

30 Remarks on Intention To Nominate Marina von Neumann
Whitman To Be a Member of the Council of
Economic Advisers. *January 29, 1972*

MRS. WHITMAN must be confirmed by the Senate, so she will not be able to say anything on her own behalf today, but we are delighted that she has accepted the appointment of the nomination to the Council of Economic Advisers. And as our chitchat here indicates, while I am sure most stories, as I know from the inspired lead which appeared in the papers this morning indicated, this is very important, because this is the first time a woman has ever been a member of the Council. So be it. That is important.

But what is more important, I think, is that of those who were considered for this post, that Herb Stein had Mrs. Whitman first on his list and this is an indication of our concern. I think it is the feeling of this Administration and I think of most people in the Government, Democrats and Republicans, when we look for quality, particularly where brains are concerned, and achievement, that we are not concerned about color, we are not concerned about race, we are not concerned about religion, we are not concerned about sex, we are concerned about quality.

And you don't have to feel—I always say this about people—[laughter]. But, in

any event, in this field, we have now added to the Council an experienced, despite her young years, and also an intellectual ability of the first magnitude, and that is what Mr. Stein wants and Ezra Solomon wants. You are outnumbered. It is two to one.

MRS. WHITMAN. That is right.

THE PRESIDENT. But not in terms of brains. So, we are very pleased. You can say a word. Your main problem I think was bringing your children downtown this morning.

MRS. WHITMAN. I guess the family logistics were a little complicated, but that seems to have been straightened out with great success.

Thank you. I guess I can say how very, very pleased I am to be here and how pleased and honored and excited I am to be coming and to be given a chance to tackle some of the most exciting and important and difficult, challenging problems that are in this country today.

One of the things about being an economist is that unlike doctors and lawyers and so forth, we very seldom get a chance to practice our profession as well as to teach. So, it is a very unique, really, opportunity to be given this chance to prac-

tice, I hope, in the highest sense, my profession.

Also, I was on the Council's staff last year and I left Friday, August 13, which was, for many, many reasons, a bad time to leave. [Laughter] In fact, may I tell you a little story about that?

THE PRESIDENT. Sure.

MRS. WHITMAN. When I was just packing up, I left the Council and had a call from a member of the Council staff on Sunday the 15th, saying, "Be sure and watch your television set tonight, because the President is really going to drop a bomb." My 8-year-old daughter said, "He is? Where?" I just wish all bombs could be as productive as that particular one.

In any case, I really feel I am coming home to work again with Herb and Ezra Solomon and I am very grateful to you, Mr. President, for inviting me back.

THE PRESIDENT. Well, we are happy to have you and I think this is, first, a very important assignment as the Council's work this year, which must be not only a very good year, but also it is a period in which we feel that it is very important to get on the Council a variety of experience,

a broad base of experience and that we are accomplishing.

MR. STEIN. Marina will work in two of the most vital areas for this year. She will do our international economics and with the experience she has, she will conduct our relations mainly with the price-wage control system, on which she is now an expert, since she has been a member of the Price Commission for 3 months and that is more experience than anybody else has. So, she has a lot to do and we are counting very heavily on her.

THE PRESIDENT. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:14 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. He spoke without referring to notes.

A White House announcement containing biographical information on Mrs. Whitman was released on the same day and is printed in the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (vol. 8, p. 150). The White House also released the transcript of a news conference by Herbert Stein, Chairman, Council of Economic Advisers, Mrs. Whitman, and Barbara H. Franklin, Staff Assistant to the President for Executive Manpower, on the nomination.

On March 13, 1972, Mrs. Whitman was sworn in as a member of the Council in a ceremony at the White House.