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## REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAYTON YEUTTER

Clayton K. Yeutter

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 16, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT SWEARING-IN CEREMONY OF  
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAYTON YEUTTER

10:10 a.m. EST

The Agriculture Department  
Washington, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Peter, and all the members of the Cabinet; the members of the United States Congress here; distinguished ambassadors and others. I've come over here today for the swearing-in of our Secretary. Clayton Yeutter is about to make an enduring commitment to this Department and I should acknowledge the fact that I think five of his predecessors are here today -- Democrats and Republicans which I think gives him an extraordinarily good send-off. There's a difference, you know, between involvement and commitment. You all know it. Remember the old farmer making eggs and bacon. The chicken is involved, but the pig is committed. (Laughter.) And it is a particular pleasure here today because yesterday marked the 100th anniversary of Cabinet status for this Department.

As the distinguished former Secretaries that are joining us today know, the agency has met many difficult challenges over the past century, and this really is just a beginning. There are many more challenges that this Department will encounter over the next hundred years. And who better to lead the Department at this time than Clayton Yeutter?

Somebody reminded me that Yeutter rhymes with "fighter." And that's what he is -- tough as nails, knowledgeable, and that is why I picked him. And I know he is going to fight hard for farming, for fair trade, and for all the other important responsibilities of this Department.

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And I know that everyone here is familiar with his outstanding tenure as United States Trade Representative. The list of things he has accomplished just in the past year is truly, truly impressive -- bringing down barriers to American beef and citrus in Japan, ushering a comprehensive trade bill through Congress, concluding the free trade agreement with Canada and moving that through the Congress and pressing forward on the Uruguay round of multi-lateral trade negotiations. And now he's putting down the trade portfolio and taking up the agriculture portfolio.

But as all of you know, that's hardly a change. Agriculture is one of the most difficult areas in our trade talks and agriculture is an area to which we attach an extraordinarily high priority in international discussions. I'm confident that our partners in the Uruguay round of talks will see Clayton's appointment as just what it is -- a signal that this administration has an extremely strong sense of purpose and determination in these crucial negotiations.

He's going to be working closely with our USTR, with our Trade Representative Carla Hills, who I spotted a minute ago, but -- where is she? Maybe I didn't spot her. Right here she is -- with Carla to make sure our objectives in agriculture are achieved. And I said in the campaign and let me repeat, as President I want to work to level the playing field. We've got to knock down barriers and we will relentlessly pursue negotiations to end subsidies that distort markets and that restrict trade. Fair, free, and open world markets -- that's what we want, that's what we're working for, and in the end that's what we are determine to get.

Trade may be a hot issue right now, but the Department, as you all know better than any, has many other critical responsibilities -- our nation's farm and soil conservation programs, forestry, nutrition, rural diversification and

rural development, the environment -- you're involved in all of these important questions. And you perform your work in all of these areas with energy and dedication. The Ag Department has a long, proud history and each of you helps to continue that tradition. And I know you will find that Clayton Yeutter is your kind of guy.

Dynamic -- always has been. When he graduated from the University of Nebraska he was named the Outstanding Animal Husbandry Graduate in the nation. And later he finished first in his class in law school and then took a Ph.D. in Agricultural Economics.

And I've heard that he's said that it isn't all that far from the farm he grew up on to a Ph.D. or Trade Ambassador. On the farm, he said, he developed physical stamina and learned self-discipline and those have come in handy ever since.

And there's one other thing about Clayton that I'm very happy about. Many kids want to grow up to be President -- not Clayton. (Laughter.) When he was a boy he wanted to be Secretary of Agriculture. And here he is, and that's a lucky break for America. Now, the oath of office.

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