

WH - Senate Spouses
Luncheon - June 12, 1995

THE WHITE HOUSE

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**Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
at the Senate Spouses Luncheon
The White House**

MRS. CLINTON: Well, we are delighted to have you back here again, this year, and only disappointed by the rain because we were unable to gather in the Sculpture Garden, because there is a new sculpture exhibit. Some of you may have seen it as you came in through the East Colonnade -- but we have these regionally-based sculpture exhibits and we are now on the Southeast -- the very liberally defined Southeast, which includes Arkansas and Louisiana.

And we are very pleased that we are able to showcase sculpture from so many of the museums and galleries in all of the states around our country. So, maybe you can come back when the weather is not so bad.

I wanted to just reiterate what I have said to some of you personally and individually -- which is that many people who have been here far longer than I have and far longer than Tipper has, have said over and over again how much they miss the collegiality, the informality, the socializing that used to go on. I've had spouses as well as Senators say to me that in the "old days" -- however that's defined -- there were chances for people to get to know one another on a much more personal basis. There were regular dinners, regular get-togethers, regular bridge games, all kinds of opportunities for people to sit across from a dining table or a card table, or leaning up against the wall in someone's kitchen or in their outdoor patio -- and really know each other. And I think we have sacrificed a lot because we no longer have those connections. I think it has to some extent made it possible for people to stereotype one another to jump to conclusions about one another and not to have any real basis in fact or experience about how to work with or to even talk with one another.

A once-a-year lunch is obviously not a substitute for more regular contact that goes across regional, and party, and every other kind of line that too often serve as barriers here. But it

that we could, despite all of the pressures that exist in our political life today, work on ways to have more of that kind of personal contact again. I think it is certainly good for one another, speaking for myself I know some of you in this room were friends of mine during the days when our husbands were governors, and the time we spent together and the friendships we made across party lines were among the most sustaining and important that I've ever had. That seems much more difficult in today's environment here in the nation's capital. But I do believe that perhaps, particularly, spouses can try in our own way to make it more likely that some of that kind of friendship and personal connection can be given priority again.

The other thing I want to say is that I'm very grateful to so many of you for the work you're doing on issues that are of importance to you. I hear about it all the time. I see, when I travel, the results of your efforts. And I know that for many of you, these are very important matters that you give yourself and you would whether or not your spouse was a Senator. But it does make a difference and I am grateful that so many of you are involved in that. We are very lucky, today, because this lunch is a very important lunch and then upstairs on the second floor, the President has been entertaining Captain O'Grady and his family. I have prevailed upon the President and Captain O'Grady to stick their heads in. The Captain has to be at the Pentagon very shortly, so it will literally be a quick in-and-out.
(Applause)

PRESIDENT CLINTON: This is the most popular person in America, today. Captain O'Grady, this is all the power in America, in this room. Would you like to say a word?

CAPTAIN O'GRADY: I'm just honored to be here. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT: He'll stay popular without speaking. We're very proud of him. Thank you.

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