

**Remarks of Kenneth Wollack
NDI 25th Anniversary Dinner Celebration
Washington, DC, May 10, 2010**

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am Ken Wollack, President of NDI. Welcome to our dinner celebrating the 2010 W. Averell Harriman Award and the Madeleine K. Albright Grant.

We are also marking the Institute's 25th Anniversary. Truth be told, however, we are really 26 but what's a year among friends – particularly really old friends.

We are honored today by the presence of these old friends – individuals and representatives of institutions who, over the past quarter century, have sustained a vision of freedom and democracy.

First, there are those who literally built this organization at an earlier time when we were challenged by more than a few skeptics.

Ambassador Charles Manatt, who is here tonight, was NDI's founding Chairman. He was succeeded by Vice President Walter Mondale and Senator Paul Kirk.

My predecessor Brian Atwood is also here. I was Brian's Vice-President for seven years before succeeding him in 1993. He made my job a lot easier by establishing the foundation of the Institute.

I want to particularly recognize our Board of Directors who have guided and supported our work year in and year out. And we are fortunate to benefit from the leadership of our Chairman.

Madeleine Albright was the Institute's founding Vice-Chair. She left briefly for a couple of obscure government posts, and returned as chair in 2001. In many ways, her life and her work, personify our mission.

Joining us tonight are Board members and staff of the National Endowment for Democracy and our three affiliated institutes -- all proud members of the NED family – the International Republican Institute, the Labor movement's Solidarity Center and the Center for International Private Enterprise.

It was bipartisan optimism that created and has sustained the Endowment and the institutes and we are honored by the presence of members and staff of the Senate and House. The Congress also remains an inspiration for democratic activists around the world.

NDI has enjoyed the support of five administrations. And we are heartened by President Obama's and his Administration's renewed commitment to a more democratic and peaceful world.

We are pleased that officials from the White House, State Department, USAID and the Millennium Challenge Corporation are with us.

At its heart, NDI is a public-private partnership. So I especially want to single out those who made this event possible, the sponsors listed in the program: the corporations, trade unions, foundations and individual donors.

I want to welcome the diplomatic corps and political leaders from abroad. And I would like to express our gratitude to those in this room and hundreds of others around the globe who volunteer their time to assist NDI's efforts with political parties, parliaments, government and civil society.

NDI is proud of its unique standing in, and work with the three largest international groupings of political parties, and we welcome their leaders who are here tonight. Together, the three internationals represent more than 350 political parties in 150 countries, representing Social Democratic, Liberal and Centrist ideologies.

I want to recognize NDI's staff, both past and present. Working in challenging and sometimes dangerous environments, they are the most talented and dedicated group of people I have known.

NDI is not alone in carrying out its democratic development mission. We are part of a growing global community that includes governments, intergovernmental bodies, and other nongovernmental groups both here and abroad. We have all benefitted from our cooperation; and representatives of many of these organizations are here tonight.

This community is united in its belief of a common humanity. That in this growing interdependent world, we are responsible for one another. We have learned by now, that what happens in one place for good or for evil, affects us all.

This has not, and has never been, solely an American endeavor, and we draw our inspiration from individuals like those we honor tonight. Thank you for joining us.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce John – Lord Alderdice – who you will also see shortly in our film. John was a leader of a Northern Ireland party that crossed the sectarian divide, a negotiator and signatory of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, and Speaker of the new, Northern Ireland Assembly.

He was appointed the youngest ever life peer in the British House of Lords and currently serves as a member of the Monitoring Commission that oversees the closing down of Northern Ireland's paramilitary organizations.

His leadership, however, extends well beyond Northern Ireland and NDI has been fortunate to benefit from his friendship and support.

He helped negotiate the end of the Sunni boycott of the Kirkuk Council in Iraq, and led negotiations in Zimbabwe that reached agreements to reduce tensions between democratic political factions.

He has travelled globally with NDI, bringing his renowned skills as a politician, a psychiatrist and a psycho-analytical psycho-therapist. In fact, many of the awards that have come John's way have been related to his work on the application of the science of psychoanalysis on the cause of peace. And, I may add, his rates are reasonable.

I present to you, Lord Alderdice.

Introduction of Alejandro Toledo

It is my privilege to introduce former President of Peru, Alejandro Toledo.

President Toledo was born into a family of 16 children in a remote town in the Andes. As a boy of six, he went to work: shining shoes and hawking newspapers and lottery tickets to help support his family.

Decades later -- with a B.A. from the University of San Francisco and a Masters, and PhD from Stanford University -- he turned to politics. And, 10 years ago he emerged as the candidate of the political opposition, mobilizing the country to fight against the election fraud perpetrated by Pres. Alberto Fujimori.

After Fujimori's resignation in the wake of scandal and new elections in 2001, he won the presidency, becoming the first democratically elected Peruvian president of indigenous descent.

Since leaving office, President Toledo has broadened his mission to help the poor and politically excluded and marginalize communities -- raising his sights beyond his country to the regional and global level. He mobilized many other former presidents of the region behind this cause.

Given his own life experience and his commitment to those who have often need excluded from political life, it is only fitting that President Toledo present this year's Madeleine K. Albright Grant to the Network of Chocó Women. President Toledo.