

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center

Remarks of Secretary Timothy Geithner at his Swearing-In Ceremony on January 26, 2009

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TG-01

Thank you Mr. President.

Thank you Mr. Vice President.

And thanks to my many friends and colleagues for being here this evening.

My wife, Carole, stood beside me as I took this oath of office, as she has before in this building. I want to thank her for extraordinary grace and support. She has a remarkable capacity for calm wisdom and empathy. Our children Elise and Benjamin are back at school in New York doing their mid term exams. I miss them and am proud of them.

I am very pleased that my father, Peter Geithner, and my brother David are here, representing my terrific family. My father gave me, among many wonderful things, the important gift of showing me the world as a child. He took us to live in Zambia and Rhodesia, then to India and Thailand, and from those places I saw America through the eyes of others. It was that experience -- seeing first hand the extraordinary influence of American policy on the world -- that led me to work in government.

I first walked into this building about 20 years ago.

I had at Treasury the wonderful experience of working with smart and dedicated people working for their country, with the shared goal of making government more effective, improving the results produced by policy, in an environment where our obligation was to debate the merits, to do what was right not what was expedient, drawing on the best ideas and expertise.

Treasury's tradition is to defend the integrity of policy, to respect the constraints imposed by limited resources, and to limit government intervention to where it is essential to protect our financial system and improve the lives of the American people.

That tradition is important today, but because it is that tradition of credibility that makes it possible for governments to do what is necessary to resolve a crisis. In the world we confront today, Treasury has to be a source of initiative, not just a reminder of the constraints of reality.

We are at a moment of maximum challenge for our economy and our country.

Our agenda is to move quickly to help you do what the country asked you to do.

To launch the programs that will bring economic recovery sooner, to make our economy more productive, to restore trust in our financial system with fundamental reform, to make our tax system better at rewarding work and investment, more fair and more simple.

And to restore confidence in America's economic leadership around the world.

I pledge all of my ability to help you meet that challenge and to restore to all Americans the promise of a better future.

Mr. President, I am deeply grateful for your trust and confidence.

We will work our hearts out for you.

Thank you for giving me this great privilege of working for you.

