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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 5, 1989

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

The J.W. Marriott Hotel
Washington, D.C.

7:12 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Ed. Thank you so much. Barbara and I are delighted to be here. And, Ed, to you, my sincere thanks, not just for the invitation and the introduction, but for all you do for education. My respects to John Akers, who is the Chairman of your Human Resources Task Force. My respects to the members of the Senate and the House who are here tonight and to members of my Cabinet. I see our Secretary of Education here, Larry Cavazos, who is doing an outstanding job. Larry, delighted to see you. (Applause.) And one of your own, or one from industry, Bruce Gelb I see sitting here, who's now heading the U.S. Information Agency, taking on a very important job. So I'm going to stop right there before I get in trouble. (Laughter.)

But I spent some time today just thinking about the trip that was just completed and then how I would tie that in to what I'd be saying here tonight. And let me just say a word on the European trip. I am convinced that the Alliance that is so vital to American interests, and I think to interests of every Western European country, are in good shape. I think the Alliance itself is together, perhaps stronger and more united than it's ever been. The spirit of Brussels was one of change and opportunity and the challenge we face in moving towards a future of freedom, prosperity and peace. And I've labeled it "beyond containment." And many of you people in this room know very well what I'm talking about when I talk about a relationship with the Soviet Union that goes beyond containment. And admittedly, a lot has to be done in terms of performance.

But I think with the Alliance together, the challenge now to Mr. Gorbachev to come forward and make these serious reductions to parity in U.S. and Soviet forces. I think we're on the move. I think we're on the offense. And I must say I was very, very pleased by the firm and united reaction from our European allies. (Applause.)

But even as we talked about the matter of arms control and arms reductions, the subject that joins us here tonight -- the subject of education -- came up, everybody recognizing that we're moving into a much more competitive age. And education is a means of equipping ourselves to excel in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. That is one of the things we're facing. Education is the root -- can be the root of mutual understanding and can make an enormous step towards peace in the world.

And so, before I mention that -- a subject which I told Ed I'm a little reluctant to talk about with Larry Cavazos here and with many of you already involved in it -- let me just say a word about another subject -- the one that has dominated the news for the last 48 hours and before as well. I'm talking about the tragic, deplorable events taking place in China. I have a special affection for the Chinese people. I've kept up my knowledge of China and my relationship with various leaders there. I've been back to China five times since Barbara and I left in 1975. And she's been back six

MORE

times. And it is with a saddened heart that I, joining many of you, watched the proceedings in Tiananmen Square.

I was so moved today by the bravery of that individual that stood alone in front of the tanks rolling down the main avenue there. And I heard some speculation on the television on -- what is it that gives a young man the strength, gives him the courage to stand up in front of a column of tanks right there in front of the world. And I'll tell you, it was very moving. Because all of us have seen the bravery and the determination of the students and the workers -- seen their commitment to peaceful protest. And that image, I think, is going to be with us for a long time. And all I can say to him, wherever he might be, or to people around the world is, we are and we must stand with him. And that's the way it is. And that's the way it's going to be. (Applause.)

I know that many in this room do what we have encouraged you to do -- do business with the People's Republic of China. And I don't want to disturb that. I don't want to hurt the very business community in China and here that has moved things forward toward democracy. I did take some steps that some of you may have seen in the military side today. I am convinced that there are many in the People's Liberation Army who are sympathetic to the demonstrators.

But I think the way to move, to take action and to express the outrage we feel is on that military supply side. And I'm very hopeful that this message we sent today will be strong enough to convince the leaders of the Chinese military to go back to the policy of restraint and negotiation and peace as opposed to this crushing of the human spirit in Tiananmen Square.

Tonight, I want to focus on the partnership that we can build to create the world class education system that this country needs. A gathering like this is a very, very good sign -- all of you busy. And you've got the Business Roundtable, the Chamber, the NAM -- National Association of Manufacturers, the American Business Conference, coming together on this matter of urgent concern to our great country.

And our schools are in trouble -- they're in real trouble. And that means our kids are in trouble too. So what are we going to do about it?

Well, together we can lead a nationwide crusade for excellence in education. You won't find too many times when the subject is education that I'll come out against studying. But this is one of them. We've spent plenty of time studying the problem. Hundreds of studies in the past few years alone, showing that our schools simply do not measure up. And we've all heard the stories about the kids who can't find the U.S. on a map and we've seen the low test scores. And so, I really believe that the time for study is past and it's time to take action.

Improving our schools is going to take a national effort -- one that involves all levels of government -- parents, local communities, the private sector as well. And it's going to take an honest effort. And if we're serious about excellence in education, we've got to put the politics on the back burner. And Ed was telling me about the magnificent program you had here today with people from all elements in the educational community. And I think that's a very, very good thing.

I've heard plenty of complaints that we're not spending enough. The typical Washington reaction says, well, if you've got a problem, double the spending and that'll take care of it. The fact is that we spend more per capita than many of our toughest competitors. And, as a nation, we devote more than \$300 billion a year to educating our children. And that's not stingy, it's staggering. And the resources are there and it's how we put those resources to work that counts.

And there's something more that we need to recognize -- we can multiply success. There's no monopoly on ideas -- no one right answer when it comes to improving our schools. We can learn from each other. Look at the states -- today's entrepreneurs of education policy, if you will. We're witnessing the emergence of 50 laboratories of reform -- 50 states -- 50 laboratories of reform. And yes, federal leadership is crucial. And, as you know, we've introduced a package of education initiatives designed to reward excellence, improve accountability and promote quality schools through choice. I expect our ideas to get full and fair hearings when Congress begins working on our bill next week.

And right now, I want to highlight an idea that's proved its value in the business world -- an idea that can play a central role in education as well. And I'm talking about competition. The business world knows that competition brings out the best in individuals and institutions. And the same is true for our schools. Proof already exists. America's postsecondary education system is widely recognized as the strongest and most successful system in the world. And it's also extremely competitive. Schools compete to attract the best students and first-rate faculties. And the plain fact is that this competition is good. Superior schools inspire others to reach for excellence. And our elementary and secondary schools are the weak links in our system. Competition and choice can help us make them stronger.

But what government can do is only part of the story. In the private sector and in this business community hundreds of companies, thousands of employees are going into the classrooms to help children learn. And you didn't wait for a signal from Washington. You saw an opportunity and you got involved. And the numbers are impressive -- 186 corporations from the Business Roundtable alone, and hundreds of others as well. And that tells me that the great American tradition of serving others is alive and thriving in corporate America.

Improving our schools is a national problem. But the search for solutions must take place on the local level in our communities. Local solutions work. Last month, I was up -- just before I went abroad -- I was up in Rochester to visit the Wilson Magnet School -- a school that just turned itself around. And 10 years ago, Wilson was plagued by crime and plunging grades and, indeed, urban flight. And today, that Wilson Magnet School is one of the top-ranked high schools in the state of New York -- a night-and-day change. And you might say, well, how did it happen? Over and over, everyone that I asked there said, I have one answer, and that answer -- commitment. They used that word over and over again. Commitment on the part of parents, teachers, students, and commitment on the part of the corporation that calls that community home -- Eastman Kodak -- contributed the equipment and the expertise that helped bring learning alive for the kids at Wilson.

And I saw those Kodak employees sitting side-by-side with the students at the computers, pitching in, doing a whale of a job. And today, Wilson has many more applicants than it has space for students. And it's a success story that I'd like to see repeated all across this country. And business, it was you -- it was business that played this key role.

Efforts like the one at Wilson, like the ones that many of your companies are now engaged in, are producing real, lasting results -- one school at a time, one student at a time. And all of us know the magnitude of the challenge, and all of us can do our part to strengthen our schools.

And that's why I'm announcing tonight the creation of an advisory committee -- my first as President -- to focus on education -- the President's Education Policy Advisory Committee. And I'll call on this committee to bring me innovative ideas, to bring

together leaders from business and labor, educators at every level, state and local government officials, and the media in a partnership to improve our schools.

The students who need our help can't wait. It's early June; school's about to end for this year. And on graduation day, how many kids won't be walking across that stage to get their diploma? How many kids who walk out of that classroom a few weeks from now won't be back in September? How many will get that degree and go out into the world, come to work in your companies, without the skills they need. Even a single young man or woman is one too many, and yet there are millions.

Everyone in this room, I know, shares my concern. And tonight I want to issue a challenge, a corporate call to action, if you will, four ways that you can make a real difference. Start by raising the literacy levels. Someone once asked Ben Franklin who he thought was the most pitiful man in the world, and he said, "A lonesome man on a rainy day who does not know how to read." And Franklin understood that literacy is an open door to opportunity and self-knowledge, to history, culture and a world of experience. And make no mistake, reading isn't just a rainy day diversion; it's a survival skill. And how can young people do the job if they can't read the job application?

Some of you have spoken to me about this problem. I know many of you have been engaged with Barbara in her effort to help make this country more literate. And tonight, I ask all of you to start at home and your offices, on the shop floor, make it your business to help every employee who can't read but wants desperately to learn.

And second, let's raise our sights and our standards. All of you know the kind of new employees that you're looking for, and that's why it makes sense to work with the schools to create programs that develop skills for the real world, for the millions of new jobs that our economy is creating each year.

And all of you know how difficult it is for your companies to keep pace in a world where change is measured in milliseconds. And we must do all we can to equip our children, our future workforce, with the thinking skills they'll need to make careers in the information age.

You can't start too early. IBM is working in partnership with Headstart in Baltimore, teaching four-year-olds how to use computers. And listen to what one mother says: "The computer will be just like the telephone -- everyone will have one. My kids have to learn this and so do I." That may be a good sales program for John Akers, but it's also a whale of a good education program, I'll tell you. (Laughter.)

We have to understand and we have to be involved. And many of us grew up in a time when a worker would spend an entire career in the same job, and those days are ending. Workers entering the economy today can expect to train and retrain several times to keep pace with changed working conditions. And it's up to our corporations to create a working environment where employee education and retraining and training never stops. From now on in America, learning must be a life-long occupation.

And third, I challenge every CEO in this room to get involved -- personally involved -- with the schools in your own community. Walk into the classroom, not as a CEO, but as a concerned parent, as a good citizen, right there in the community. And I know you and your companies are doing a great deal now to improve our schools. But it's got to be personal. Be a catalyst for change.

Let me tell you about a businessman I know in New Orleans who did exactly that. Pat Taylor -- Patrick Taylor. He walked into one of the worst schools in New Orleans and made a promise to the

entire eighth grade class -- over 200 kids. And he told them if they kept up a B average and graduated, he'd guarantee that they get to college -- go to college. And here's how he looks at it -- you don't always get from individuals what you expect. But if you expect nothing, you're going to get nothing. And Pat Taylor is telling those kids that they've got a future and he's ready to help them get there.

And now the last challenge -- everyone in this room is here because you know how much education matters. And I want you to take a message to the companies who aren't here tonight. Reach out, bring others in this business community onboard. I want to see all of America's corporations involved in a truly common effort.

And I know that you've got the energy and the ingenuity to meet these challenges. Start now. I want to hear from you by next Labor Day -- see the report card, if you will, your action plan for excellence in education. And if I don't hear from you, I'll get Barbara Bush on your case. (Laughter and applause.) She's told me over and over again about many of you -- of your personal and your company's interest in literacy and in education in general. And she has been inspired by what so many of you have already done. She's your cheerleader -- for those who are already constructively involved. You've taken your skills and resources into our classrooms because you know the bottom line -- we can't have a world-class economy with second-class schools.

So take the challenges to heart, build on the fine work that's already started and that's already going on in a big way. And thank you for all you are doing and thank you for what I'm confident all of you will be doing in the future. Thank you all very, very much. (Applause.)

END

7:43 P.M. EDT

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ACTION FYI

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SCOWCROFT	2224	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	2998 BRAD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Brenda</i> DARMAN	2255	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		2705	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BATES	3060	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	2421 FRED	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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CARD	2270	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Rogers</u>	6594	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	2533	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Roper</u>	6515	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	2702	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Pinkerton</u>	6407	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	7620	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Lopez</u>	2150	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**REMARKS: BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE EDUCATION FORUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 5, 1989**

**THANK YOU, ED. I KNOW ALL OF YOU HAVE SPENT THE
AFTERNOON BRAINSTORMING ON WAYS THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY
CAN IMPROVE EDUCATION.**

**I SPENT SOME TIME TODAY THINKING ABOUT THE TRIP
I'VE JUST COMPLETED, AND WHAT I'D BE SAYING HERE
TONIGHT.**

- 2 -

**THE SPIRIT OF BRUSSELS WAS ONE OF CHANGE, OPPORTUNITY -
- AND THE CHALLENGE WE FACE IN MOVING TOWARDS A FUTURE
OF FREEDOM, PROSPERITY AND PEACE. THAT'S A CHALLENGE
THAT UNDERSCORES THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION:
EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF EQUIPPING OURSELVES TO EXCEL IN
AN INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE GLOBAL MARKET. EDUCATION
AS THE ROOT OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING -- ANOTHER STEP
TOWARDS PEACE IN OUR WORLD.**

- 3 -

AND LET ME SAY A WORD ABOUT SOMETHING THAT'S ON ALL OUR MINDS TONIGHT: THE TRAGIC, DEPLORABLE EVENTS TAKING PLACE IN CHINA. ALL OF US HAVE SEEN THE BRAVERY AND DETERMINATION OF THE STUDENTS AND WORKERS -- THEIR COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL PROTEST. TODAY, THE CAMERAS BROUGHT HOME TO US AN IMAGE WE WON'T FORGET: ONE LONE INDIVIDUAL, STANDING IN FRONT OF THE TANKS -- ONE LONE INDIVIDUAL STANDING UP FOR THE FREEDOMS WE ENJOY. HE'S NOT ALONE. WE'RE STANDING WITH HIM. [PAUSE]

- 4 -

TONIGHT, I WANT TO FOCUS ON THE PARTNERSHIP WE CAN BUILD TO CREATE THE WORLD-CLASS EDUCATION SYSTEM THIS NATION NEEDS.

A GATHERING LIKE THIS IS A GOOD SIGN. WE'VE GOT THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE, THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS AND THE AMERICAN BUSINESS CONFERENCE COMING TOGETHER ON A MATTER OF URGENT CONCERN TO ALL OF US.

- 5 -

OUR SCHOOLS ARE IN TROUBLE -- REAL TROUBLE. THAT MEANS OUR KIDS ARE IN TROUBLE, TOO. SO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT? WELL, TOGETHER, WE CAN LEAD A NATIONWIDE CRUSADE FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION.

((YOU WON'T FIND TOO MANY TIMES WHEN THE SUBJECT IS EDUCATION THAT I'LL COME OUT AGAINST STUDYING -- BUT THIS IS ONE OF THEM.))

**WE'VE SPENT PLENTY OF TIME STUDYING THE PROBLEM --
HUNDREDS OF STUDIES IN THE PAST FEW YEARS ALONE SHOWING
THAT OUR SCHOOLS DON'T MEASURE UP. WE'VE ALL HEARD THE
STORIES ABOUT KIDS WHO CAN'T FIND THE U.S. ON A MAP.
WE'VE ALL SEEN THE LOW TEST SCORES.**

**THE TIME FOR STUDY IS PAST. IT'S TIME TO TAKE
ACTION.**

- 7 -

IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS IS GOING TO TAKE A NATIONAL EFFORT, ONE THAT INVOLVES ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, PARENTS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR AS WELL. AND IT'S GOING TO TAKE AN HONEST EFFORT. IF WE'RE SERIOUS ABOUT EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION, WE'VE GOT TO PUT POLITICS ON THE BACK BURNER.

- 8 -

I'VE HEARD PLENTY OF COMPLAINTS THAT WE'RE NOT SPENDING ENOUGH. THE FACT IS THAT WE SPEND MORE PER CAPITA THAN MANY OF OUR TOUGHEST COMPETITORS, AND, AS A NATION, WE DEVOTE MORE THAN \$300 BILLION A YEAR TO EDUCATING OUR CHILDREN. THAT'S NOT STINGY -- IT'S STAGGERING. THE RESOURCES ARE THERE. IT'S HOW WE PUT THOSE RESOURCES TO WORK THAT COUNTS.

- 9 -

AND THERE'S SOMETHING MORE WE NEED TO RECOGNIZE. WE CAN MULTIPLY SUCCESS. THERE'S NO MONOPOLY ON IDEAS -- NO ONE "RIGHT ANSWER" WHEN IT COMES TO IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS. WE CAN LEARN FROM EACH OTHER.

JUST LOOK AT THE STATES -- TODAY'S ENTREPRENEURS OF EDUCATION POLICY. WE'RE WITNESSING THE EMERGENCE OF 50 LABORATORIES OF REFORM.

- 10 -

FEDERAL LEADERSHIP IS CRUCIAL. AS YOU KNOW, WE'VE INTRODUCED A PACKAGE OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES DESIGNED TO REWARD EXCELLENCE, IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY AND PROMOTE QUALITY SCHOOLS THROUGH CHOICE. I EXPECT OUR IDEAS TO GET A FULL AND FAIR HEARING WHEN CONGRESS BEGINS WORKING ON OUR BILL NEXT WEEK.

RIGHT NOW, I WANT TO HIGHLIGHT AN IDEA THAT'S PROVED ITS VALUE IN THE BUSINESS WORLD -- AN IDEA THAT CAN PLAY A CENTRAL ROLE IN EDUCATION AS WELL.

- 11 -

I'M TALKING ABOUT COMPETITION. THE BUSINESS WORLD KNOWS THAT COMPETITION BRINGS OUT THE BEST -- IN INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS.

THE SAME IS TRUE FOR OUR SCHOOLS. PROOF ALREADY EXISTS: AMERICA'S POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED AS THE STRONGEST AND MOST SUCCESSFUL SYSTEM IN THE WORLD. IT'S ALSO EXTREMELY COMPETITIVE. SCHOOLS COMPETE TO ATTRACT THE BEST STUDENTS, AND FIRST-RATE FACULTIES.

- 12 -

AND THE PLAIN FACT IS THAT THIS COMPETITION IS GOOD. SUPERIOR SCHOOLS INSPIRE OTHERS TO REACH FOR EXCELLENCE. OUR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ARE THE WEAK LINKS IN OUR SYSTEM. COMPETITION AND CHOICE CAN HELP US MAKE THEM STRONGER.

- 13 -

BUT WHAT GOVERNMENT CAN DO IS ONLY PART OF THE STORY. IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR -- IN THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY -- HUNDREDS OF COMPANIES AND THOUSANDS OF EMPLOYEES ARE GOING INTO THE CLASSROOMS TO HELP CHILDREN LEARN. YOU DIDN'T WAIT FOR A SIGNAL FROM WASHINGTON -- YOU SAW AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP, AND YOU GOT INVOLVED. THE NUMBERS ARE IMPRESSIVE: 186 CORPORATIONS FROM THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE ALONE, AND HUNDREDS OF OTHERS AS WELL.

- 14 -

THAT TELLS ME THAT THE GREAT AMERICAN TRADITION OF SERVING OTHERS IS ALIVE AND THRIVING IN CORPORATE AMERICA.

IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS IS A NATIONAL PROBLEM, BUT THE SEARCH FOR SOLUTIONS MUST TAKE PLACE ON THE LOCAL LEVEL -- IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

LOCAL SOLUTIONS WORK. LAST MONTH I WAS UP IN ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, TO VISIT THE WILSON MAGNET SCHOOL -- A SCHOOL THAT TURNED ITSELF AROUND.

TEN YEARS AGO, WILSON WAS PLAGUED BY CRIME, PLUNGING GRADES, AND URBAN FLIGHT. TODAY, WILSON MAGNET SCHOOL IS ONE OF THE TOP-RANKED HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

A NIGHT-AND-DAY CHANGE: HOW DID IT HAPPEN? OVER AND OVER, WHOEVER I ASKED, I GOT ONE ANSWER: COMMITMENT. COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS. AND COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF THE CORPORATION THAT CALLS THAT COMMUNITY HOME.

- 16 -

EASTMAN-KODAK CONTRIBUTED THE EQUIPMENT AND EXPERTISE THAT HELPED BRING LEARNING ALIVE FOR THE KIDS AT WILSON.

TODAY, WILSON HAS MANY MORE APPLICANTS THAN IT HAS SPACE FOR STUDENTS. IT'S A SUCCESS STORY I'D LIKE TO SEE REPEATED ACROSS THIS COUNTRY -- AND BUSINESS PLAYED AN IMPORTANT PART.

- 17 -

EFFORTS LIKE THE ONE AT WILSON -- LIKE THE ONES
YOUR COMPANIES ARE NOW ENGAGED IN -- ARE PRODUCING
REAL, LASTING RESULTS, ONE SCHOOL AT A TIME, ONE
STUDENT AT A TIME. ALL OF US KNOW THE MAGNITUDE OF THE
CHALLENGE -- AND ALL OF US CAN DO OUR PART TO
STRENGTHEN OUR SCHOOLS.

- 18 -

THAT'S WHY I AM ANNOUNCING TONIGHT THE CREATION OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE -- MY FIRST AS PRESIDENT -- TO FOCUS ON EDUCATION: THE PRESIDENT'S EDUCATION POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

I'LL CALL ON THIS COMMITTEE TO BRING ME INNOVATIVE IDEAS -- TO BRING TOGETHER LEADERS FROM BUSINESS AND LABOR, EDUCATORS AT EVERY LEVEL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND THE MEDIA IN A PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE OUR SCHOOLS.

- 19 -

THE STUDENTS WHO NEED OUR HELP CAN'T WAIT.

IT'S EARLY JUNE. SCHOOL'S ABOUT TO END FOR THE YEAR. ON GRADUATION DAY, HOW MANY KIDS WON'T BE WALKING ACROSS THAT STAGE TO GET THEIR DIPLOMA? HOW MANY CHILDREN WHO WALK OUT OF THAT CLASSROOM A FEW WEEKS FROM NOW WON'T BE BACK IN SEPTEMBER? HOW MANY WILL GET THAT DEGREE, AND GO OUT INTO THE WORLD -- COME TO WORK IN YOUR COMPANIES -- WITHOUT THE SKILLS THEY NEED?

- 20 -

EVEN A SINGLE YOUNG MAN OR WOMAN IS ONE TOO MANY --
AND YET THERE ARE MILLIONS.

EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM SHARES MY CONCERN. TONIGHT,
I WANT TO ISSUE A CHALLENGE -- A CORPORATE CALL TO
ACTION -- FOUR WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE.
O START BY RAISING LITERACY LEVELS. SOMEONE ONCE
ASKED BEN FRANKLIN WHO HE THOUGHT WAS THE MOST PITIFUL
MAN IN THE WORLD. FRANKLIN SAID: "A LONESOME MAN ON A
RAINY DAY WHO DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO READ."

- 21 -

FRANKLIN UNDERSTOOD THAT LITERACY IS AN OPEN DOOR TO OPPORTUNITY AND SELF-KNOWLEDGE -- TO HISTORY, CULTURE, AND A WORLD OF EXPERIENCE.

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE: READING ISN'T JUST A RAINY DAY DIVERSION. READING IS A SURVIVAL SKILL. HOW CAN OUR YOUNG PEOPLE DO THE JOB IF THEY CAN'T READ THE JOB APPLICATION?

SOME OF YOU HAVE SPOKEN TO ME ABOUT THIS PROBLEM.

- 22 -

TONIGHT, I ASK ALL OF YOU TO START AT HOME -- IN YOUR OFFICES, ON THE SHOP FLOOR. MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS TO HELP EVERY EMPLOYEE WHO CAN'T READ, BUT WANTS DESPERATELY TO LEARN.

O SECOND, LET'S RAISE OUR SIGHTS -- AND OUR STANDARDS. ALL OF YOU KNOW THE KIND OF NEW EMPLOYEES YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

- 23 -

**THAT'S WHY IT MAKES SENSE TO WORK WITH THE SCHOOLS TO
CREATE PROGRAMS THAT DEVELOP SKILLS FOR THE REAL
WORLD -- FOR THE MILLIONS OF NEW JOBS OUR ECONOMY IS
CREATING EACH YEAR.**

**ALL OF YOU KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS FOR YOUR
COMPANIES TO KEEP PACE IN A WORLD WHERE CHANGE IS
MEASURED IN MILLISECONDS.**

- 24 -

WE MUST DO ALL WE CAN TO EQUIP OUR CHILDREN -- OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE -- WITH THE THINKING SKILLS THEY'LL NEED TO MAKE CAREERS IN THE INFORMATION AGE.

AND YOU CAN'T START TOO EARLY. IBM IS WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HEAD START IN BALTIMORE, TEACHING 4-YEAR-OLDS HOW TO USE COMPUTERS. LISTEN TO WHAT ONE MOTHER SAYS: "THE COMPUTER WILL BE JUST LIKE THE TELEPHONE. EVERYONE WILL HAVE ONE. MY KIDS HAVE TO LEARN THIS -- AND SO DO I."

- 25 -

MANY OF US GREW UP IN A TIME WHEN A WORKER COULD SPEND AN ENTIRE CAREER IN THE SAME JOB. THOSE DAYS ARE ENDING. WORKERS ENTERING THE ECONOMY TODAY CAN EXPECT TO TRAIN AND RETRAIN SEVERAL TIMES TO KEEP PACE WITH CHANGING WORK CONDITIONS. IT'S UP TO OUR CORPORATIONS TO CREATE A WORKING ENVIRONMENT WHERE EMPLOYEE EDUCATION AND TRAINING NEVER STOPS. FROM NOW ON IN AMERICA, LEARNING MUST BE A LIFE-LONG OCCUPATION.

- 26 -

O THIRD, I CHALLENGE EVERY CEO IN THIS ROOM TODAY TO GET INVOLVED -- PERSONALLY INVOLVED -- WITH THE SCHOOLS IN YOUR COMMUNITY. WALK INTO THAT CLASSROOM NOT AS A CEO -- BUT AS A CONCERNED PARENT, AS A GOOD CITIZEN IN YOUR COMMUNITY. I KNOW YOU AND YOUR COMPANIES ARE DOING A GREAT DEAL NOW TO IMPROVE OUR SCHOOLS. BUT TAKE IT PERSONALLY: BE A CATALYST FOR CHANGE.

- 27 -

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT A BUSINESSMAN FROM LOUISIANA WHO DID JUST THAT. PATRICK TAYLOR WALKED INTO ONE OF THE WORST SCHOOLS IN NEW ORLEANS, AND MADE A PROMISE TO THE ENTIRE 8TH GRADE CLASS -- OVER 200 KIDS. HE TOLD THEM IF THEY KEPT UP A B AVERAGE AND GRADUATED -- HE'D GUARANTEE THEY'D GET TO COLLEGE.

HERE'S HOW HE LOOKS AT IT: "YOU DON'T ALWAYS GET FROM INDIVIDUALS WHAT YOU EXPECT. BUT IF YOU EXPECT NOTHING -- YOU'RE GOING TO GET NOTHING."

- 28 -

PAT TAYLOR IS TELLING THOSE KIDS THEY'VE GOT A FUTURE -
- AND HE'S READY TO HELP THEM GET THERE.

O NOW, MY FINAL CHALLENGE. EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM IS
HERE BECAUSE YOU KNOW HOW MUCH EDUCATION MATTERS. I
WANT YOU TO TAKE A MESSAGE TO THE COMPANIES WHO AREN'T
HERE TONIGHT. REACH OUT --BRING OTHERS IN THE BUSINESS
COMMUNITY ON BOARD. I WANT TO SEE ALL OF AMERICA'S
CORPORATIONS INVOLVED IN A TRULY COMMON EFFORT.

- 29 -

I KNOW YOU'VE GOT THE ENERGY AND THE INGENUITY TO MEET THESE CHALLENGES. START NOW. I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU NEXT LABOR DAY -- SEE YOUR REPORT CARD -- YOUR ACTION PLAN FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION.

- 31 -

YOU'VE TAKEN YOUR SKILLS AND RESOURCES INTO OUR CLASSROOMS, BECAUSE YOU KNOW THE BOTTOM LINE: WE CAN'T HAVE A WORLD-CLASS ECONOMY WITH SECOND-CLASS SCHOOLS.

I WANT YOU TO TAKE THESE CHALLENGES TO HEART -- AND BUILD ON THE FINE WORK YOU'RE DOING TODAY. THANK YOU, AND GOD BLESS YOU.

#

(-- and all of us can do our part to strengthen our schools.
That's why I am announcing tonight the creation of an
advisory committee -- my first as president -- to focus on
education: the President's Education Policy Advisory Committee.

I'll call on this committee to ~~act as a clearing house for~~
innovative ideas -- to bring together leaders from business and
labor, educators at every level, state and local government
officials, and the media in a partnership to improve our schools.

The students-----

bring me

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 6/3/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: ---
 PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE EDUCATION FORUM
 WASHINGTON, D.C.
 SUBJECT: JUNE 5, 1989

(6/3 - 9:00 a.m. draft 3)

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BATES	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BREEDEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PINKERTON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	BOSKIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
GRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS:

The attached has been forwarded to the President.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi
 Assistant to the President
 and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
 Ext. 2702


McGroarty/Dooley
June 3, 1989
9:00 am
Draft 3

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE EDUCATION FORUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 5, 1989

Thank you, Ed. I know all of you have spent the afternoon brainstorming on ways the business community can improve education.

I spent some time today thinking about the trip I've just completed, and what I'd be saying here tonight. My message in Europe was one of change, opportunity -- and the challenge we face in moving towards a future of freedom, prosperity and peace.

That's a challenge that underscores the importance of education: Education as a means of equipping ourselves to excel in an increasingly competitive global market. Education as the root of mutual understanding -- another step towards peace in our world.

 Tonight, I want to focus on the partnership we can build to create the world-class education system this nation needs.

A gathering like this is a good sign. We've got the Business Roundtable, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Business Conference coming together on a matter of urgent concern to all of us.

Our schools are in trouble -- real trouble. That means our kids are in trouble, too. So what are we going to do about it? Well, together, we can lead a nationwide crusade for excellence in education.

((You won't find too many times when the subject is education that I'll come out against studying -- but this is one of them.))

We've spent plenty of time studying the problem -- hundreds of studies in the past few years alone showing that our schools don't measure up. We've all heard the stories about kids who can't find the U.S. on a map. We've all seen the low test scores.

The time for study is past. It's time to take action.

Improving our schools is going to take a national effort, one that involves all levels of government, parents and local communities, and the private sector as well. And it's going to take an honest effort. If we're serious about excellence in education, we've got to put politics on the back burner.

I've heard plenty of complaints that we're not spending enough. The fact is, as a nation, we devote more than \$300 billion a year to educating our children. That's not stingy -- it's staggering. The resources are there. It's how we put those resources to work that counts.

And there's something more we need to recognize. We can multiply success. There's no monopoly on ideas -- no one "right answer" when it comes to improving our schools. We can learn from one each other.

Just look at the states -- today's entrepreneurs of education policy. We're witnessing the emergence of 50 laboratories of reform.

Federal leadership is crucial. As you know, we've introduced a package of education initiatives designed to reward excellence, improve accountability and promote quality schools through choice. I expect our ideas to get a full and fair hearing when Congress begins working on our bill next week.

Right now, I want to highlight an idea that's proved its value in the business world -- an idea that can play a central role in education as well. I'm talking about competition. The business world knows that competition brings out the best -- in individuals and institutions.

The same is true for our schools. Proof already exists: America's post-secondary education system is widely recognized as the strongest and most successful system in the world. It's also **extremely competitive**. Schools compete to attract the best students, and first-rate faculties.

And the plain fact is that this competition is not destructive. Superior schools inspire others to reach for excellence. Our elementary and secondary schools are the weak links in our system. Competition and choice can help us make them stronger.

But what government can do is only part of the story. In the private sector -- in the American business community -- hundreds of companies and thousands of employees are going into the classrooms to help children learn. You didn't wait for a signal from Washington -- you saw an opportunity to help, and you got involved. The numbers are impressive: 186 corporations from

the Business Roundtable alone, and hundreds of others as well. That tells me that the great American tradition of serving others is alive and thriving in corporate America.

Improving our schools is a national problem, but the search for solutions must take place on the local level -- in our communities.

Local solutions work. Last month I was up in Rochester, New York, to visit the Wilson Magnet School -- a school that turned itself around. Ten years ago, Wilson was plagued by crime, plunging grades, and urban flight. Today, Wilson Magnet School is one of the top-ranked high schools in the state of New York.

A night-and-day change: How did it happen? Over and over, whoever I asked, I got one answer: commitment. Commitment on the part of parents, teachers, and students. And commitment on the part of the corporation that calls that community home. Eastman-Kodak contributed the equipment and expertise that helped bring learning alive for the kids at Wilson.

Today, Wilson has many more applicants than it has space for students. It's a success story I'd like to see repeated across this country -- and business played an important part.

Efforts like the one at Wilson -- like the ones your companies are now engaged in -- are producing real, lasting results, one school at a time, one student at a time. All of us know the magnitude of the challenge.

The students who need our help can't wait.

It's early June. School's about to end for the year. On graduation day, how many kids won't be walking across that stage to get their diploma? How many children who walk out of that classroom a few weeks from now won't be back in September? How many will get that degree, and go out into the world -- come to work in your companies -- without the skills they need?

Even a single young man or woman is one too many -- and yet there are millions.

Everyone in this room shares my concern. Tonight, I want to issue a challenge -- a corporate call to action -- four ways you can make a real difference.

o **Start by raising literacy levels.** Someone once asked Ben Franklin who he thought was the most pitiful man in the world. Franklin said: "A lonesome man on a rainy day who does not know how to read."

Franklin understood that literacy is an open door to opportunity and self-knowledge -- to history, culture, and a world of experience.

But make no mistake: reading isn't just a rainy day diversion. Reading is a survival skill. How can our young people do the job if they can't read the job application?

Some of you have spoken to me about this problem. Tonight, I ask all of you to start at home -- in your offices, on the shop floor. Make it your business to help every employee who can't read, but wants desperately to learn.

o **Second, let's raise our sights -- and our standards.** All of you know the kind of new employees you're looking for. That's why it makes sense to work with the schools to create programs that develop skills for the real world -- for the millions of new jobs our economy is creating each year.

All of you know how difficult it is for your companies to keep pace in a world where change is measured in milliseconds. We must do all we can to equip our children -- our future workforce -- with the thinking skills they'll need to make careers in the information age.

And you can't start too early. IBM is working in partnership with Head Start in Baltimore, teaching 4-year-olds how to use computers. Listen to what one mother says: "The computer will be just like the telephone. Everyone will have one. My kids have to learn this -- and so do I."

Many of us grew up in a time when a worker could spend an entire career in the same job. Those days are over. Workers entering the economy today can expect to train and retrain several times to keep pace with changing work conditions. It's up to our corporations to create a working environment where employee education and training never stops. **From now on in America, learning must be a life-long occupation.**

o **Third, I challenge every CEO in this room today to get involved -- personally involved -- with the schools in your community. Walk into that classroom not as a CEO -- but as a concerned parent, as a good citizen in your community. I know**

you and your companies are doing a great deal now to improve our schools. **But take it personally: be a catalyst for change.**

Let me tell you about a businessman from Louisiana who did just that. Patrick Taylor walked into one of the worst schools in New Orleans, and made a promise to the entire 8th grade class -- over 200 kids. He told them if they kept up a B average and graduated -- he'd guarantee they'd get to college.

Here's how he looks at it: "You don't always get from individuals what you expect. But if you expect nothing -- you're going to get nothing." Pat Taylor is telling those kids they've got a future -- and he's ready to help them get there.

o Now, my final challenge. Everyone in this room is here because you know how much education matters. **I want you to take a message to the companies who aren't here tonight. Reach out -- bring others in the business community on board. I want to see all of America's corporations involved in a truly common effort.**

I know you've got the energy and the ingenuity to meet these challenges. Start now. **I want to hear from you next Labor Day - - see your report card -- your action plan for excellence in education.**

You've taken your skills and resources into our classrooms, because you know the bottom line: **We can't have a world-class economy with second-class schools.**

I want you to take these challenges to heart -- and build on the fine work you're doing today. Thank you, and God bless you.

#

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 6/1/89 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 6/1/89 5:00 PM

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: AMERICAN BUSINESS EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE

	ACTION FYI			ACTION FYI	
VICE PRESIDENT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	MCCLURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SUNUNU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NEWMAN <i>had not seen 5:10</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCOWCROFT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PORTER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DARMAN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	STUDDERT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>nc</i> BATES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	UNTERMAYER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BREEDEN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ROGERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CARD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	WINSTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CICCONI	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PINKERTON	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DEMAREST	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>nc</i> BOSKIN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
FITZWATER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PETERSMEYER	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>nc</i> GRAY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
HAGIN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

REMARKS: Please forward your comments directly to Chriss Winston, Rm. 122, x2930, no later than 5:00 PM, TODAY, June 1, 1989, with an info copy to my office. Thank you.

RESPONSE:

James W. Cicconi
Assistant to the President
and Deputy to the Chief of Staff
Ext. 2702

1989 JUN -1 AM 3:00

McGroarty/Dooley
June 1, 1989
8:00 am
Draft 2

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE EDUCATION FORUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 5, 1989

[Introductory acknowledgements....]

I know you've been at it for the past three hours, brainstorming on ways the American business community can improve education. I spent some time thinking this afternoon about the trip I've just completed, and what I'd be saying here tonight. My message in Europe was one of change, opportunity -- and the challenge we face in moving towards a future of freedom, prosperity and peace.

That's a challenge that underscores the importance of education: Education as a means of equipping ourselves to excel in an increasingly competitive global market. Education as the root of mutual understanding -- the key to peace in our world.

Tonight, I want to focus on the partnership we can build to create the world-class education system this nation needs.

A gathering like this is a good sign. We've got the Business Roundtable, the Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Business Conference coming together on a matter of urgent concern to all of us.

Improving our schools is imperative. Nothing has greater impact on the long-term health of this nation. Together, you can be a powerful force for positive change -- leaders in a nation-

wide drive to make our goal, excellence in education, a classroom reality.

((You won't find too many times when the subject is education that I'll come out against studying -- but this is one of them.))

We've spent plenty of time studying the problem -- hundreds of studies in the past few years alone on why our schools aren't measuring up, on what we're doing wrong. We've all heard the stories about kids who can't find the United States on a map. We've all seen the test scores: American students far down the list compared to their peers in other industrialized nations.

The time for study is past. It's time to take action -- and I commend all of you for the work your companies are already doing to strengthen our nation's schools.

It's going to take a collective effort, one that involves all levels of government, and the private sector as well.

And it's going to take an honest effort. If we're serious about improving excellence in education, we've got to get past the politics.

I've heard plenty of complaints that we're not spending enough. The fact is, we're not stingy when it comes to education. As a nation, we devote more than \$300 billion a year to educating our children. The resources are there. It's how we put those resources to work that counts.

And there's something more we need to recognize. There's no monopoly on ideas -- no one "right answer" when it comes to

improving our schools. Our success depends on how well we learn from one other what works when it comes to improving education.

The states are emerging as leaders. We're witnessing the emergence of 50 laboratories of reform. I know you heard from Governor Bill Clinton today, about the efforts on-going in his state of Arkansas.

Federal leadership is crucial. As you know, I've introduced a package of education initiatives designed to encourage excellence, expand accountability and to promote quality schools through choice. I expect my ideas to get a full and fair hearing when Congress begins working on my bill next week.

Right now, I want to highlight an idea that's proved its value in the business world -- an idea that can play a central role in education as well. I'm talking about competition. The business world knows that competition brings out the best, in individuals and institutions -- that competition spurs creativity and innovation.

~~That~~ ^{The} same is true of competition in our education system. Proof already exists: America's post-secondary education system is widely recognized as the strongest and most successful system in the world. It's also extremely competitive. Schools compete to attract the best students and first-rate faculties. And the plain fact is that this competition is not destructive. Superior schools inspire others to reach for excellence themselves.

Our elementary and secondary schools are far less successful -- and while some choice and competition now exists, more is

needed. That's why I support greater freedom for students and parents in choosing a school -- and greater flexibility for school systems to attract talented teachers and principles. ←

But what government can do is only part of the story. In the private sector -- in the American business community -- hundreds of companies and thousands of corporate executives are going into the classrooms to help children learn. You deserve our thanks. You didn't wait for a signal from Washington -- you saw an opportunity to help, and you got involved. The numbers are impressive: 186 corporations from the Business Roundtable alone, and hundreds of others as well.

Improving our schools is a national problem, but the search for solutions must take place on the local level -- in our communities.

Local solutions work. Last month I was up in Rochester, New York, to visit the Wilson Magnet School -- a school that turned itself around. Ten years ago, Wilson was plagued by crime, plunging grades, and urban flight. Today, Wilson Magnet School is the 9th-ranked high school in the state of New York.

A night-and-day change: How did it happen? Over and over, whoever I asked, I got one answer: commitment. Commitment on the part of parents, teachers, and students. And commitment on the part of business leaders as well -- at Wilson, Eastman-Kodak.

What happened at Wilson is instructive. The community refused to accept the status quo -- and they made it their business to bring about change. Today, Wilson has many more

applicants than it has space for students. It's a success story I'd like to see repeated across this country -- and business played an important part.

Many of you here today have begun intensive "mentoring" programs, a one-on-one approach that proves to a child that someone cares enough to help him learn. Some of your companies have adopted schools, supplying equipment and expertise, opening a new world of educational experience.

Those efforts are producing real, lasting results, one school at a time, one student at a time. But all of us know the magnitude of the challenge. We know we have to move beyond a band-aid approach, to the broad changes and long-term solutions that will strengthen every school across this country.

The students who need our help can't wait. It's early June. School's about to end for the year. On graduation day, how many kids won't be walking across that stage to get their diploma? How many children who walk out of that classroom a few weeks from now won't be back in September? How many will get that degree, and go out into the world -- come to work in your companies -- without the skills they need?

Even a single young man or woman is one too many -- and yet there are millions.

Today, I want to ask you to join me in setting some challenges for ourselves -- marking out a few areas where we can redouble our efforts and make a real difference.

o Let's concentrate on cutting the drop-out rate. Today, it's one in every four 17- and 18-year-olds: a million students a year.

Let's not waste time worrying about what the drop-out rate should be. It's too high. Let's get to work now to bring it down. If it's 1 in 4, let's aim for 1 in 5. Doesn't sound like much, does it? Well, that's 200,000 kids a year, staying in school -- and staying on track to a far brighter future.

o Let's raise the literacy rate. Someone once asked Ben Franklin who he thought was the most pitiful man in the world. Franklin said: "A lonesome man on a rainy day who does not know how to read."

Franklin understood that literacy is an open door to advancement, enrichment and opportunity -- to history, culture, and a world of experience.

But make no mistake: reading isn't just a rainy day diversion. It's a survival skill. How can our young people do the job if they can't read the job application?

o Let's raise our sights -- set higher standards. All of you know the kind of new employees you're looking for. That's why it makes sense to work with the schools, to create programs that develop skills for the real world -- for the millions of new jobs our economy is creating each year.

All of you know how difficult it is for your companies to keep pace in a world where change is measured in milliseconds.

We must do all we can to equip our children with the thinking skills they'll need to make careers in the information age.

Many of us grew up in a time when a worker could spend an entire career in the same job. Those days are fading fast. Workers entering the economy today can expect to train and retrain several times to keep pace with changing work conditions. For these workers, learning must be a life-long activity. It's up to our corporations to create a working environment where employee education and training never stops.

o Finally, I challenge every CEO in this room today to get involved -- personally involved -- with the schools in your community. It all comes back to commitment -- to what I learned at the Wilson Magnet School. Your commitment motivates others. Let your communities see that you take an active interest -- and others in your community will follow your lead. I know you and your companies are doing a great deal now to improve our schools. But take it personally: be a catalyst for change.

Everyone in this room today knows the bottom line: You can't be a world-class economy without a world-class education system. You know that first-hand -- and that's why you've taken your skills and resources into our schools.

Today's conference has brought you all together, given you the chance to learn from each other -- to build a broad partnership in improving American education. I want to thank you for the work you're doing -- and I want you to take these challenges to heart.

China Insert/Business Roundtable

And let me say a word about something that's on all our minds: the tragic, deplorable events taking place in China. All of us have seen the bravery and determination of the students and workers -- their commitment to peaceful protest. Today, the cameras brought home to us an image we won't forget: one lone individual, standing in front of the tanks -- one lone individual standing up for the freedoms we enjoy. He's not alone. The whole world is watching.

McGroarty/Dooley
June 3, 1989
9:00 am
Draft 3

PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE EDUCATION FORUM
WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUNE 5, 1989

Thank you, Ed. I know all of you have spent the afternoon brainstorming on ways the business community can improve education.

I spent some time today thinking about the trip I've just completed, and what I'd be saying here tonight. *the spirit of Brussels* ~~My message in~~ *(Gold)* ~~Europe~~ was one of change, opportunity -- and the challenge we face in moving towards a future of freedom, prosperity and peace.

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((You won't find too many times when the subject is education that I'll come out against studying -- but this is one of them.))

We've spent plenty of time studying the problem -- hundreds of studies in the past few years alone showing that our schools don't measure up. We've all heard the stories about kids who can't find the U.S. on a map. We've all seen the low test scores.

The time for study is past. It's time to take action.

Improving our schools is going to take a national effort, one that involves all levels of government, parents and local communities, and the private sector as well. And it's going to take an honest effort. [If we're serious about excellence in education, we've got to put politics on the back burner.] *Bold*

I've heard plenty of complaints that we're not spending enough. The fact is, *that we spend more per capita than many of our competitors* as a nation, we devote more than \$300 *and* billion a year to educating our children. [That's not stingy -- *bold* it's staggering.] The resources are there. It's how we put those resources to work that counts.

And there's something more we need to recognize. We can multiply success. There's no monopoly on ideas -- no one "right answer" when it comes to improving our schools. We can learn from one each other.

Just look at the states -- today's entrepreneurs of education policy. We're witnessing the emergence of 50 laboratories of reform.

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And the plain fact is that this competition is ~~not~~ ^{good} ~~destructive~~. Superior schools inspire others to reach for excellence. Our elementary and secondary schools are the weak links in our system. Competition and choice can help us make them stronger.

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Improving our schools is a national problem, but the search for solutions must take place on the local level -- in our communities.

3/12 [Local solutions work.] Last month I was up in Rochester, New York, to visit the Wilson Magnet School -- a school that turned itself around. Ten years ago, Wilson was plagued by crime, plunging grades, and urban flight. Today, Wilson Magnet School is one of the top-ranked high schools in the state of New York.

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bold [The students who need our help can't wait.] (A)

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And you can't start too early. IBM is working in partnership with Head Start in Baltimore, teaching 4-year-olds how to use computers. Listen to what one mother says: "The computer will be just like the telephone. Everyone will have one. My kids have to learn this -- and so do I."

Many of us grew up in a time when a worker could spend an entire career in the same job. Those days are ~~over~~^{ending}. Workers entering the economy today can expect to train and retrain several times to keep pace with changing work conditions. It's up to our corporations to create a working environment where employee education and training never stops. From now on in America, learning must be a life-long occupation.

o **Third, I challenge every CEO in this room today to get involved -- personally involved -- with the schools in your community. Walk into that classroom not as a CEO -- but as a concerned parent, as a good citizen in your community.** I know

you and your companies are doing a great deal now to improve our schools. **But take it personally: be a catalyst for change.**

Let me tell you about a businessman from Louisiana who did just that. Patrick Taylor walked into one of the worst schools in New Orleans, and made a promise to the entire 8th grade class -- over 200 kids. He told them if they kept up a B average and graduated -- he'd guarantee they'd get to college.

Here's how he looks at it: "You don't always get from individuals what you expect. But if you expect nothing -- you're going to get nothing." Pat Taylor is telling those kids they've got a future -- and he's ready to help them get there.

o Now, my final challenge. Everyone in this room is here because you know how much education matters. I want you to take a message to the companies who aren't here tonight. Reach out -- bring others in the business community on board. I want to see all of America's corporations involved in a truly common effort.

I know you've got the energy and the ingenuity to meet these challenges. Start now. I want to hear from you next Labor Day - - see your report card -- your action plan for excellence in education.

And if I don't hear from you, I'll get Barbara Bush on your case. Incidentally, she has told me over and over again about many of you, of your personal and company's interest in literacy and education in general. She is a real cheerleader for those already so constructively involved.

You've taken your skills and resources into our classrooms, because you know the bottom line: **We can't have a world-class economy with second-class schools.**

I want you to take these challenges to heart -- and build on the fine work you're doing today. Thank you, and God bless you.

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