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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 21, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AND MRS. MARY LASKER
AT CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARD CEREMONY

The Rose Garden

2:59 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Welcome, Mrs. Lasker. Mr. Speaker, it's nice to have you back. Distinguished members of Congress -- please to greet Congressmen Early and Conte -- and our other friends who are here. And a very special welcome, Tip, to you, sir.

You've heard me talk about a thousand points of light, a metaphor that I've used to celebrate the extraordinary selflessness of Americans who give so much to the service of others. And we're here today to honor a veritable beacon of light -- a woman who has focused an enormous amount of energy on finding solutions to life-threatening diseases, Mary Lasker.

She's president of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, which she started with her husband in 1942 to encourage medical research and to raise public awareness of major diseases which cripple and kill. Today the Lasker Foundation's Medical Research Award is one of the most prestigious honors in American medicine.

Mary's contribution to medicine -- they've not stopped with the important work of the Lasker Foundation. Dr. Jonas Salk said, "When I think of Mary Lasker, I think of a matchmaker between science and society." Business Week Magazine called her "the fairy godmother of medical research." And she's worked extensively in many diverse causes, from supporting cancer research to preventing heart disease to working with those with cerebral palsy. And believe me, I am only naming a few here. And the list is so long because her good works and tireless efforts are legion.

And I cannot resist a special word of thanks and praise for Mary's leadership here in Washington. Senator Claude Pepper calls Mary the driving force behind the creation of the National Cancer Institute, the first of the National Institutes of Health and of subsequent institutes. Her generosity and association with NIH continues today. Her work in urging legislation to expand federal cancer research culminated in a 1971 bill that made the conquest of cancer a national goal. In 1984, Congress honored Mary Lasker by naming a center for her out at NIH -- the Mary Woodard Lasker Center for Health, Research and Education. Not only is she well-known for advancing medical research, but for her contributions to the arts and for her many public plantings that allow others to share her love of flowers.

Through the Society for a More Beautiful Capital, she's donated extensive plantings in Washington, including over a million daffodil bulbs for Rock Creek Park and Lady Bird Johnson Park.

Mary, your gifts of health and beauty have left the country very much in your debt. In 1987, it was with gratitude and great pride that the United States Congress voted to honor your humanitarian contributions to the areas of medical research and education, urban beautification and the fine arts.

Now it is my pleasure to thank you on behalf of the nation and to present you with this token of our gratitude, the Mary

MORE

Woodard Lasker Congressional Gold Medal. Congratulations.
(Applause.)

MRS. LASKER: Mr. President, thank you is much too small a word to describe this honor. Without your help and that of Congress, no success would be possible. This medal belongs to so many people for the triumph and hope that medical research brought to this country. Mr. President, you know how and why medical research is so important. We look to you now, Mr. President, for leadership in helping to support research at the National Institutes of Health.

Cancer still kills 500,000 people a year in this country -- more people than have been killed in all our wars combined. The strength of our nation depends on the health of our people. This medal recognizes the priority which we must once again place on research. It's good for trade, good for jobs and vital for all Americans.

Medical research is our hope for our children and for the building of a healthy America. Thank you. (Applause.)

END

3:06 P.M. EDT

REMARKS: PRESENTATION OF CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL
TO MARY WOODWARD LASKER
THE ROSE GARDEN
FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1989
2:45 P.M.

WELCOME, MRS. LASKER. I AM PLEASED ALSO TO GREET
CONGRESSMEN EARLY AND CONTE AND MY OTHER FRIENDS FROM
THE CONGRESS... A VERY SPECIAL WELCOME TO FORMER
SPEAKER -- TIP -- AND OUR GUESTS.

- 2 -

YOU HAVE HEARD ME TALK ABOUT "A THOUSAND POINTS OF LIGHT," A METAPHOR I'VE USED TO CELEBRATE THE EXTRAORDINARY SELFLESSNESS OF AMERICANS WHO GIVE SO MUCH TO THE SERVICE OF OTHERS.

WE ARE HERE TODAY TO HONOR A VERITABLE BEACON OF LIGHT, A WOMAN WHO HAS FOCUSED AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF ENERGY ON FINDING SOLUTIONS TO LIFE-THREATENING DISEASES.

- 3 -

MARY LASKER IS PRESIDENT OF THE ALBERT AND MARY LASKER FOUNDATION, WHICH SHE STARTED WITH HER HUSBAND IN 1942 TO ENCOURAGE MEDICAL RESEARCH AND TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS OF MAJOR DISEASES WHICH CRIPPLE AND KILL. TODAY THE LASKER FOUNDATION'S MEDICAL RESEARCH AWARD IS ONE OF THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS HONORS IN AMERICAN MEDICINE.

MARY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEDICINE HAVE NOT STOPPED WITH THE IMPORTANT WORK OF THE LASKER FOUNDATION.

- 4 -

DOCTOR JONAS SALK SAID "WHEN I THINK OF MARY LASKER, I THINK OF ... A MATCHMAKER

-- BETWEEN SCIENCE AND SOCIETY." BUSINESS WEEK MAGAZINE CALLED HER "THE FAIRY GODMOTHER OF MEDICAL RESEARCH."

SHE HAS WORKED EXTENSIVELY IN MANY DIVERSE CAUSES - FROM SUPPORTING CANCER RESEARCH ... TO PREVENTING HEART DISEASE ... TO WORKING WITH THOSE WITH CEREBAL PALSY ... BELIEVE ME, I'M ONLY NAMING A FEW.

- 5 -

THE LIST IS SO LONG -- BECAUSE HER GOOD WORKS AND TIRELESS EFFORTS ARE LEGION.

AND I CANNOT RESIST A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS AND PRAISE FOR MARY'S LEADERSHIP HERE IN WASHINGTON. SENATOR CLAUDE PEPPER CALLS MARY "THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE CREATION OF THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE, THE FIRST OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH" AND OF SUBSEQUENT INSTITUTES. HER GENEROSITY AND ASSOCIATION WITH NIH CONTINUES TODAY.

- 6 -

HER WORK IN URGING LEGISLATION TO EXPAND FEDERAL CANCER RESEARCH CULMINATED IN A 1971 BILL THAT MADE THE CONQUEST OF CANCER A NATIONAL GOAL. IN 1984, CONGRESS HONORED MARY LASKER BY NAMING A CENTER FOR HER AT NIH, THE MARY WOODARD LASKER CENTER FOR HEALTH RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.

- 7 -

NOT ONLY IS MARY LASKER WELL KNOWN FOR ADVANCING MEDICAL RESEARCH, BUT FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ARTS, AND FOR HER MANY PUBLIC PLANTINGS THAT ALLOW OTHERS TO SHARE HER LOVE OF FLOWERS. THROUGH THE SOCIETY FOR A MORE BEAUTIFUL CAPITOL SHE HAS DONATED EXTENSIVE PLANTINGS IN WASHINGTON, INCLUDING OVER A MILLION DAFFODIL BULBS FOR ROCK CREEK PARK AND LADY BIRD JOHNSON PARK.

- 8 -

MARY, YOUR GIFTS OF HEALTH AND BEAUTY HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY VERY MUCH IN YOUR DEBT.

IN 1987, WITH GRATITUDE AND GREAT PRIDE, THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS VOTED TO HONOR YOUR "HUMANITARIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE AREAS OF MEDICAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION, URBAN BEAUTIFICATION AND THE FINE ARTS."

- 9 -

IT IS MY PLEASURE NOW TO THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF THE NATION AND TO PRESENT YOU WITH THIS TOKEN OF OUR GRATITUDE, THE MARY WOODARD LASKER CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

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Final
Credits

REMARKS: PRESENTATION OF CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL
TO MARY WOODWARD LASKER
THE ROSE GARDEN
FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1989
2:45 P.M.

Congress Early
and Continued
with

Welcome, Mrs. Lasker. I am pleased also to greet ^{my} friends from the Congress, a very special former member -- Tip, welcome -- and our guests.

You have heard me talk about "a thousand points of light," a metaphor I've used to celebrate the extraordinary selflessness of Americans who give so much to the service of others.

We are here today to honor a veritable beacon of light, a woman who has focused an enormous amount of energy on finding solutions to life-threatening diseases.

Mary Lasker is president of the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, which she started with her husband in 1942 to encourage medical research and to raise public awareness of major diseases which cripple and kill. Today the Lasker Foundation's Medical Research Award is one of the most ^{prestigious} significant honors in American medicine.

Mary's contributions to medicine have not stopped with the ~~very~~ important work of the Lasker Foundation. Doctor Jonas Salk said "when I think of Mary Lasker, I think of ... a matchmaker -- between science and society." Business Week Magazine called her "the fairy godmother of medical research."

~~I need not tell those here today that Mary Lasker is a uniquely effective "matchmaker" or "godmother" in her service of~~

~~others.~~ She has worked extensively in many diverse causes -- from supporting cancer research ... to preventing heart disease ... to working with those with cerebal palsy ... believe me, I'm only naming a few. The list is so long -- because her good works and tireless efforts are legion.

And I cannot resist a special word of thanks and praise for Mary's leadership here in Washington. Senator Claude Pepper calls Mary "the driving force behind the creation of the National Cancer Institute, the first of the National Institutes of Health", and of ~~subsequent Institutes.~~

^{generosity and} Her association with NIH has ^{condemned to death!} ~~been steady and generous to this day.~~ Her work in urging legislation to expand federal cancer research culminated in a 1971 bill that made the conquest of cancer a national goal. In 1984, Congress honored Mary Lasker by naming a center for her at NIH, the Mary Woodard Lasker Center for Health Research and Education.

Not only is Mary Lasker well known for advancing medical research, but for her contributions to the arts, and for her many public plantings that allow others to share her love of flowers. Through the Society For a More Beautiful Capitol she has donated extensive plantings in Washington, including over a million daffodil bulbs for Rock Creek Park and Lady Bird Johnson Park.

Mary, your gifts of health and beauty have left the country very much in your debt.

^{In 1987:} ~~It was, then,~~ with gratitude and great pride, ~~that~~ the United States Congress voted to honor your "humanitarian contributions

to the areas of medical research and education, urban beautification and the fine arts."

It is my pleasure now to present you with this token of our gratitude, the Mary Woodard Lasker Congressional Gold Medal.

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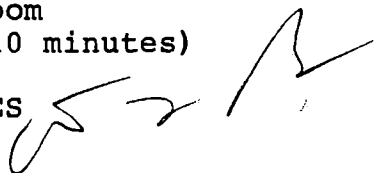
*Thank you on behalf of the nation and
to*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Michael Jackson

PRESENTATION OF CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL
TO MARY WOODARD LASKER

DATE: Friday, April 21, 1989
LOCATION: Roosevelt Room
TIME: 2:45 p.m. (10 minutes)
FROM: DAVID Q. BATES



I. PURPOSE

To present Mary Lasker the Congressional Gold Medal struck in her honor.

II. BACKGROUND

Legislation authorizing this presentation was sponsored by Representative Claude Pepper and cosponsored by 184 Democrats and 35 Republicans. It was sponsored in the Senate by Claiborne Pell and became law on December 24, 1987. The Treasury Department struck the medal and is holding it for presentation. Following presentation of the medal, the U.S. Mint will sell bronze replicas of the Lasker medal. The President customarily presents these medals.

Public Law 100-210 states that the medal is in recognition of Mrs. Lasker's humanitarian contributions in the areas of medical research and education, urban beautification and the fine arts.

In 1942, Mary Lasker and her husband formed the Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation to raise public awareness about life-threatening diseases and to encourage medical research. She has had a close association with the National Institutes of Health -- in 1984 Congress named a new NIH center in her honor. She was instrumental in founding the American Cancer Society and is an honorary member of its board and executive committee.

Lasker also has a passion for beautification. She has donated extensive plantings in New York and through the Society for a More Beautiful National Capital has planted a great deal in Washington, D.C., including some 1.2 million daffodil bulbs for Rock Creek Park and Lady Bird Johnson Park. Lasker was awarded a Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Johnson. The National Institutes of Health will sponsor a reception for Mrs. Lasker following the White House ceremony.

III. PARTICIPANTS

The President, Mrs. Lasker, and roughly thirty guests. Among those expected to attend are: Representatives Silvio Conte and Joseph Early, Tip O'Neill, NIH Deputy Director William Raub, Dr. Michael DeBakey, and Eppie Lederer (author of the Ann Landers column).

IV. PRESS PLAN

White House photographer only

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Mrs. Lasker will be escorted into the Oval Office, where you will greet her and pose for photographs.
- You accompany Mrs. Lasker to the Roosevelt Room and go directly to the lectern.
- You deliver brief remarks and then present the medal to Mrs. Lasker.
- Mrs. Lasker will say a few words of thanks (1 minute).
- You depart the Roosevelt Room.

VI. REMARKS

To be provided by David Q. Bates in talking point form to you in the morning.

Attachment

MARY LASKER CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL

The bronze duplicate medals of the Congressional Gold Medal honoring Mary Lasker will be available from the United States Mint beginning April 21, 1989.

President Bush will be presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to Mary Lasker at a White House ceremony on April 21, 1989. Public Law 100-210 states that the medal is in recognition of her humanitarian contributions in the areas of medical research and education, urban beautification and the fine arts.

The obverse of the medal features a portrait of Mary Lasker prepared from photographs submitted by the Lasker family.

The reverse of the medal features an interpretation of the Winged Victory of Samothrace used for the Ablert Lasker Medical Research Award. In the background is the Mary Woodard Lasker Center for Health Research and Education at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland.

The obverse was designed and executed by Mr. James Licaretz, Sculptor/Engraver, United States Mint. The reverse was designed by Mr. John Mercanti, Sculptor/Engraver, United States Mint. Ms. Maria Kirby-Smith executed the reverse model.

The bronze duplicate medal is available in a 3-inch size, number 697 on the Mint Medals List, selling for \$20.00. It is also available in a 1½-inch size, number 698, at a cost of \$2.00. Both medals are available at the following Mint Sales Centers:

United States Mint
5th & Arch Streets
Philadelphia, PA
19106
(215) 597-7692

United States Mint
320 West Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80204
(303) 844-3331

San Francisco
Old Mint
88 Fifth St.
San Francisco
CA 94103
(415) 976-0788

If ordered by mail, the cost of the 3-inch medal is \$21.00 and the 1½-inch medal can be obtained for \$2.25. Mail orders with a check or money order payable to the United States Mint should be directed to:

United States Mint
Order Processing Branch
10001 Aerospace Drive
Lanham, MD 20706

If ordering from another country, remittance should be made by either an international money order or a check drawn on a United States bank payable in U.S. currency.

Additionally, the Visitors Center at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing will offer the Mary Lasker bronze duplicate medals at the prices listed above. The Visitors Center does not offer mail order sales.

Visitors Centers
Bureau of Engraving and Printing
15th and C Streets, S.W.
Washington, DC 20228
Telephone: (202) 447-0831