kunin; and the former Governor of Michigan, Jim Blanchard, standing at the Super 8 Motel in Manchester. [Laughter] And it's a great commentary on how we get things done in this country. I think David Walters and Ann Richards will be a great team; that is, if Ann Richards is not too boastful about the Super Bowl victory last night. [Laughter]

I remember last fall when the Democratic Governors joined me in a western fly-around and a campaign we called "Winning the West." Most people thought the Democrats had no chance in the West. We traveled to seven States and won six, in no small measure because of the inordinate support that the western Democratic Governors gave the Clinton-Gore campaign.

Democratic Governors from the South participated—[applause]—clap, Governor Roberts.