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Statement

by

Mike Espy
Secretary of Agriculture

On the Opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
Washington, D.C.
April 22, 1993

It is my somber honor to note the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. It is highly fitting that this museum is located in the very core of our nation's capital, because it is critical that all Americans understand the history and lessons of the Holocaust.

On behalf of the men and women of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, I welcome this museum to our neighborhood around this nation's Mall. I have already toured the museum and will encourage all our employees to visit it.

We all wish we didn't have to extend this welcome. We wish we didn't have to spend our time today focusing on horrible deeds of the past. Yet we must accurately understand all sides of the human condition. It is important for our children to visit the nearby National Gallery of Art--to stand only a few feet away from actual canvasses by Rembrandt Van Rijn or Mary Cassatt--to understand the glorious beauty that can be created by fellow human beings. But it is just as important for these children to visit the new Holocaust museum--to be taught that the choice between the beauty and the ugliness is in their very own hands.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." To me, those words represent the most important lesson of the Holocaust--the lesson that it is our supreme moral duty to stand up against injustice wherever and whenever we find it.

This lesson has been taught well by Elie Wiesel, the great Nobel-prize winning author and Holocaust survivor who has dedicated his life to opposing human rights abuses around the world, from the former Soviet Union to South Africa.

This lesson was taught equally well by Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James Cheney, two white Jewish men and one black Christian man, who gave their lives fighting against racial inequality in my home state of Mississippi. And so this lesson must be learned--and learned well--by all of us.

We must all find the moral courage to stand up for the sanctity of human

rights around the globe. We must act with the understanding that the fate of the world is in our very own hands. We must never allow ourselves to be silent again.

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Statement

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AGRICULTURE SECRETARY GLICKMAN ISSUES STATEMENT ON OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

FORT VALLEY, GA, April 20, 1995--The following statement was released today by Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman concerning the explosion at a federal building in Oklahoma City:

"I am saddened and angered by the bombing yesterday of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. The Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service has an office in the building. A number of our employees based there remain unaccounted for.

"I know I can speak for the Clinton Administration and the entire Agriculture Department in extending our hopes and prayers that all USDA employees are located and are unharmed. My prayers are with the families of the APHIS employees still missing.

"I also would like to extend my condolences to the families of all the victims of this horrible bombing that has brutally shattered the lives of many throughout America's heartland.

"If there is anything we at USDA can do to assist in the investigation of this heinous crime, we will do it."

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USDA/AMERICORPS MEMBERS TO COMMEMORATE OKLAHOMA BOMBING

WASHINGTON, April 11, 1996--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's AmeriCorps members nationwide will observe the April 23 Day of National Service with treeplanting and other activities commemorating the first-year anniversary of the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City.

In Oklahoma City, AmeriCorps/USDA members from Cheyenne, Sentinel, and Woodward, Okla., will join members of other organizations to plant trees, present educational programs concerning conservation, and conduct cleanup and repair activities at the Mark Twain Elementary School, a mile from the bombing site. The school was slightly damaged by the explosion but did not qualify for special funding for repairs available in the wake of the bombing.

On April 19, the actual anniversary of the explosion, AmeriCorps/USDA members in Claremore, Okla., will participate in two treeplanting ceremonies at the Rogers State College Conservation Reserve.

On April 15, AmeriCorps/USDA members from Sentinel, Okla., will plant trees with students from the Pioneer Elementary School in Elk City, Okla., in cooperation with the Great Plains Resource and Conservation District.

AmeriCorps, President Clinton's national service program passed with bipartisan support by Congress, engages 25,000 Americans of diverse backgrounds in performing service that meets critical community needs in return for an award which may be used for college, job training, or to pay back student loans. The majority of AmeriCorps members are working in partnerships with states, local governments, and non-profit organizations.

Besides the Oklahoma events, AmeriCorps/USDA members will take part in activities at sites in Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota on the Day of Service.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is running three types of AmeriCorps teams in 45 states, composed of approximately 1,350 members: an anti-hunger team, a public lands and environment team, and a rural development team. Many of the AmeriCorps projects are sponsored by community-based organizations and all projects are designed to get things done, while boosting community, opportunity, and responsibility.

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