

9 Remarks at the Swearing In of Arthur S. Flemming as Special Consultant to the President on Aging.

January 11, 1972

Ladies and gentlemen:

I welcome Dr. Flemming as an old friend in swearing him in today. I recall during the years he served on President Eisenhower's Cabinet how ably he served his country. As I bring him into this special position, I should point out to those members of the press corps who did not follow him then that he had several attributes: One, he is a man who is tremendously popular in the Government, and two, despite that very calm exterior he has, he is enormously tenacious. Once he starts working on something, he keeps working until the job is done. Three, he believes very deeply in matters before he takes on an assignment.

I know his heart is deeply committed, as is his mind, to the problems of the elderly. I know that as he travels around the country and sees the problems, that he will come with his recommendations to this office. He will not pound the desk, but he can be even more effective than that in his quiet, effective way.

I think the elderly have in him one who will very effectively present a point of view that needs to be represented here in the highest office of the White House, eloquently, as he does. Also, I believe that we have in him the man who has the experience and the background to take this particular issue, to analyze all its parts, and

to make recommendations, not for the sake of their being particularly melodramatic, but for the sake of getting things done in this critical area for our senior citizens across the land.

Now we will have the swearing-in ceremony. I will give the Bible to Mrs. Flemming and Judge Flannery will swear him in.

[At this point, Thomas A. Flannery, United States District Judge for the District of Columbia, administered the oath of office. The President then resumed speaking.]

Dr. Flemming, you will have other occasions when you can talk at greater length, but now you are recognized for one minute, if you like.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:05 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. He spoke without referring to notes.

Dr. Flemming responded as follows:

Mr. President, first of all, may I express to you my very deep appreciation for the opportunity that you are affording me to work in behalf of the older citizens of this country. I am very, very grateful for the opportunity of, in this way, becoming a part of your Administration.

You have made very clear to me the duties and the responsibilities of this position. I feel that our Nation must accept the concept of the dignity and worth of every older citizen and I think it must reflect the acceptance of that concept by what we do, rather than by what we say.

It is in that spirit that I accept the position to which you have appointed me, and it is in

that spirit that I will endeavor to discharge the duties and responsibilities of the office.

I make that commitment, and I am happy to have the opportunity to make it.