



FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION

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**Foreign Policy Association Annual Dinner
June 21, 2007**

Featuring:

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor of the City of New York

Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman & CEO Carlson Companies

David M. Cote, Chairman & CEO, Honeywell International

Paul S. Otellini, President & CEO Intel Corporation

THE HON. JOHN WHITEHEAD: — Good evening everyone. There is no one in this city who less needs an introduction than the mayor, so I'm going to bring him right up. The Mayor Michael Bloomberg. [Applause] Now I have a speech. The mayor is receiving tonight our Foreign Policy Association award—citizenship award—and we all can realize how much he deserves that. He combines America's can-do spirit with the high idealism that is America's patrimony. As a businessman, he aimed to make financial markets transparent. As a philanthropist he is funding research to eliminate malaria, by building a better mosquito! His record as mayor speaks for itself: major crime has dropped 30%, test scores and graduation rates are up, unemployment is at a record low, welfare rolls are at a 40-year low, construction is booming, the deficit has become a surplus, and New York City's bond rating has just hit an all-time high of Double A. As an old investment banker, Mike, I never thought I'd see the day come when that would happen. At a time when too many politicians are mesmerized by the siren call of partisan politics, Mayor Bloomberg stands out as a leader and a statesman. He has taken on the subject of public smoking, of trans-fats, of illegal guns, and global warming—all national issues as well as local issues. Mr. Mayor, you have created a new model for public service, a model that inspires our admiration, and best wishes for your current and future

endeavors, whatever they may be. The Foreign Policy Association is proud to confer its Medal upon his Honor, the Mayor of the City of New York, Michael R. Bloomberg. [Applause]

THE HONORABLE MICHAEL BLOOMBERG — Thank you, and John, thank you for those kind words. We still have a little more to do. I just want you to know something. I've known John for a long time, from probably about 1966, but in the year 2005, there was a John Whitehead running as a Republican for our city council here in this city, and they used this John Whitehead's picture. And I thought to myself, "He's even crazier than I thought he was!" Seriously, John has served this city, and this nation, in so many capacities for so many years. In fact, if you take a look at the founding photo of the FPA in 1918, I think you'll see John standing in the background right there! I also want to thank Gonzalo de Las Heras for his long and enthusiastic support for New York's Sister Cities and Global Partners Program, and I think it's safe to say that my sister thanks you as well. It is great to be here tonight, here on the first day of summer. But don't worry, I'm not going to make the longest speech of the year! Just going to talk for a couple minutes. Seriously, receiving the FPA Medal is a great honor, from a great organization. And unlike all of your very distinguished previous winners, I hold office at the local level—although it's often been said that the Mayor of New York City is the only locally-elected official in America who needs a foreign policy. And has one! The State Department isn't always thrilled with it, but then, we are New York.

And we are certainly the nation's most international city. We are the home of the United Nations, a hub of global finance and communications, a place where more than 170 languages are spoken on our streets, where every religion is practiced, every culture respected, and every cuisine relished—including by me, and my waistline shows that...even if I can't always pronounce the names of the dishes. It is also true that today, every American city is becoming an international city. 9/11 taught us the harsh lesson that the oceans separating us from the rest of the world aren't as wide as we once thought that they were. The risks of terrorism and nuclear proliferation, the realities of the global economy, and the menace of global warming make all of us global citizens, and as the world's only superpower we really do have a duty to lead the way on these important and other critically important issues. Which is why today, more than ever, Americans need the balanced information about our world that FPA provides so well through your nonpartisan programs and publications.

The FPA does an outstanding job of education, and education isn't just a domestic issue, it is a foreign policy issue too, because if American students continue to have math skills worse than those of students in many other nations, they will be looking at futures as second-class citizens in the competitive global economy that we're

having. And that's why I've made reforming our city's public school system a top priority, and why we have refused to accept changes that tinker around the edges. What we're trying with Joel Klein, our Chancellor, and Dennis Walcott, our Deputy Mayor for Education, are big, bold reforms: longer school days, which has been controversial; standards that mean something; more extra help for struggling students; more choices for students and parents; more pay for our principals and teachers—we've raised teachers' salaries 43% in the last five years—I said I want the best and the brightest, and that's what we're going to have. And starting this September, I'm proud to say, for the first time this city is going to give every school the same amount per capita, regardless of the ethnicity of their student body—and that hasn't been done. Now we really have, in the last five years since we took control of the school system, made major changes, and the results have been major as well. I'm happy to report today that our graduation rates are up roughly 20% in the last four years, to an all-time high, and that is true no matter what the ethnicity is. Our student test scores are rising: math scores up 20%, English scores up 10%, which is amazing, considering for the first time that we have to count all English language learners, and we have a lot of kids who don't speak English, so if they can't pass the English test it brings down our average. But in spite of that we've been able to raise the averages, and next year I think we'll do even better. And maybe most encouraging is that the gap between black and Latino kids and the way they score, and white and Asian kids, the way they score, is starting to decline. It is tightening, and it is doing so quite precipitously; this year in math, black and Latino kids improved at twice the rate of the white and Asian kids. And if we don't reduce that gap and eventually eliminate it, we're just not going to have the kind of society we want, where all children have an opportunity to share in the great American Dream and become self-sufficient.

We still have a lot of work to do going ahead in our schools and across the globe, we have a lot to do in this country to understand that we are a nation of immigrants, and that if we don't continue to bring in 4-500,000 people a year, nobody's going to be around to pay your social security, nobody's going to be starting new businesses, nobody's going to add to our culture, nobody's going to all kinds of work—those kinds of jobs that require intellectual capital, and those kinds of jobs that require the sweat of your brow. This country doesn't understand where it is. Today I was honored to get an Honorary Degree at Rockefeller University. They gave out 28 doctorates, and I think about half were from students outside of the United States. We have to let the best and the brightest come here, and once they get here and once they get a great education, we have to make sure that they have working papers so that they can stay. Unfortunately what we've been doing is we've let kids in, they're ready to win a Nobel Prize, and we don't let them work here, and science is moving overseas and medicine is moving overseas and entrepreneurship is moving overseas. We just have to stop this craziness and understand who we are, and not be so threatened by terrorism that the terrorists win without firing a shot, and I think, sadly, that's what we're doing.

We live in the most international city, we live in the greatest city in the world, I think, and it's not just because I'm the mayor and I live here, and I will live here and be buried here. This is a city where you really can say what you want to say, and practice your religion, where we are tolerant, no matter what you believe. I had somebody last night at a speech yell at me, and I said, "Young lady," she probably was my age, she was screaming at me from the back, I couldn't figure out what she was talking about, but I said, "I've got all evening. If you want to scream, that's what the civil liberties we have are."

We shouldn't forget that we have young men and women overseas fighting, and dying, sadly, so that we can protest, and I think a lot of our young protesters don't realize that their right to protest is not something they would have elsewhere, and it's a right that has to be fought for continuously, and probably will be for the rest of our lives. And it would please me to say the last thing, it's sort of a sad thing— not sort of, it is a sad thing, and I don't want to ruin anybody's evening, but I just came, about an hour ago, from a hospital where I sat with the parents of a firefighter who tonight fell off a four-story roof, and died, obviously, and it just goes to show that there are people putting their lives on the line all the time for us, whether they're overseas or they're here. We go about our lives and we have a good time, and that's exactly what we should be doing. But I would just ask you, before you go to bed tonight, a little prayer for a 23 year old firefighter, two years on the job.

Goodnight, thank you.