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SOTU [State of the Union] Speech Drafts [1]

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# Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

## Clinton Library

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### COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records  
Speechwriting  
Terry Edmonds  
OA/Box Number: 10989

### FOLDER TITLE:

SOTU [State of the Union] Speech Drafts [1]

2006-0462-F  
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### RESTRICTION CODES

#### Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

#### Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Draft 1/29/96

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
STATE-OF-THE-UNION ADDRESS  
UNITED STATES CAPITOL  
FEBRUARY 4, 1997**

*Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice-President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests:*

I come before you tonight to put forward a concrete plan of action to prepare our people for the challenges of the next century.

Our economy is in its 69<sup>th</sup> month of strong growth; crime, welfare, and teen pregnancy are receding. We are helping to bring peace and prosperity unrivaled in history throughout the world. And we are living in a moment of tremendous opportunity, because of a new global economy and the Information Age.

It would be easy to be complacent, to rest at this moment. But we must not rest. America won the Cold War. In the last four years, we have won back the strength of our economy. We are winning back our optimism, our faith that we can master our most difficult social challenges when we face them together. But we must not win these struggles only to lose the moment of opportunity that these victories have created.

We face no enemy bent on destroying us. The enemy of our time is inaction. Worldwide commerce, new careers, life-enhancing technology, are ours to seize for all our people. But if we do not take action, and make the right choices, these opportunities could slip from our grasp or even be turned to our disadvantage in this new, competitive world.

Our moment of opportunity is fleeting. A child born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Everything she is likely to know firsthand about the progress of America, she will know because of the work we do now to help build the new century. We must focus on our responsibilities to help her and all our children, make the most of their own lives.

My fellow Americans, the State of our Union is strong, but the opportunity before us is even stronger. So tonight, I issue a call to action to prepare America for the 21st Century -- action to build a new government, demand a new sense of responsibility, summon a new spirit of community for a new century.

This call to action summons us to work for stronger education; to build stronger families and stronger communities; to harness the forces of technology; to keep America the world's indispensable force for peace, freedom, and prosperity. Above all, it calls on us to build a stronger union here at home.

**As we prepare for all these challenges, we must move quickly to finish the unfinished business before us here: balancing our budget, finishing welfare reform, restoring our**

**democracy.**

Over the last four years, we cut the deficit so it is now the smallest in the industrialized world. In two days, I will formally propose a detailed plan to balance the budget by 2002, provide targeted tax relief, and strengthen our economy for a vigorous new world of competition.

My plan proves we can meet all our obligations: it lifts the burden of debt from our children and invests in those things that will help them make the most of their lives. It proves we can build on the Vice President's work to modernize and reinvent government so it works better and serves the people better, even as it costs less.

We should not wait years for a constitutional amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis; we should not wait a year for an agreement. Let this be the Congress that finally balances the budget, and let it happen now, not later, but now.

When we balance the budget, our job will not be done. In the near future, we must come together, in a bipartisan process, to reform Medicare and Social Security, to preserve quality and choice and ensure these core programs are as strong tomorrow as they are today.

There is a second piece of unfinished business for us here: We must make the permanent underclass a thing of the past, and finish the job of welfare reform.

We must build on last year's landmark welfare reform legislation, taking seriously our responsibility to make sure that all people who should work, have the opportunity to work.

Our goal is to lift one million people welfare to work by the Year 2000. Here is my plan: Tax credits to businesses that hire people off welfare. Incentives for companies and job placement firms that create jobs for welfare recipients. Transportation to help people get to their jobs.

Beyond what we do here, I challenge every state to turn welfare checks into a private sector paychecks. I challenge every church to hire someone off welfare. I challenge every business in America to do what it can to hire someone off welfare. And I am very pleased to announce tonight that [x] and [x] have agreed to lead a national mobilization of businesses to hire people off welfare.

To everyone here, whether you supported this law or opposed it -- but especially those of us who supported it -- I say: We have a moral obligation to make sure people being required to work have the opportunity to work.

Finally, we must join together across party lines to do what Republican and Democratic governors have asked us to do, to restore help for legal immigrants who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law.

A third piece of unfinished business continues to stain our democracy. Tonight, before the

eyes of America, we should commit to passing bipartisan campaign finance reform.

We have just come through an election in which more money was raised and spent on races for Congress and the Presidency than ever before. This system is badly broken. Every one involved in it -- every one of us here -- must take responsibility for this system, and for ending it.

Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across the aisle to craft reform. It curbs spending, reduces the role of special interests, creates a level playing field between challengers and incumbents, and bans the large soft money contributions that both parties receive.

You know, and I know, that delay will mean the death of reform. We must work together to enact campaign finance reform, and we should do it by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy, by July 4.

If we balance the budget, finish the job of welfare reform, and enact campaign finance reform, we will have cleared our once-obstructed path to prepare our country for the new century ahead.

**Then, the most important thing we can do -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is work together to give every child in America the best education in the world.**

Tonight, we must set this goal: In the year 2000, every 8 year old will be able to read, every 12 year old will be able to log on to the Internet, every 18 year old will be able to go to college -- and America will have the best schools in the world.

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to stronger education -- \$42 billion next year. We are going to do our part here in Washington. But we know when it comes to education, that is nowhere near enough.

I have a Plan for America's Schools, based on four principles, that we all have to work on.  
[hold up booklet]

First, we must set the highest national standards for education, and help our children reach them. Fourth graders must be able to read, and read well. Eighth graders must be able to do algebra. Twelfth graders must master a rigorous high school curriculum.

Over the next 2 years, we will develop a national fourth grade reading test and a national 8th grade math test, both based on widely accepted, world-class standards. Tonight, I issue a national challenge: By 1999, every state should require these national tests of basic skills. And, to help make sure a high school diploma means something, we should provide the Third International Math and Science Survey -- the TIMSS test -- to every school district that wants it. We should give more of our high school students the chance to test themselves against students

around the world.

Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. But the point is, this will be the way we will lift them up, so they can compete with the best in the world. These tests will help show us who needs extra help, and which schools need to be improved. And these tests will help us end social promotion in America, so children move from grade to grade when they are ready.

These tests are far more than just tests of our children. This entire endeavor is a test of our nation, of our ability to step up to the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age. We must make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

We know our kids can learn. They can do this. But we have to make it possible for them to succeed. This is a challenge to every governor, every teacher, every educator, and every parent in America. We know we can make this work, because we see examples of what works all across this country. Tonight, I am very pleased to have with us two students who scored among the best in the country on the TIMSS test, and their teacher. [Intro TIMSS]

[Teacher] reminds us why the second part of my plan is so important. My budget will help more than 100,000 teachers to get national certification as master teachers. We must reward good teachers, and find ways to quickly and fairly remove those few teachers who don't measure up. Now we have to do more to challenge the best of our young people to look at the teaching profession as a career in which they can make a contribution.

So all our children can read, I want a citizen army of one million volunteers to tutor those who need extra help. My balanced budget invests \$2.75 billion for this. Tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have pledged tens of thousands of work study students to work one year as reading tutors.

We cannot raise our children up in schools that are literally falling down. My budget includes \$5 billion to spur \$20 billion in school construction and modernization over the next four years.

The second part of my plan calls on every state to let parents choose the right public school for their children. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. We must do more to encourage teachers and parents to start public charter schools that set and meet the highest standards. My balanced budget doubles the funding set aside to help start charter schools, so by the Year 2000, there will be 3,000.

Finally, we must press forward to make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We cannot raise standards on every other subject if we fail to teach our children how to be good citizens. We should continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, and get disruptive kids out of the classroom.

We must do our part, but success is not in our hands alone. Parents, teachers, businesspeople, clergy, governors and state officials and school boards must answer this call to action. Tonight, I pledge to take this plan to the country, to enlist America's support in what must be a crusade for tomorrow's children. *[mention of Governors who might be present]*

Beyond this, to prepare our people for the 21st Century, we must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- as universal in America as high school is today.

We should do more than ever before to provide college scholarships to deserving students. My plan provides the largest increase in Pell Grants in 20 years.

And ~~we~~ <sup>we</sup> should cut taxes ~~to open the doors of college~~. My balanced budget plan provides for America's HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay the tuition at a typical community college; a \$10,000 deduction for all education after high school; a tax-free IRA so families to send their children to college.

~~My balanced budget plan, with these tax cuts,~~ <sup>need</sup> will mean no working family ever pays a nickel of taxes on the money they save for college -- and I ask you to pass this so that we open the doors of college to every American.

All our people must have the chance to learn new skills throughout their lives. The G.I. Bill for Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a single, simple skill grant that will go directly to workers and gives them the power to compete in the new economy. For too long now, this bill has sat before Congress, without action. We have to face up to it: our worker training system does not work. It is time to fix it.

We must recognize that learning begins in the cradle <sup>and</sup> must continue throughout a lifetime. We should help parents teach their own children in the earliest years. My balanced budget expands Head Start by one million children by 2002. <sup>and</sup> I am pleased to announce that we will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain and the Vice President's Family Conference this spring, to bring the newest scientific insights to understand how young children learn.

Indeed, to prepare America for the 21st century, we must expand the world of knowledge <sup>and technology</sup> for the benefit not just of the young, but of all Americans.

This ~~speech tonight~~ is the first State of the Union to be carried live over the Internet. But we have only scratched the surface of the Internet's potential.

Last year, I challenged our nation to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the Year 2000, bringing for the first time the same universe of knowledge to an isolated rural schoolhouse, an inner city high school, or a magnet school in a wealthy suburb. My plan increases our Technology Literacy Fund by [\$N]. Last year, Vice-President Gore and I joined 20,000

volunteers to connect thousands of schools in California at the first Net Day. This year, I challenge every state to have a Net Day. And I challenge every computer company, communications company, and computer lover in America to join up.

Today, I challenge the private sector to work with us to connect every children's hospital to the Internet as well, so a child in bed can stay in school.

We must build the second generation Internet. My balanced budget includes [\$100 million] to connect 100 universities and national labs with an Internet up to 1,000 times as fast as today's -- powerful enough to connect patients in rural hospitals to the best doctors in America and cutting edge medical equipment. And we should take steps to open the rich world of America's heritage and culture to even more of our people. Tonight I call on the private sector to create a fund that will put 10 million objects in the Smithsonian collection online.

In the last few years, ever-more rapid medical breakthroughs have brought new hope to people suffering from spina bifida, AIDS, and cancer. My balanced budget includes a N% increase in funding for our medical laboratories.

And ~~we will continue to explore the heavens.~~ *as we continue to explore human technologies that affect our lives.*

[Even as we tap technology's vast potential to improve our lives, we also know it sometimes poses dangers, especially to our children. I pledge to do everything I can to protect our children from obscenity on the Internet.]

Through all these efforts, especially our exploration of space, we are offering a new vision for our children: inspiring them to explore their world; to gain a new understanding of our universe, our solar system and our planet; and to explore the limits of science and technology, joining the quest for new knowledge in the 21st Century.

**It is not enough to build stronger individuals. To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families and communities.**

In the new century, with new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we must do what we can to help parents raise strong families and pass on their values to their children.

First and foremost, raising our children is the sacred responsibility of their parents. And no parent can be allowed to walk away from that responsibility. We should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her obligation to pay child support. And to America's fathers, let me say: child support is no substitute for the love and discipline your children need from you. You must be there for them.

The Family and Medical Leave Law has helped millions of our people. Now we should expand Family Leave so parents can take time off from work for parent teacher conferences or to take a child for a routine checkup. We should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for

overtime not only in income, but also with time off to be with their families.

For our families to be strong, we must continue to move step-by-step to give them access to affordable, quality health care. My balanced budget plan will extend health coverage to five million children -- cutting in half the number of uninsured children in America. It will help all people between jobs pay their premiums for up to six months. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

[Last year, we ended "drive-through deliveries," requiring that new mothers and their babies get at least 48 hours of hospital care. This year, we must enact the bipartisan legislation before you to end the dangerous and demeaning practice of drive-through mastectomies.]

We must continue our efforts to protect the health of our children. We will fight to enforce our new rules to stop tobacco advertising aimed at children.

→ *Communities Not just str 15 + 60, but str cities.*

To make our families and communities stronger we must protect our environment and preserve our natural heritage for the 21st century. My balanced budget provides the resources to clean up over 500 toxic waste sites -- 2/3 of all the toxic waste sites in America -- by the Year 2000.

Over the past four years, we saved Yellowstone from mining, and established the largest national park south of Alaska in California's Mojave Desert; we are working to save the Florida Everglades and protected Utah's magnificent Grand Escalante Staircase. Tonight, I am announcing that we will add American Heritage Rivers to the special list of American national treasures we must conserve and preserve.

As we clean up our communities, we must make sure that taxpayers never again pay to clean up polluters' mess. I urge you to pass my proposal to make polluters live by this simple rule: if you pollute our environment, you clean it up.

Some of the worst pollution is in the heart of our cities, making it even ~~more difficult~~ <sup>harder</sup> to strengthen communities most in need of renewal. Our way is to bring the full force of the private economy to bear -- to create jobs, spur investment by businesses and banks, and restore hope. I urge you to pass the brownfields initiative, to restore contaminated properties to productive use, and to pass a new round of Empowerment Zones to spread economic growth to our poorest city neighborhoods and rural communities.

And we must pledge tonight that ~~all of us in this room will~~ <sup>we will</sup> work together to use these approaches -- including tax incentives to business -- to meet the challenges of this great capital city, so that it is once again the proud face that America shows the world.

In the fight for strong communities, nothing is more important than the fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row -- the longest decline in decades. The key has been community policing -- so we must finish the job of putting 100,000 police officers

on the street. We should pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution. We should set a goal to deport a record 100,000 criminals and other illegal aliens this year.

And we must mount a full scale assault on juvenile crime. I will submit comprehensive legislation that declares war on criminal gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; gives judges more power to crack down on gang members who intimidate witnesses; extends the Brady Bill so a minor who commits a violent crime will never be given the right to own a handgun; requires trigger safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and provides resources to keep schools open late, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

Helping young people is exactly why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros joined Vice President Gore and me at the White House two weeks ago to announce the Presidents's Summit of Service to be held in Philadelphia in April. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 70,000 young people to work their way through college. Citizen service belongs to no party, no ideology. It is an American idea which every American should embrace in their daily lives.

Our young people should never forget that their first responsibility is to themselves.

My balanced budget includes the largest anti-drug effort ever: to stop drugs at their source, punish those who push drugs, and steer young people away.

But the war on drugs will be won or lost by our young people themselves. Let me say a word directly to you, our children: As we work to build a strong future for you, you have to think about what kind of future you want to have for yourself. Nothing your parents do, nothing anyone can do, will keep drugs out of your hands if you set out to find them. It is up to you. Drugs are deadly. They will ruin your life. Don't let them. Look within yourself; you can find the strength to say no.

**And to ~~truly~~ prepare our people for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of global change and build stronger American leadership for a new time.**

Fifty years ago, President Harry Truman stood before the [TK] Congress and called for a national commitment to make America the free world's indispensable nation. Soon thereafter, we launched the Marshall Plan to rebuild our allies and former adversaries. And America created the institutions and provided the resources that brought the West security and prosperity -- and victory in the Cold War. Because of those commitments, more people than ever before share the ideals that define America and the interests we defend.

Now, we face another time of change and a moment of choice. We have taken down many of the blocs and barriers that divided the world for our parents. But we still must create the new institutions and understandings that will define the world for our children. If we choose complacency, we will squander the promise of our time. Instead, let us commit to taking the

steps that will keep America the world's indispensable nation.

**Our first task must be to build, for the very first time, a Europe that is undivided, peaceful and democratic.** When Europe is stable, America is more secure. When Europe prospers, so does America.

Fifty years ago, NATO strengthened struggling democracies and paved the way for prosperity in Europe's west. Now, we can do the same for Europe's east by opening NATO's doors to new democracies and building a strong NATO - Russia partnership. Tonight, I say to Congress: let us work together so that by 1999 - NATO's 50th anniversary - the first countries we invite to join are full fledged members of the Alliance.

**Second, in a global economy with global security challenges, America must look to the East no less than to the West -- and build a true community of nations in the Asia Pacific.** Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia in living memory. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend on trade with Asia.

As we tear down trade barriers and build up our alliances, that Pacific community is taking shape. But we must not let our progress mask the promise -- or the peril -- that remains. We must dismantle North Korea's frozen nuclear program, as North Korea has agreed. I call on Congress to fund America's contribution to this effort. And we must advance peace talks between South Korea and North Korea that can bridge the final divide of the Cold War's last frontier.

Let us pursue a deeper dialogue with China. An isolated, inward looking China is not in our interest. Instead, we must work together on common problems like weapons proliferation and deal with our fundamental differences like human rights. As contacts grow... as markets expand and information flows... as China plays its rightful role in the world... a more open society can gain strength. I look forward to exchanging state visits with President Jiang -- not because we agree on everything, but because a constructive U.S. - China relationship matters to the world.

**Third, the American people will only know true security if they are given the opportunity to prosper in the global economy.** Through trade, travel and communications, our links to the world will be greater than ever -- and so America's ability to compete is more important than ever.

These past four years, we made it our mission to open markets abroad and create good jobs at home. More than two hundred trade agreements later, our determination has been rewarded. Once again, America is the world's number one exporter and most competitive nation.

Now, we must build on that momentum throughout Asia and Latin America -- and place the United States at the hub of the two most dynamic regions on earth. I will travel to Mexico in April, and then to Argentina, Brazil, Chile, [TK] in May to advance that goal. And I will work with Congress to make -- and to enforce -- trade agreements that are good for America.

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**Fourth, we must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Africa.** Taking prudent risks for peace lessens the likelihood of more costly conflicts. It encourages other nations to focus on their people, not their arsenals. It helps build a community willing to tackle shared problems together.

In Bosnia, with American leadership, the killing has stopped -- but the habits of peace are slow to take hold. That is why I agreed for our troops to take part in a smaller follow-on force that should complete its mission by June 1998. The force will help prevent hostilities from resuming so that economic reconstruction and political reconciliation can accelerate -- and Bosnia's peace can become self-sustaining. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. They are doing a remarkable job for America -- America must do right by them.

**Fifth, we must move strongly against new threats to our security that have no respect for borders: weapons of mass destruction... terrorism... international crime and drug trafficking.** The American people are more secure -- and should be proud -- because we have dramatically reduced the threat of weapons of mass destruction. We reached a historic accord to end all nuclear testing for all time. We extended the treaty to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. With Russia, we have made deep cuts in our nuclear arsenals and agreed to stop targeting each other's citizens. We are working to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of landmines.

But the American people will have no cause for pride if we fail the test of leadership that lies ahead: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Convention will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism and isolate rogue states. That is why the Reagan Administration negotiated the Convention... the Bush Administration signed it... and XX nations have approved it. Together, let us make the Chemical Weapons Convention law -- and begin to banish poison gas from this earth.

**Finally, preparing America for the 21st century cannot be done on the cheap. But the price of neglect would be far greater.** We must maintain a strong and ready military -- and we will, by increasing funding for weapons modernization by 40 percent by the Year 2000. Our men and women in uniform have preserved our freedom in the past. They must have the equipment and training to prevail in the conflicts of the future.

We also must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy. Every dollar we devote to diplomacy and to the international financial institutions brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending totals just one percent of the federal budget -- versus sixteen percent when Harry Truman asked America to choose engagement over escapism. One percent of our budget for fifty percent of our destiny. We have to do better.

The United Nations can help us spread the risks and the costs of leadership -- saving children's lives, sheltering refugees, giving peace a chance to take hold. Its new Secretary General is committed to reform. As the UN cuts waste and streamlines staff, the United States should pay our debts and our dues.

At the key points of the second half of this century, Republicans and Democrats have disagreed on specific policies. But we have always agreed on the need for American leadership. That bipartisan support has been a key to our strength.

Before this month is out, I will ask the leadership of both houses and both parties to join with me to discuss America's foreign policy agenda. Together, we must make the most of this moment, for the actions we take will shape the decades to come -- and the lives of every American.

**Perhaps our most important leadership for the world grows out of the power of our example.**

People all over the world are splitting apart because of conflicts of race or religion or ethnicity. And this division is fueling the fanaticism of terror. As the world's most diverse democracy, America must show the world that it is possible to live and learn together across all our differences.

We do this, not only for the world, but for our children. The global economy is putting us in touch, for the first time, with billions of people around the world who are different from us. Our diversity in this new era is not a weakness -- it is our greatest strength.

But despite this, we see evidence all around us that our work is not yet done. We have seen it in the awful resurgence of church burnings. We see it every day in the sullen faces of hopelessness worn by too many of our youth. And too often, we see it in our corridors of business and halls of government. Too many people still spend their time trying to drive wedges between us -- black against white, haves against have nots, old immigrants against new immigrants.

But we also see signs of hope. Two men of faith are with us tonight who reflect the light of reconciliation that must shine in all our lives. Rev. Terrence Mackey is pastor of Mt. Zion AME Church in Greelyville, South Carolina. His church was one of those destroyed by arson last year. But Rev. Mackey refused to give in to bitterness. He and his neighbors -- people of different races and faiths -- joined together to rebuild that church. And I hope none of us forget the words he told his daughter when she asked how could anyone set fire to their precious church home. He told her, "They didn't burn down the church. They burned down the building in which we hold church. The church is inside all of us."

The second man I want to call your attention to is Rev. Robert Schuller. A few days before my second inauguration, Rev. Schuller suggested a verse of scripture, on which I placed my hand when I took the oath of office. "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." Rev. Mackey and Rev. Schuller show us what it means to come together across all the lines that might divide us. They remind us, we all must be repairers of the breach. They are sitting with my wife Hillary; I'd like them both to stand.

Over two centuries ago, at the very end of the Constitutional Convention, one of the drafters posed this question: "Can you imagine that this vast country, will 150 years [from now] remain one nation?" That is still the central question for America. Through all the changes we faced as a nation, we did stay together. And now we must imagine that we can do it again, that we can indeed form a more perfect union, despite all the forces of change swirling about us at this moment in our history.

My fellow Americans, this is hard work, but there is nothing more important we can do. Our unity is our greatest strength. It is the "foundation of many generations," the foundation of every other strength we must have for the 21st century.

We don't have a moment to waste. Tomorrow morning, there will be barely 1000 days until the Year 2000. My fellow Americans, we have a lot of work to do.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

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Draft 1/29/96 11pm

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
STATE-OF-THE-UNION ADDRESS  
UNITED STATES CAPITOL  
FEBRUARY 4, 1997**

*Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice-President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests:*

I come before you tonight to put forward a plan of action to prepare our people for the challenges of the next century.

We have much to be thankful for. Our economy is in its 69<sup>th</sup> month of strong growth; crime, welfare, and teen pregnancy are receding. We are helping to bring peace and prosperity unrivaled in history throughout the world. And we are living in a moment of tremendous opportunity, because of a new global economy and the Information Age.

It would be easy to be complacent, to rest at this moment. But we must not rest. America won the Cold War. In the last four years, we have won back the strength of our economy. We are winning back our optimism, our faith that we can master our most difficult social challenges when we face them together. But we must not win these struggles only to lose this moment of opportunity.

We face no enemy bent on destroying us. The enemy of our time is inaction. Worldwide commerce, new careers, life-enhancing technology, are ours to seize for all our people. But if we do not make the right choices, and make the right choices, these opportunities could slip from our grasp or even be turned to our disadvantage in this new, competitive world.

Our moment of opportunity is fleeting. A child born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Everything she is likely to know firsthand about the progress of America, she will know because of the work we do now to help build the new century. We must focus on our responsibilities to help her and all our children, make the most of their own lives.

My fellow Americans, the State of our Union is strong, but the opportunity before us is even stronger. So tonight, I issue a call to action to prepare America for the 21st Century. That call must be answered by a new government for a new century, one that gives all our people the means and the power to make the most of their own lives; by all individuals living up to a new sense of responsibility; and by our entire country, inspired by a new spirit of community.

This call to action summons us to work for stronger education, as we harness the forces of technology and science; to build stronger families and stronger communities; to keep America the world's indispensable force for peace, freedom, and prosperity. And above all, to build a stronger, more perfect union here at home.

**As we prepare for these challenges, we must move quickly to finish the unfinished business before us: balancing our budget, finishing welfare reform, restoring our democracy.**

Over the last four years, we cut the deficit so it is now the smallest in the industrialized world. In two days, I will propose a detailed plan to balance the budget by 2002, provide targeted tax relief, and strengthen our economy for a vigorous new world of competition.

My plan proves we can meet all our obligations: it lifts the burden of debt from our children and invests in the things that will help them make the most of their lives. It proves we can build on the Vice President's work to modernize and reinvent government so it works better, even as it costs less.

We should not wait years for a constitutional amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis; we should not wait a year for an agreement. Let this Congress finally balance the budget, and let it happen now -- not later, but now.

When we balance the budget, our job will not be done. In the near future, we must come together, in a bipartisan process, to preserve Social Security, and to reform Medicare to preserve its quality and choice, and to ensure these core programs are as strong tomorrow as they are today.

There is a second piece of unfinished business for us here: We must make the permanent underclass a thing of the past, and finish the job of welfare reform.

We must build on last year's landmark welfare reform legislation, taking seriously our responsibility to make sure all people who should work, have the opportunity to work.

Our goal is to lift one million people from welfare to work by the Year 2000. Here is my plan: Tax credits to businesses that hire people off welfare. Incentives for companies and job placement firms that create jobs for welfare recipients. Transportation to help people get to work.

Beyond what we do here, I challenge every state to turn welfare checks into a private sector paychecks. I challenge every church to hire someone off welfare. Since last autumn, a growing number of businesses have stepped up to my challenge to hire someone off welfare. And I am very pleased to announce tonight that [x] and [x] have agreed to lead a national mobilization of businesses to move people from welfare to work.

To everyone here, whether you supported this law or opposed it -- but especially those of us who supported it -- I say: We have a moral obligation to make sure people being required to work have the opportunity to work.

Finally, we must join together to do what Republican and Democratic governors have

asked, to restore help for legal immigrants who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law.

A third piece of unfinished business continues to stain our democracy. Tonight, before the eyes of America, we should commit to passing bipartisan campaign finance reform.

We have just come through an election in which more money was raised and spent on races for Congress and the Presidency than ever before. This system is badly broken. Every one involved in it -- every one of us here -- must take responsibility for this system, and for fixing it.

Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines to craft reform. It curbs spending, reduces the role of special interests, creates a level playing field between challengers and incumbents, and bans the large soft money contributions both parties receive.

You know and I know: delay will mean the death of reform. We must work together to enact campaign finance reform, and we should do it by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy, by July 4.

If we balance the budget, finish welfare reform, and enact campaign finance reform, we will have cleared the path to prepare America for the new century ahead.

**Then, the most important thing we can do -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to work together to meet these goals: Every 8 year old will be able to read, every 12 year old will be able to log on to the Internet, every 18 year old will be able to go to college -- and American children must have the best schools in the world.**

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to stronger education -- \$42 billion next year. We are going to do our part here in Washington. But when it comes to education, that is nowhere near enough.

I have a plan we all must work on, a Plan for America's Schools, based on four principles, to which we must commit ourselves tonight. [hold up booklet]

First, we must set the highest national standards for education, and help our children reach them. Fourth graders must be able to read, and read well. Eighth graders must be able to do algebra. Twelfth graders must master a rigorous high school curriculum.

Over the next two years, we will develop a national fourth grade reading test and a national 8th grade math test, based on widely accepted, world-class standards. Tonight, I issue a national challenge: By 1999, every state should require these national tests of basic skills. And to help make sure a high school diploma means something, we should provide the Third International Math and Science Survey -- the TIMSS test -- to every school district that wants it. We should give more of our high school students the chance to test themselves against students

around the world.

Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. But the point is, this is how we will lift them up. These tests will help show us who needs extra help, and which schools need improvement. And these tests will help us end social promotion in America, so children move from grade to grade only when they are ready.

To help all our children read, I want a citizen army of one million volunteers to tutor those who need extra help. My balanced budget invests \$2.75 billion for this. Tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have pledged tens of thousands of work study students to work one year as reading tutors.

These tests are far more than just tests of our children. This entire endeavor is a test of our nation, of our ability to step up to the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age. We must make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

We know our kids can learn. They can do this. But we have to make it possible for them to succeed. This is a challenge to every governor, every teacher, every educator, and every parent in America. We know we can make this work, because we see examples of what works all across this country. Tonight, I am very pleased to have with us two students who scored among the best in the country on the TIMSS test, and their teacher. [Intro TIMSS]

[Teacher] reminds us why the second part of my plan is so important. My budget will help more than 100,000 teachers get national certification as master teachers. We must reward good teachers, and find ways to quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up. Now we have to do more to challenge the best of our young people to look at teaching as a career.

The second part of my plan calls on every state to let parents choose the right public school for their children. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. We must do more to encourage teachers and parents to start public charter schools that set and meet the highest standards. My balanced budget doubles the funding set aside to help start charter schools, so by the Year 2000, there will be 3,000.

We cannot raise our children up in schools that are literally falling down. My budget includes \$5 billion to spur \$20 billion in school construction and modernization over the next four years.

Finally, we must press forward to make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We cannot raise standards on every other subject if we fail to teach our children how to be good citizens. We should continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, and get disruptive kids out of the classroom.

We must do our part, but success is not in our hands alone. It is in the hands of every

American. Tonight, I pledge to take this plan to the country, to enlist America's support in this crusade for tomorrow's children. [*mention of Governors who might be present*]

To prepare our people for the 21st Century, we must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- as universal in America as high school is today.

My balanced budget does more than ever before to bring college scholarships to deserving students, with the largest Pell Grant increase in 20 years.

And we should cut taxes to open the doors of college. My balanced budget includes America's HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college; a \$10,000 deduction for all education after high school; a tax-free IRA so families can save for college.

No working family need ever pay a nickel of taxes on money they save for college -- and I ask you to pass this so every American who works hard can go to college.

All our people must have the chance to learn new skills throughout their lives. The G.I. Bill for Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a single, simple skill grant that will go directly to workers. For too long, this bill has sat before you without action. Our worker training system does not work. It is time to fix it.

Learning must continue through life, but it begins in the cradle. We should help parents teach their children in their earliest years. My balanced budget expands Head Start by one million children by 2002. I am pleased to announce we will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain and the Vice President's Family Conference this spring, to apply the newest scientific insights toward understand how young children learn.

**To prepare America for the 21st century, we must bring the force of our science and technology for our young and all Americans.**

This is the first State of the Union to be carried live over the Internet. But we have only scratched the surface of the computer revolution.

Last year, I challenged our nation to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the Year 2000, bringing for the first time the same universe of knowledge to an isolated rural schoolhouse, an inner city high school, or a magnet school in a wealthy suburb. My plan increases our Technology Literacy Fund by \$225 million. Last year, Vice-President Gore and I joined 20,000 volunteers to connect thousands of schools in California at the first Net Day. This year, I challenge every state to have a Net Day. And I challenge every computer company, communications company, and computer lover in America to join up.

We must build the second generation Internet. My balanced budget includes [\$100 million] to connect 100 universities and national labs with an Internet up to 1,000 times faster

than today's -- powerful enough to connect patients in rural hospitals to America's best doctors and cutting edge medical equipment. We must work with the private sector to connect every children's hospital to the Internet as well, so a child in bed can stay in school. We should open the rich world of America's heritage and culture to even more of our people. Tonight, I am pleased to announce that we will be working with the private sector to put 10 million objects in the Smithsonian collection online.

In the last few years, medical breakthroughs have brought new hope to people suffering from spina bifida, AIDS, and cancer. My balanced budget includes a [tk]% increase in funding for our medical laboratories.

As we do all these things to harness the forces of science in our lives, we will press forward to explore the heavens. Through the Mars probes, the international space station, the project to explore the origins of life, we are inspiring our children to join the quest for new knowledge in the 21st Century, even as we discover practical applications that make life better here on Earth.

**To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families.**

In the new century, with new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we must help parents raise strong families and pass on their values to their children.

First and foremost, raising our children is the sacred responsibility of their parents. No parent can be allowed to walk away from that responsibility. We should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her obligation to pay child support. And to America's fathers, let me say: child support is no substitute for the love and discipline your children need from you. You must be there for them.

For four years, the Family and Medical Leave Law has helped millions of our people. Now we should expand Family Leave so parents can take time off for parent teacher conferences or a child's routine checkup. We should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for overtime not only in income, but also with time off to be with their families.

For our families to be strong, we must continue, step-by-step, to give them access to affordable, quality health care. My balanced budget will extend health coverage to five million children -- cutting in half the number of uninsured children in America. It will help all people between jobs pay their premiums for up to six months. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

And we must never abandon our efforts to find ways to cover the 40 million Americans who still lack health insurance.

[Last year, we ended "drive-through deliveries," requiring that new mothers and their babies get at least 48 hours of hospital care. This year, we must enact the bipartisan legislation

before you to end the dangerous and demeaning practice of drive-through mastectomies.]

We must continue our efforts to protect the health of our children -- and that means fighting to enforce our new rules to stop tobacco advertising aimed at children.

**Beyond stronger education, beyond stronger families, to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger communities.**

We must protect our environment and preserve our natural heritage for the 21st century. My balanced budget provides the resources to clean up over 500 toxic waste sites -- 2/3 of all those in America -- by the Year 2000. Our children should grow up next to parks, not poison.

Over the past four years, we saved Yellowstone from mining, established the largest national park south of Alaska in California's Mojave Desert; protected Utah's magnificent Grand Escalante Staircase; and we are working to save the Florida Everglades. Tonight, I am announcing a new category of protected national treasures -- the American Heritage Rivers, which I will begin to name later this year.

As we clean up our communities, we must make sure taxpayers never again pay to clean up polluters' mess. I urge you to pass my proposal to make polluters live by this simple rule: if you pollute our environment, you clean it up.

Some of the worst pollution is in the heart of our cities. Our approach to renewing those neighborhoods, and poor communities across America, is to bring the full force of the private economy to bear -- to create jobs, spur investment by businesses and loans by banks, and restore hope. I urge you to pass the brownfields initiative, restoring contaminated properties to productive use, and to pass a new round of Empowerment Zones to spread economic growth to our poorest inner cities and rural communities.

And we must pledge tonight that all of us in this room will work together to use these approaches -- including private sector tax incentives -- to meet the challenges of this great capital city, so it is once again the proud face America shows the world.

In the fight for strong communities, nothing is more important than the fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row -- the longest decline in decades. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 police officers on the street. We should pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution. We should set a goal to deport a record 100,000 criminals and other illegal aliens this year.

And we must mount a full scale assault on juvenile crime. I will submit comprehensive legislation that declares war on criminal gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; gives judges more power to crack down on gang members who intimidate witnesses; extends the Brady Bill so a minor who commits a violent crime will never be given the right to own a handgun; requires trigger safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and provides resources to keep schools

open late, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

Helping young people through service is exactly why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros joined Vice President Gore and me at the White House to announce the Presidents's Summit of Service, to be held in Philadelphia in April. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 50,000 young people to work their way through college. Citizen service belongs to no party or ideology. It is an American idea which every American should embrace in their daily lives. And I hope that will include many more of our young people.

Our young people should never forget that their first responsibility is to themselves.

My balanced budget includes the largest anti-drug effort ever: to stop drugs at their source, punish those who push them, and steer young people away.

But the war on drugs will be won or lost by our young people themselves. Let me say a word directly to you, our children: As we work to build a strong future for you, you have to think about what kind of future you want to have for yourself. Nothing your parents do, nothing anyone can do, will keep drugs out of your hands if you set out to find them. Drugs are deadly. They will ruin your life. Don't let them. It's up to you.

**And to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of global change and keep American leadership strong in this new time.**

Almost exactly fifty years ago -- on March 17, 1947 -- President Harry Truman stood before Congress and called for a national commitment to make America the free world's indispensable nation. Soon thereafter, we launched the Marshall Plan to rebuild our allies and former adversaries. We created the institutions and provided the resources that brought the West security and prosperity -- and victory in the Cold War. Because of those commitments, more people than ever before share the ideals that define America and the interests we defend.

Now, we face another time of change and moment of choice. We dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided the world for our parents. But we still must create the new institutions and understandings that will make the world work for our children. We must commit ourselves anew to taking the steps that will keep America the indispensable nation for the entire world.

Our first task must be to build, for the very first time, an undivided, peaceful and democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, America is more secure. When Europe prospers, so does America.

Nearly half a century ago, NATO strengthened struggling democracies and paved the way

for prosperity in Europe's west. Now, we can do the same for Europe's east by opening NATO's doors to new democracies and building a strong NATO-Russia partnership. This summer, I will go to Madrid for a special NATO summit. Together, we should commit our country to an expanded NATO by 1999, in which countries that were once our enemies become our allies to keep Europe united and at peace.

Second, in a global economy with global security challenges, America must look to the East no less than the West -- and build a true community of nations in the Asia Pacific. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia in living memory. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend on trade with Asia.

As we tear down trade barriers and build up our alliances, that Pacific community is taking shape. But we must not let our progress mask the promise -- or the peril -- that remains. We must dismantle North Korea's frozen nuclear program, as North Korea has agreed. I call on you to fund America's contribution to this effort. And we must advance peace talks between South Korea and North Korea to bridge the final divide of the Cold War.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China. An isolated, inward looking China is not in our interest. Instead, we must work together on common problems like weapons proliferation and deal with fundamental differences like human rights. As contacts grow . . . as markets expand and information flows . . . as China plays its rightful role in the world... a more open society can gain strength. I look forward to exchanging state visits with President Jiang -- not because we agree on everything, but because a constructive U.S.-China relationship matters to the world.

Third, the American people will only know true security if they have the opportunity to prosper in the global economy. These past four years, we made it our mission to open markets abroad and create good jobs at home. More than two hundred trade agreements later, America is once again the world's number one exporter and most competitive nation.

Now, we must build on that momentum throughout Asia and Latin America -- and to place the United States at the hub of the two most dynamic regions on earth. I am pleased to announce tonight that I will travel to Mexico in April, then to [tk] in May, to advance that goal. And I will work with Congress to make -- and enforce -- trade agreements that are good for America.

Fourth, we must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Africa. Considered risks for peace lessen the likelihood of more costly conflicts. It encourages other nations to focus on their people, not their arsenals. It helps build a community willing to tackle shared problems together.

In Bosnia, with American leadership, the killing has stopped -- but the habits of peace are slow to take hold. That is why I agreed for our troops to take part in a smaller follow-on force that should complete its mission by June 1998. The force will help prevent hostilities from resuming so economic reconstruction and political reconciliation can accelerate -- and Bosnia's

peace can become self-sustaining. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. They are doing a remarkable job for America -- America must do right by them.

Fifth, we must move strongly against new threats to our security that have no respect for borders: weapons of mass destruction... terrorism... international crime and drug trafficking. The American people are more secure -- and should be proud -- because we have dramatically reduced the threat of weapons of mass destruction. We reached an historic accord to end nuclear testing for all time. We extended the treaty to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. With Russia, we made deep cuts in our nuclear arsenals and agreed to stop targeting each other's citizens. We are working to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of landmines.

But the American people will have no cause for pride if we fail the test of leadership that lies ahead: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Convention will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism and isolate rogue states. That is why the Reagan Administration negotiated the Convention... the Bush Administration signed it... and XX nations have approved it. Together, let us make the Chemical Weapons Convention law -- and begin to banish poison gas from this earth.

Preparing America for the 21st century cannot be done on the cheap; the price of neglect would be far greater. We must maintain a strong and ready military -- and we will, by increasing weapons modernization funding 40 percent by the Year 2000. Our men and women in uniform have preserved our freedom in the past. They must have the equipment and training to preserve it in the future.

We must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy. Every dollar we devote to diplomacy and to the international financial institutions brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending totals just one percent of the federal budget -- versus sixteen percent when Harry Truman asked America to choose engagement over escapism. We have to do better.

The United Nations can help us spread the risks and the costs of leadership -- saving children's lives, sheltering refugees, giving peace a chance to take hold. Its new Secretary General is committed to reform. As the UN cuts waste and streamlines staff, the United States should pay our debts and our dues.

At the key points of the second half of this century, Republicans and Democrats have disagreed on specific policies. But we have always agreed on the need for American leadership. That bipartisan support has been a key to our strength.

Before this month is out, I will ask the leadership of both houses and both parties to join me to discuss America's foreign policy agenda. The actions we take, much like the actions we took 50 years ago, will shape the lives of every American for decades to come.

**Perhaps our most important leadership of the world grows out of the power of our example -- and our ability to be strong in our diversity.**

People all over the world are splitting apart because of conflicts of race or religion or ethnicity. And this division is fueling the fanaticism of terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy. And the world looks to us to show it is possible to live and learn together across all differences.

We do this, not only for the world, but for our children. The global economy requires us to cooperate with, for the first time, on billions of people around the world who are different from us. Our diversity in this new era is not a weakness -- it is our greatest strength.

Despite this, we see evidence all around us that our work is not yet done. We have seen it in the awful resurgence of church burnings. We see it every day in the sullen, hopeless faces worn by too many of our youth. And too often, we see it in our corridors of business and halls of government. Too many people still spend their time trying to drive wedges between us -- black against white, haves against have nots, old immigrants against new.

But we also see signs of hope. Two men of faith are with us tonight who reflect the light of reconciliation that must shine in all our lives. Rev. Terrence Mackey is pastor of Mt. Zion AME Church in Greelyville, South Carolina. When his church was one of those destroyed by arson last year, Rev. Mackey refused to give in to bitterness. He and his neighbors -- people of different races and faiths -- joined together to rebuild that church. And I hope no one forgets the words he told his daughter when she asked him how anyone could set fire to their church. He told her, "They didn't burn down the church. They burned down the building in which we hold church. The church is inside all of us."

The second man is one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller. A few days before my second inauguration, Rev. Schuller suggested that I look at Isaiah 58:12, and it was on that verse that I placed my hand when I took the oath of office. It says: "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." Rev. Mackey and Rev. Schuller teach us that no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, in our backgrounds, in our politics -- we all must be repairers of the breach. We may not all share a common past, but surely we share a common future. Those two men are sitting with my wife Hillary; I'd like them both to stand.

Over two centuries ago, at the very end of the Constitutional Convention, one of the drafters posed this question: "Can you imagine that this vast country, [spreading across the continent], will 150 years [from now] remain one nation?" That is still the central question for America. Through all the changes we faced as a nation, we did stay together. And now we must imagine that we can do it again, that we can indeed form a more perfect union, despite all the forces of change swirling about us at this remarkable moment.

This is hard work. But there is nothing more important we can do. Our unity is our

greatest strength. It is the "foundation of many generations," the foundation of every other strength we must build for the 21st century.

We don't have a moment to waste. Tomorrow morning, there will be barely 1,000 days until the Year 2000. 1,000 days to prepare our people. 1,000 days to work together. 1,000 days to fulfil our promise. My fellow Americans, we have work to do.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

Draft 1/30/97 11:30am

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
STATE-OF-THE-UNION ADDRESS  
UNITED STATES CAPITOL  
FEBRUARY 4, 1997

*Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice-President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests:*

I come before you tonight to put forward a plan of action to prepare our people for the challenges of the next century.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of solid growth, we have won back the strength of our economy. With crime, welfare rolls, teen pregnancy all falling, we are winning back our optimism, our faith that we can master our most difficult social challenges. America won the Cold War, and now we are helping to bring peace and prosperity unrivaled in history throughout the world.

It would be easy to be complacent, to rest at this moment. But we must not rest. We must not win these struggles only to lose this moment of opportunity.

Though we face no enemy bent on destroying us, the enemy of our time is inaction. The global economy, the Information Age, new careers, life-enhancing technology are ours to seize for our people. But if we do not take action, these opportunities could slip from our grasp or even be turned to our disadvantage in this vigorous new world of competition.

Our moment of opportunity is fleeting. A child born tonight will have almost no memory

of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Everything she is likely to know firsthand about the progress of America, she will know because of the work we do now to help build the new century. We must focus on our responsibilities to help her and all our children build for the future.

My fellow Americans, the State of our Union is strong, but the opportunity before us is even stronger. So tonight, I issue a call to action -- action by this Congress, action by our states, action by all our people to prepare America for the 21st Century. To answer this call, we must have a new government for a new century, one that gives all our people the means and the power to make the most of their own lives; we must have a new sense of responsibility among all individuals, and we must have a new spirit of community across our nation.

This call to action summons us to work for stronger education and harness the forces of technology and science; to build stronger families and stronger communities; to keep America the world's strongest force for peace, freedom and prosperity. And above all, to build a stronger, more perfect union here at home.

**As we prepare for these challenges, we must move quickly to finish the unfinished business before us: balancing our budget, finishing welfare reform, restoring our democracy.**

Over the last four years, we have made our economy grow, by investing in our people, expanding exports and cutting our deficit so it is now the smallest in the industrialized world.

*appet  
have  
grown*

Now we must continue to keep our economy growing and interest rates low. We must finish the

job of balancing the budget.

In two days, I will propose a detailed plan to balance the budget by 2002.

My plan provides targeted tax relief to pay for education -- to raise a child -- and to buy and sell a new home. The middle class deserves tax relief, and we must give it to them.

My plan proves ~~we can meet all~~ our obligations: lifting the burden of debt from our children and investing in education, training and other things to help them make the most of their lives. It proves we can build on the Vice President's work to modernize and reinvent government so it works better, even as it costs less.

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We ~~should not wait years~~ for a constitutional amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis; *Let's just do it. Do it now. Do it together.* we ~~should not wait another year for an agreement.~~ Let this Congress finally *negotiate* balance the budget, and let it happen now -- not later, but now.

*neg detail somewhere in speech*  
When we balance the budget, our job will not be done. ~~In the near future~~, we must come together, in a bipartisan process, to preserve Social Security, and to reform Medicare to ~~preserve~~ *will be* its quality and choice. ~~We must make sure~~ these core programs ~~are~~ as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

There is a second piece of unfinished business for us here: We must make the permanent



A third piece of unfinished business continues to strain our democracy. Tonight, before the eyes of America, we should commit to passing bipartisan campaign finance reform.

We have just come through an election in which more money was raised and spent on races for Congress and the Presidency than ever before. This system is badly broken. Every one involved in it -- every one of us here -- must take responsibility for this system, and for fixing it.

Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines to craft reform. It would curb spending, reduce the role of special interests, create a level playing field between challengers and incumbents and ban the large soft money contributions both parties receive. [And it does something we should have done a long time ago: It bans contributions from people who are not citizens.]

You know and I know: delay will mean the death of reform. We must work together to enact campaign finance reform, and we should do it by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy, by July 4.

If we balance the budget, finish welfare reform, and enact campaign finance reform, we will have cleared the path to prepare America for the new century ahead.

Then, the most important thing we can do -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to work together to meet these goals: Every 8 year

old will be able to read, every 12 year old will be able to log on to the Internet, every 18 year old will be able to go to college -- and American children must have the best education in the world.

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to stronger education -- \$42 billion next year. We are going to do our part here in Washington. But when it comes to education, that is nowhere near enough.

I have a plan we all must work on, a Plan for America's Schools, based on four principles, to which we must commit ourselves tonight. [hold up booklet]

First, we must set the highest national standards for education, and help our children reach them. Fourth graders must be able to read, and read well. Eighth graders must be able to do algebra. Twelfth graders must master a rigorous high school curriculum.

*must embrace national standards. The us we must*  
Over the next two years, we will develop a national fourth grade reading test and a national 8th grade math test, ~~based on widely accepted, world-class standards.~~ *get our student to see if these standards really met* Tonight, I issue a national challenge: By 1999, every state should require these national tests of basic skills. And to help make sure a high school diploma means something, we should provide the Third International Math and Science Survey -- the TIMSS test -- to every school district that ~~wants it.~~ *will accept it.* Children all over the world have taken this test. We should give more of our high school students *it is a reflection of the world class standards our children* the chance to test themselves against students around the world.

*The point is not to put them down but to determine how to lift them up*

*must meet to prosper in this new era.*

Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. But the point is, this is how we will lift them up. These tests will help show us who needs extra help, and which schools need improvement. And ~~these tests~~ <sup>which change in</sup> <sup>of teachers</sup> <sup>need to</sup> <sup>occur</sup> will help us end social promotion in America, so children move from grade to grade only when they are ready.

To help all our children read, I want a citizen army of one million volunteers to tutor those who need extra help. <sup>We're going to use 35,000 AmeriCorps</sup> My balanced budget invests \$2.75 billion for this. Tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have pledged tens of thousands of work study students to work one year as reading tutors. <sup>800</sup> <sup>Callign</sup> <sup>School</sup> <sup>Volunteer</sup>

These tests are far more than just tests of our children. This entire endeavor is a test of our nation, of our ability to step up to the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age. We must make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

<sup>Challenging - every American teacher's limitation - science project</sup>  
<sup>super - teacher -</sup> <sup>if your child is 8 or younger and is having trouble reading</sup>  
<sup>40%</sup>

We know our kids can learn. They can do this. But we have to make it possible for them to succeed. <sup>a lot of our children's 1st lang is not English but we have to help them</sup> This is a challenge to every governor, every teacher, every educator, every parent, every business person in America. We know we can make this work, because we see examples of what works all across this country. Tonight, I am very pleased to have with us two students who scored among the best in the <sup>world</sup> ~~country~~ on the TIMSS test, and their teacher. [Intro TIMSS]

<sup>NP & Teachers Conf. highest early learning</sup>

[Teacher] reminds us why the second part of my plan is so important. My budget will

help more than 100,000 teachers get national certification as master teachers. We must reward <sup>for years educators have worked hard to obtain national</sup> <sup>first teachers were certified in 1996</sup> <sup>in for best teachers</sup> <sup>professional excellence</sup> <sup>any budget will</sup> <sup>we not to get 100,000 more</sup> <sup>but what you know - but how you teach</sup>

good teachers, and find ways to quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up. Now we have to do more to challenge the best of our young people to look at teaching as a career.

The second part of my plan calls on every state to let parents choose the right public school for their children. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. We must do more to encourage teachers and parents to start public charter schools that set and meet the highest standards. My balanced budget doubles the funding set aside to help start charter schools, so by the Year 2000, there will be 3,000.

We cannot raise our children up in schools that are literally falling down. My budget includes \$5 billion to spur \$20 billion in school construction and modernization over the next four years.

Finally, we must press forward to make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We cannot raise standards on every other subject if we fail to teach our children how to be good citizens. We should continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, and get disruptive kids out of the classroom.

We must do our part, but the responsibility for success belongs to every American. Tonight, I pledge to take this plan to the country, to enlist America's support in this crusade for

tomorrow's children. *[mention of Governors who might be present; legislature speeches?]*

To prepare our people for the 21st Century, we must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- as universal in America as high school is today.

My balanced budget does more than ever before to give college scholarships to deserving students, with the largest Pell Grant increase in 20 years.

*We propose to do that with*

And, to open the doors to college, we should cut taxes. My balanced budget includes

America's HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the *two year* typical community college; a \$10,000 deduction *for the addition of a year* *in education* after high school; a tax-free

*apply the* IRA so families can save for college. *and the largest increase in Pell*

*with this package*

No working family need ever pay a nickel of taxes on money they save for college -- and

I ask you to pass this so every American who works hard can go to college.

All our people must have the chance to learn new skills throughout their lives. The G.I. *print pictures*

Bill for Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a single, *really a. A worker is in driving distance to a career college -* simple skill grant that will go directly to workers. For too long, this bill has sat before you *idle - under employed or unemployed -* without action. Our worker training system does not work. It is time to fix it.

We should help parents teach their children in their earliest years. My balanced budget

*move to America Reads*

expands Head Start by one million children by 2002. I am pleased to announce we will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain and the Vice President's Family Conference this spring, to apply the newest scientific insights toward understanding how young children learn. It is never too early to learn, and we can never do too much to help them.

**To prepare America for the 21st century, we must harness these powerful forces of knowledge, science and technology to the service of all Americans.**

This is the first State of the Union to be carried live over the Internet. But we have only scratched the surface of the computer revolution.

Last year, I challenged our nation to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the Year 2000, bringing for the first time the same universe of knowledge to an isolated rural schoolhouse, an inner city high school, or a magnet school in a well-off suburb. My plan

increases our Technology Literacy Fund by \$225 million. Last year, Vice President Gore and I

*we began this effort last year*  
*showered classrooms have been work in Net Days - but we have a long way to go*  
~~joined 20,000 volunteers to connect thousands of schools in California at the first of [tk] Net~~

~~Days across America. This year, I challenge every state to have a Net Day. And I challenge~~  
every computer company, communications company, and computer lover in America to join up.

We must build the second generation Internet. My balanced budget includes [\$100 million] to connect 100 universities and national labs with an Internet up to 1,000 times faster than today's -- powerful enough to connect patients in rural hospitals to America's best doctors

and cutting edge medical equipment. We must work with the private sector to connect every children's hospital to the Internet as well, so a child in bed can stay in school. We should open the rich world of America's heritage and culture to even more of our people. Tonight, I am pleased to announce that we will be working with the private sector to put 10 million objects in the Smithsonian collection online.

In the last few years, medical breakthroughs have brought new hope to people suffering from spina bifida, AIDS, and cancer. My balanced budget includes a [tk]% increase in funding for our medical laboratories. [*Expected breakthroughs by 2000 to come from NIH*]

As we do all these things to harness the forces of science in our lives, we will press forward to explore the heavens. Through the Mars probes, the international space station, the project to explore the origins of life, we are inspiring our children to join the quest for new knowledge in the 21st Century, even as we discover practical applications that make life better here on Earth.

**To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families.**

In the new century, with new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we must help parents raise strong families and pass on their values to their children.

Every parent must uphold their most sacred responsibility. We should make it a felony

for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her obligation to pay child support. And to America's fathers, let me say: child support is no substitute for the love and discipline your children need from you. You must be there for them.

For four years, the Family and Medical Leave Law has helped millions of our people. Now we should expand Family Leave so parents can take time off for parent teacher conferences or a child's routine checkup. We should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for overtime not only in income, but also with time off to be with their families.

For our families to be strong, we must continue, step-by-step, to give them access to affordable, quality health care. My balanced budget will extend health coverage to five million children -- cutting in half the number of uninsured children in America. It will help all people between jobs pay their premiums for up to six months. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

*step by step let's not lose sight of the ultimate goal  
not to lose sight of the ultimate goal*

And we must never abandon our efforts to find ways to cover the 40 million Americans who still lack health insurance. *Do we believe accep- people working everyday*

*Everyone in room - taxpayers gave us good H/C - 40 million - working  
we know it's hard. I don't think that's right, you don't let them*

[Last year, we ended "drive-through deliveries," requiring that new mothers and their babies get at least 48 hours of hospital care. This year, we must enact the bipartisan legislation *Amplifiers* before you to end the dangerous and demeaning practice of drive-through mastectomies.]

We must continue our efforts to protect the health of our children -- and that means fighting to enforce our new rules to stop tobacco advertising aimed at children.

**Beyond stronger education, beyond stronger families, to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger communities.**

We must protect our environment and preserve our natural heritage for the 21st century. My balanced budget provides the resources to clean up over 500 toxic waste sites -- 2/3 of all those in America -- by the Year 2000. Our children should grow up next to parks, not poison.

Over the past four years, we saved Yellowstone from mining, established the largest national park south of Alaska in California's Mojave Desert; protected Utah's magnificent Grand Escalante Staircase; and we are working to save the Florida Everglades. Tonight, I am announcing a new category of protected national treasures -- the American Heritage Rivers. We protect our forests. We protect our deserts. We must also protect our cherished rivers -- and we will do it, starting now.

*in last 4 years  
Joseph  
Catal  
Candace  
recovered  
with  
sandy  
fast & steady  
lean up*

As we restore our communities, we must make sure taxpayers never again pay to clean up polluters' mess. I urge you to pass my proposal to make polluters live by this simple rule: if you pollute our environment, you clean it up.

Some of the worst pollution is in the heart of our cities. Our approach to renewing those Green through eco produce 4 - still places - because of success of E.P. Zones - in places like Detroit

neighborhoods, and poor communities across America, is to bring the full force of the private economy to bear -- to create jobs, spur investment by businesses and loans by banks, and restore hope. I urge you to pass the brownfields initiative, restoring contaminated properties to productive use, and to pass a new round of Empowerment Zones to spread economic growth to our poorest inner cities and rural communities.

And we, together, must pledge tonight that we will use these approaches -- including private sector tax incentives -- to renew this great capital city, so it is once again the proud face America shows the world.

In the fight for strong communities, nothing is more important than the fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row -- the longest decline in decades. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 police officers on the street. We should pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution. We should set a goal to deport a record 100,000 criminals and other illegal aliens this year.

And, for the next four years, our goal must be to mount a full scale assault on juvenile crime. I will submit comprehensive legislation that declares war on criminal gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; gives judges more power to crack down on gang members who intimidate witnesses; extends the Brady Bill so a minor who commits a violent crime will never be given the right to own a handgun; requires trigger safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and provides resources to keep schools open late, on weekends, and in the summer, so

young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

Helping young people through service is exactly why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros joined Vice President Gore and me at the White House to announce the Presidents's Summit of Service, to be held in Philadelphia in April. Out of that summit, we want to mobilize millions of Americans to serve our young people in thousands of ways. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 50,000 young people to work their way through college as they serve America. Citizen service belongs to no party or ideology. It is an American responsibility which all Americans should embrace in their daily lives. And I hope many more of our young people will take up that responsibility as well.

Our young people should never forget that their first responsibility is to take care of themselves.

My balanced budget includes the largest anti-drug effort ever: to stop drugs at their source, punish those who push them, and steer young people away.

Let me say a word directly to you, our children: As we work to build a strong future for you, you have to think about what kind of future you want to have for yourself. Nothing your parents do, nothing anyone can do, will keep drugs out of your hands if you set out to find them. Drugs are deadly. They will ruin your life. Don't let them. It's up to you.

And to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of global change and keep American leadership strong in this new time.

Almost exactly fifty years ago -- on March 17, 1947 -- President Harry Truman stood before Congress and called for a national commitment to make America the free world's indispensable nation. We launched the Marshall Plan to rebuild our allies and former adversaries. *after world WAR II* We created the institutions and provided the resources that brought the West security and prosperity -- and victory in the Cold War. Because of those commitments, more people than ever before share the ideals that define America and the interests we defend.

*In past 4 years*  
Now, we face ~~another time of change and moment of choice~~. We dismantled many of the ~~blobs and barriers that divided the world for our parents~~. *new* But we ~~still~~ must finish creating the new institutions and understandings that will make the world work for our children. We must commit ourselves anew to taking the steps that will keep America the indispensable nation for the entire world.

Our first task must be to build, for the very first time, an undivided, peaceful and democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, America is more secure. When Europe prospers, so does America.

Nearly half a century ago, NATO strengthened struggling democracies and paved the way

for prosperity in Europe's west. Now, we can do the same for Europe's east by opening NATO's doors to new democracies and building a strong NATO-Russia partnership. This summer, I will go to Madrid for a special NATO summit. Together, we, here, should commit our country to an expanded NATO by 1999, in which countries that were once our enemies become our allies to keep Europe united and at peace.

Second, in a global economy with global security challenges, America must look to the East no less than the West -- and build a true community of nations in the Asia Pacific. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia in living memory. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend on trade with Asia.

As we tear down trade barriers and build up our alliances, that Pacific community is taking shape. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. We must dismantle North Korea's frozen nuclear program, as North Korea has agreed. I call on you to fund America's contribution to this effort. And we must advance peace talks between South Korea and North Korea to bridge the final divide of the Cold War.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China. An isolated, inward looking China is not in our interest. Instead, we must work together on common problems like weapons proliferation and deal with fundamental differences like human rights. As contacts grow . . . as markets expand and information flows . . . as China plays its rightful role in the world... a more open society can gain strength. I look forward to exchanging state visits with President Jiang -- not

because we agree on everything, but because a constructive U.S.-China relationship matters to the world.

Third, the American people will only know true security if they have the opportunity to prosper in the global economy. These past four years, we made it our mission to open markets abroad and create good jobs at home. More than two hundred trade agreements later, America is once again the world's number one exporter and most competitive nation.

Now, we must build on that momentum throughout Asia and Latin America -- and to place the United States at the hub of the two most dynamic regions on earth. I am pleased to announce tonight that I will travel to Mexico in April, then to [tk] in May, to advance that goal. And I will work with Congress to make -- and enforce -- trade agreements that are good for America.

Fourth, we must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Africa. Considered risks for peace lessen the likelihood of more costly conflicts. It encourages other nations to focus on their people, not their arsenals. It helps build a community willing to tackle shared problems together.

In Bosnia, with American leadership, the killing has stopped -- but the habits of peace are slow to take hold. That is why I agreed for our troops to take part in a smaller follow-on force that should complete its mission by June 1998. The force will help prevent hostilities from

resuming so economic reconstruction and political reconciliation can accelerate -- and Bosnia's peace can become self-sustaining. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. They are doing a remarkable job for America -- America must do right by them.

Fifth, we must move strongly against new threats to our security that respect no borders: weapons of mass destruction... terrorism... international crime and drug trafficking. The American people are more secure -- and should be proud -- because we have dramatically reduced the threat of weapons of mass destruction. We reached an historic accord to end nuclear testing for all time. We extended the treaty to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. With Russia, we made deep cuts in our nuclear arsenals and agreed to stop targeting each other's citizens. We are working to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of landmines.

But the American people will have no cause for pride if we fail the test of leadership that lies ahead: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Convention will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism and isolate rogue states. That is why the Reagan Administration negotiated the Convention... the Bush Administration signed it... and XX nations have approved it. Together, let us make the Chemical Weapons Convention law -- and begin to banish poison gas from this earth.

*I know this will cost a lot of money*

Preparing America for the 21st century cannot be done on the cheap; the price of neglect would be far greater. We must maintain a strong and ready military -- and we will, by

increasing weapons modernization funding 40 percent by the Year 2000. Our men and women in uniform have preserved our freedom in the past. They must have the equipment and training to preserve it in the future.

We must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy. Every dollar we devote to diplomacy and to the international financial institutions brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending totals just one percent of the federal budget -- versus sixteen percent when Harry Truman asked America to choose engagement over escapism. We have to do better.

The United Nations can help us spread the risks and the costs of leadership -- saving children's lives, sheltering refugees, giving peace a chance to take hold. Its new Secretary General is committed to reform. As the UN cuts waste and streamlines staff, the United States should pay our debts and our dues.

At the key points of the second half of this century, Republicans and Democrats have disagreed on specific policies. But we have always agreed on the need for American leadership. That bipartisan support has fortified our strength.

Before this month is out, I will ask the leadership of both houses and both parties to meet with me to work on America's foreign policy agenda. The actions we take, much like the actions we took 50 years ago, will shape the lives of every American for decades to come.



Finally, perhaps our most important leadership of the world grows out of the power of our example -- and our ability to remain strong as One America.

People all over the world are splitting apart because of conflicts of race or religion or ethnicity. And this division is fueling the fanaticism of terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy. And the world looks to us to show it is possible to live and learn together across all differences.

We do this, not only for the world, but for our children. The global economy requires us to cooperate with, for the first time, on billions of people around the world who are different from us. Our diversity in this new era is not a weakness -- it is our greatest strength.

Despite this, we see evidence all around us that our work is not yet done. We have seen it

in the awful resurgence of church burnings. We see it every day in the sullen, hopeless faces

worn by too many of our youth. And too often, we see it in our corridors of business and halls

of government. Too many people still spend their time trying to drive wedges between us --

black against white, haves against have nots, old immigrants against new.

But we also see signs of hope. Two men of faith are with us tonight who reflect the light

of reconciliation that must shine in all our lives. Rev. Terrence Mackey is pastor of Mt. Zion

AME Church in Greelyville, South Carolina. When his church was one of those destroyed by

arson last year, Rev. Mackey refused to give in to bitterness. He and his neighbors -- people of

different races and faiths -- joined together to rebuild that church. And I hope no one forgets the words he told his daughter when she asked him how anyone could set fire to their church. He told her, "They didn't burn down the church. They burned down the building in which we hold church. The church is inside all of us."

The second man is one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller. A few days before my second inauguration, Rev. Schuller suggested that I look at Isaiah 58:12, and it was on that verse that I placed my hand when I took the oath of office. It says: "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." Rev. Mackey and Rev. Schuller teach us that no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, in our backgrounds, in our politics -- we all must be repairers of the breach. We may not all share a common past, but surely we share a common future. Those two men are sitting with my wife Hillary; I'd like them both to stand.

[Over two centuries ago, at the very end of the Constitutional Convention, one of the drafters posed this question: "Can you imagine that this vast country, [spreading across the continent], will 150 years [from now] remain one nation?" That is still the central question for America. Through all the changes we faced as a nation, we did stay together. And now we must imagine that we can do it again, that we can indeed form a more perfect union, despite all the forces of change swirling about us at this remarkable moment. *Cutable*]

This is hard work. But there is nothing more important we can do. Our unity is our greatest strength. It is the "foundation of many generations," the foundation of every other

strength we must build for the 21st century.

We don't have a moment to waste. Tomorrow morning, there will be barely 1,000 days until the Year 2000. 1,000 days to prepare our people. 1,000 days to work together. 1,000 days to fulfill our promise. My fellow Americans, we must answer our call to action. Our obligation is clear. We have work to do.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

Draft 1/31/97 9:30pm

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
STATE-OF-THE-UNION ADDRESS  
UNITED STATES CAPITOL  
FEBRUARY 4, 1997**

*Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice-President, Members of the 105th Congress, distinguished guests:*

*I present a*

~~I come before you~~ tonight to put forward a plan of action to prepare our people for the challenges of the next century.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of solid growth, we have won back the strength of our economy. With crime, welfare rolls, teen pregnancy all falling, we are winning back our optimism, our faith that we can master our most difficult social challenges. America won the Cold War, and now we are helping to bring peace and prosperity unrivaled in history throughout the world.

It would be easy to be complacent, to rest at this moment. But we must not rest. We must not win these struggles only to lose this moment of opportunity.

Though we face no enemy bent on destroying us, the enemy of our time is inaction. The global economy, the Information Age, new careers, life-enhancing technology are ours to seize for our people. But if we do not take action, these opportunities could slip from our grasp or even be turned to our disadvantage in this vigorous new world of competition.

Our moment of opportunity is fleeting. A child born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Everything she is likely to know firsthand about the progress of America, she will know because of the work we do now to help build the new century. We must focus on our responsibilities to help her and all our children build for the future.

My fellow Americans, the State of our Union is strong, but the opportunity before us is even stronger. So tonight, I issue a call to action -- action by this Congress, action by our states, action by all our people to prepare America for the 21st Century. To answer this call, we must have a new government for a new century, one that gives all our people the means and the power to make the most of their own lives; we must have a new sense of responsibility among all individuals, and we must have a new spirit of community across our nation.

This call to action summons us to work for stronger education and harness the forces of technology and science; to build stronger families and stronger communities; to keep America the world's strongest force for peace, freedom and prosperity. And above all, to build a stronger, more perfect union here at home.

The spirit in which we approach this work will determine its success. The people of this country elected us all. They will not tolerate gridlock or acrimony. They put us all in the same boat . . . gave us all oars . . . and told us to row. And that's what we have to do.

**We must start by moving quickly to finish the unfinished business before us:**

**balancing our budget, renewing our democracy, and finishing the job of welfare reform.**

Over the last four years, we have made our economy grow, by investing in our people, expanding exports, cutting our deficit and creating 11 million new jobs. Now we must keep our economy the strongest in the world.

We here tonight have an historic opportunity. This Congress can be the Congress that finally balances the budget.

In two days, I will propose a detailed plan to balance the budget by the Year 2002.

My plan proves we can balance the budget and invest in our people so they can make the most of their own lives. We can balance the budget and provide tax relief to pay for education -- *and to help pay for college and to help pay for home* to raise a child -- ~~and to buy~~ and sell a new home. The middle class deserves tax relief, and we must give it to them. We can balance the budget and build on the Vice President's work to make government work better, even as it costs less.

Let me be clear: A balanced budget amendment could cripple our country in time of crisis; it could force unthinkable results such as judges impounding Social Security checks or increasing taxes. Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution.

We must also come together, in a bipartisan process, to preserve Social Security, and reform Medicare so these core programs are as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

There is a second piece of unfinished business for us here. Tonight, before the eyes of America, we should commit to passing bipartisan campaign finance reform.

We have just come through an election in which more money was raised and spent on races for Congress and the Presidency than ever before. Every one involved in this system -- every one of us here -- must take responsibility for it, and for fixing it.

In the last Congress, we passed sweeping reform of the lobbying laws, and we did it in a bipartisan way. Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines to craft reform. It would curb spending, reduce the role of special interests, create a level playing field between challengers and incumbents and ban the large soft money contributions both parties receive. And it bans contributions from foreign owned companies and people who are not American citizens.

You know and I know: delay will mean the death of reform. We must work together to enact campaign finance reform, and we should do it by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy, by July 4.

There is a third piece of unfinished business for us here: Last year we enacted landmark

welfare reform. Now each and every one of us has to fulfill our responsibility to finish the job and lift the permanent underclass into our growing middle class.

Over the last four years, we moved a record 2.25 million people off of the welfare rolls. Now we must act to meet this new goal: to lift one million more people from the dependence of welfare to the dignity of work by the Year 2000.

To everyone here, whether you supported this law or opposed it -- but especially those of us who supported it -- I say: We have a moral obligation to make sure people who now must work, can work. We cannot blame the welfare system anymore. We have torn the broken system down. Now we must come together to raise our people up.

Here is my plan: Tax credits to businesses that hire people off welfare. Incentives for companies and job placement firms that create jobs for welfare recipients. Transportation and childcare to help people go to work.

But this is not our responsibility here alone; this is the responsibility of every American. I challenge every state: turn welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I challenge every religious congregation, every <sup>business, etc.</sup> community non-profit, and, especially, every business: hire someone off welfare. If every business in America would do that, we could solve this problem, once and for all. Every employer in this country who ever made a disparaging remark about the old welfare system ~~should do their part and hire someone from welfare to work.~~ <sup>it's gone -</sup>  
*now to your part - give someone on welfare a chance to work.*

Tonight, I am pleased to announce that five major corporations -- Sprint, Monsanto, UPS, Burger King, and United Airlines -- will join with my administration to lead a national effort to marshal America's businesses to hire people off welfare.

And, we must join together to do what Republican and Democratic governors have asked, to restore help for legal immigrants who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law. *They should not be deprived of humanitarian support when misfortune strikes*

We passed welfare reform. We were right to do it. But no one should walk out of this chamber with a clear conscience unless you are prepared to help us finish the job. We must give all our people the chance to raise themselves up through the dignity, the power and the ethic of work.

If we balance the budget, enact campaign finance reform, and finish the job of welfare reform, we will have cleared the path to prepare America for the new century ahead.

Then, the most important thing we can do to prepare our people for the future -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to work together to meet these goals: Every 8 year old will be able to read, every 12 year old will be able to log on to the Internet, every 18 year old will be able to go to college, -- and American children must have the best education in the world, *and every adult American will be able to keep on learning*

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to stronger education -- \$42

but far more money is required  
billion next year, the largest ever. We are going to do our part here in Washington. But when it comes to education, that is nowhere near enough.

I have a Plan for America's Schools, based on [four] principles, to which we must commit ourselves tonight. [hold up booklet]

As long as,  
First, we must set rigorous national standards for education, and help our children reach them. For the first time in America, every school in every community must say: Fourth graders must be able to read, and read well. Eighth graders must be able to do algebra. All our children must master the basics.

attach & meet  
not feel just standards, but national  
We must begin tonight a national effort to achieve these standards. Every state and every school must dedicate itself to develop the curriculum and train the teachers to lift our students up. To help schools meet these standards and measure their progress, we will lead an effort over the next two years to develop national tests based on them.

Tonight, I issue a national challenge: By 1999, every state should test every student in reading and math to make sure these standards are met

And we will provide the Third International Math and Science Survey -- the TIMSS test -  
- to every school district that will accept it. Children all over the world have taken this test. It is a reflection of the world class standards our young people must meet for the new era.

*standards have in* *so that when*  
And every state should require a tough graduation exam, so high school seniors will not get a diploma unless they can pass a test to show they have earned it.

When we are done, every parent will have the tools to know whether their child can read. American students will have the tools to test themselves against students around the world. And we will make sure that every high school diploma means something.

*When we do* *When we do*  
Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. But the point is not to put them down, it is to lift them up. These tests will help show us who needs extra help, what changes in teaching we need to make, and which schools need to be improved. And they will help us, ~~once and for all~~, to end social promotion in America.

These tests are far more than just tests of our children. This entire endeavor is a test of our nation, of our ~~ability to marshal the many forces of this country~~ *will meet* to meet the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age. We must make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

*world class*  
We know our children can achieve excellence, ~~because we see them do it all across this country~~. Last week, I visited the Chicago suburbs, ~~where parents were not afraid to test their communities against the rest of the world~~. Their children took the TIMSS test. They came in first in the world in science. And two of them are here today, along with their teacher. *[introduce students and teacher in First Lady's box]*

They prove what we know: When we aim high and challenge our students to be the best in the world, they will be the best in the world.

*add Melanne Leung*

We can't start teaching our children too soon. We are already expanding Head Start -- by one million children by 2002. New scientific discoveries teach us that we build the foundation for a child's later learning is the earliest years. *the first lady* My wife Hillary has spent a lot of time studying *the issue of early childhood learning she & I* ~~this~~ and writing about it. And I am pleased to ~~announce~~ that we will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this Spring.

We must do more to help all our children read. Today, 40% of 8 year olds cannot read on their own. We have launched the America Reads initiative -- a national effort to build a citizen *to make sure our child can read independently by 3rd grade* army of one million volunteers ~~to~~ tutor those who need extra help. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. Tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have pledged tens of thousands of work study students to work one year as reading tutors.

I call on more of you to join us. ~~Call 1-800-USA-LEARN to find out how.~~ This is a challenge to every teacher and every principal -- to be honest enough to recognize when a child is having trouble reading, and committed enough to do something about it. But this is especially a challenge to parents. Parents should read to their children every night. This spring, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference where they will talk about parents and learning -- because parents are our children's first teachers, and every home must be

a school.

The second principle of my Plan for America's Schools recognizes we must have the best teachers to have the best schools. For years, <sup>my</sup> educators, <sup>and one</sup> with leadership from people like North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. ~~The goal is to measure, not just what teachers know, but how well they teach.~~ The first of these master teachers were certified [last year], and there are now [##]. <sup>My</sup> <sup>second that</sup> budget will help more than 100,000 teachers seek national certification as master teachers. ~~We~~ should reward our best teachers, ~~but find ways to~~ quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up. And we ~~have to do more to~~ challenge the best of our young people to look at <sup>base</sup> teaching as a career.

The third part of my plan calls on every state to let parents choose the right public school for their children. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. We must do more to encourage teachers and parents to start public charter schools that set and meet the highest standards. My balanced budget doubles the funding set aside to help start charter schools, so by the Year 2000, there will be 3,000 <sup>about 10 times as many as there are now.</sup>

<sup>with school buildings & student pop. growing, this is a serious problem all across America. I had heard players would.</sup>  
We cannot raise our children up in schools that are literally falling down. My budget includes \$5 billion to spur \$20 billion in school construction and modernization over the next four years. <sup>(Carol Mowley Braun)</sup>

Finally, we must press forward to make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We cannot raise standards on every other subject if we fail to teach our children how to be good citizens. We should continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, and get <sup>10 more</sup> disruptive ~~kids out of the classroom~~ <sup>students from</sup> and tolerance guns drugs.

 Tonight, I pledge to take this plan to the country, to enlist America's support in this crusade for tomorrow's children. [mention of Governors who might be present; legislature speeches?]

Beyond high school, to prepare our people for the 21st Century, we must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- as universal in America as high school is today.

To do that, ~~we should cut taxes.~~ I propose America's HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, <sup>based on prog. Zell mill in GA,</sup> enough to pay for the typical community college tuition; a deduction of up to \$10,000 deduction for all tuition after high school; an IRA you can save in and then withdraw from tax free, as long as it's for education; and the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships for deserving students in 20 years.

With this package, no working family need ever pay a nickel of taxes on money they save for college -- and I ask you to pass it so every American who works hard can go to college.

All our people must have the chance to learn new skills throughout their lives. Nearly every American worker lives within driving distance of a community college, offering a path to a better future. Government doesn't need to decide what kind of training they need; they can decide for themselves -- if they have the means. My G.I. Bill for Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a single, simple skill grant that will go directly into eligible workers' hands. For far too long, this bill has sat before you without action -- and *ask you to*  
~~you should~~ pass it now.

**To prepare America for the 21st century, we must harness these powerful forces of knowledge, science and technology to the service of all Americans.**

This is the first State of the Union to be carried live over the Internet. But we have only begun to spread the benefits of the technology revolution to the lives of all our citizens.

Last year, I challenged our nation to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the Year 2000 -- so that for the first time, children in the poorest rural communities, inner city schools, and well off suburbs will have access to the same universe of knowledge. We are doing it, and giving them access at rates every school can afford.

This year, I challenge the private sector to help us connect every children's hospital to the Internet as soon as possible, so a child in bed can stay in school and stay in touch with family and friends.

My plan increases funding to teach our children how to use computers by \$225 million. We will build the second generation of the Internet so our leading universities and national laboratories can communicate at speeds 1000 times faster than today, to develop new medical treatments, new sources of energy, and new ways of working together.

We must continue to explore the heavens, pressing our mission of discovery with the Mars probes, the international space station, and the project to discover the origins of life.

And we must speed the remarkable advances in medical science. In the last year alone, American scientists discovered the gene for breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and have discovered drug treatments that dramatically lengthen the lives of people with AIDS. *check parlance* *Stroke*

Since I took office, funding for AIDS research has gone up nearly 50%. With these new resources, the National Institutes of Health will now become the primary discovery engine for an AIDS vaccine. Every year we move up the discovery of an AIDS vaccine, we will save 65,000 lives. If you approve this plan, scientists from business, universities and our national labs will be able to work together so we can end the threat of AIDS in America.

**To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families.**

In the new century, with new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we must

help parents raise strong families and pass on their values to their children.

For four years, the Family and Medical Leave Law has helped millions of our people. Now we should expand Family Leave so parents can take time off for parent teacher conferences or a child's routine checkup. We should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for overtime not only in income, but also with time off to be with their families.

~~For our families to be strong,~~ we must continue, step-by-step, to give them access to affordable, quality health care. My balanced budget will extend health coverage to five million children -- cutting in half the number of uninsured children in America. It will help all people between jobs pay their premiums for up to six months. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

And we must never lose sight of our ultimate goal: to find a way to cover the rest of the 40 million Americans who are in working families, <sup>those</sup> who pay their taxes, and <sup>give every single</sup> who still lack health insurance. I don't think that's right, and I know you don't either. <sup>we can't rest until</sup> ~~We have to find a way to~~ <sup>we charge it.</sup> ~~continue to work together until every American has access to the world's best health care system.~~

Last year, we ended "drive-through deliveries," requiring that new mothers and their babies get at least 48 hours of hospital care. This year, we must enact the bipartisan legislation before you to end the dangerous and demeaning practice of drive-through mastectomies.

*with us today is Dr. Kristen Zarbo, a surgeon who fought - called to keep her patients - write a letter to Cong woman <sup>14</sup> Rosa DeLauro, connecticut decrying this practice & inspired her to intro legislation*

*Stacy Beck - press sec.  
588-1062*

*must* *stand by our*  
And if we want to protect our children, we will stand by our action to ban cigarette ads that lure our children. This is the right thing to do; it will save lives; and I will not back down.

*fund* *to*  
Every parent must uphold their most sacred responsibility -- ~~their responsibility~~ for their children. We should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her obligation to pay child support. And to America's fathers, let me say: child support is no substitute for the love and discipline your children need from you. You must be there for them. *now we all know, much effort*

*we must build*  
Beyond stronger education, beyond stronger families, to prepare America for the 21st Century, ~~we must build stronger communities.~~

Even though this economy produced over 11 million jobs in four years, the most ever in a single term, there are still places in America where opportunity and economic growth have not reached. Our approach to renewing urban neighborhoods, and poor communities across America, is to ~~bring the full force of the private economy to bear -- to create jobs, spur~~ *empower people to create and in which people can live and children can flourish* investment by businesses and loans by banks and restore hope. What we're doing is not to provide one top down bureaucratic plan, but thousands of community plans, that work for our people.

Empowerment zones have already brought hope to communities like Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half in four years. We should double the number of

empowerment zones. We should expand the network of community development banks. We should enact the brownfields initiative to restore contaminated properties to productive use.

And we, together, must pledge tonight that we will use this empowerment approach -- including private sector tax incentives -- to renew this great capital city, so it is once again the proud face America shows the world.

As we strengthen our communities we must protect our environment and preserve our natural heritage for the 21st century. We cleaned up as many toxic waste sites in three years as in the previous 12; we cut the amount of toxic pollution in half; we protected the 1.7 million breathtaking acres of the Grand Escalante Staircase in Utah.

*Check 3 national parks*

Now we should clean up over 500 more toxic waste sites, so that 2/3 of our worst sites are cleaned up by the Year 2000. We should pass my proposal to make big polluters live by this simple rule: if you pollute our environment, you pay to clean it up.

And to strengthen our communities in the 21st Century, we must press our fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row -- the longest decline in decades. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 police officers on our streets. We should pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution. We should set a goal to deport a record 100,000 criminals and other illegal aliens this year.

And, for the next four years, our goal must be to mount a full scale assault on juvenile crime. I will submit comprehensive legislation that declares war on criminal gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; gives judges more power to crack down on gang members who intimidate witnesses; extends the Brady Bill so a minor who commits a violent crime will never be given the right to own a handgun; requires trigger safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and provides resources to keep schools open late, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

*in the end it is not punishment*

~~Helping young people~~ through service is exactly why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros joined Vice President Gore and me at the White House to announce the Presidents's Summit of Service, to be held in Philadelphia in April. Out of that summit, we want to mobilize millions of Americans to serve our young people in thousands of ways. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 50,000 young people to work their way through college as they serve America. Citizen service belongs to no party or ideology. It is an American responsibility which all Americans should embrace in their daily lives. And I hope many more of our young people will take up that responsibility as well.

And we must help our communities in the battle against drugs. My balanced budget includes the largest anti-drug effort ever: to stop drugs at their source, punish those who push them, and steer young people away.

Let me say a word directly to you, our children: As we work to build a strong future for you, you have to take responsibility for your own future. *school drugs - gang* Nothing your parents do, nothing anyone can do, will keep drugs out of your hands if you set out to find them. Drugs are deadly. They will ruin your life. Don't let them. It's up to you. *Soon America will be in your hands*

**And to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of global change and keep American leadership strong in this new time.**

Almost exactly fifty years ago -- on March 17, 1947 -- President Harry Truman stood before Congress and called for a national commitment to make America the free world's indispensable nation. We launched the Marshall Plan to rebuild our allies and former adversaries. We created the institutions and provided the resources that brought the West security and prosperity -- and victory in the Cold War. Because of those commitments, more people than ever before share the ideals that define America and the interests we defend.

Now, we face another time of change and moment of choice. We dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided the world for our parents. But we still must finish creating the new institutions and understandings that will make the world work for our children. We must commit ourselves anew to taking the steps that will keep America the indispensable nation for the entire world.

Our first task must be to build, for the very first time, an undivided, peaceful and democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, America is more secure. When Europe prospers, so does America.

Nearly half a century ago, NATO strengthened struggling democracies and paved the way for prosperity in Europe's west. Now, we can do the same for Europe's east by opening NATO's doors to new democracies and building a strong NATO-Russia partnership. This summer, I will go to Madrid for a special NATO summit. Together, we, here, should commit our country to an expanded NATO by 1999, in which countries that were once our enemies become our allies to keep Europe united and at peace.

Second, in a global economy with global security challenges, America must look to the East no less than the West -- and build a true community of nations in the Asia Pacific. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia in living memory. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend on trade with Asia.

As we tear down trade barriers and build up our alliances, that Pacific community is taking shape. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. We must dismantle North Korea's frozen nuclear program, as North Korea has agreed. I call on you to fund America's contribution to this effort. And we must advance peace talks between South Korea and North Korea to bridge the final divide of the Cold War.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China. An isolated, inward looking China is not in our interest. Instead, we must work together on common problems like weapons proliferation and deal with fundamental differences like human rights. As contacts grow . . . as markets expand and information flows . . . as China plays its rightful role in the world... a more open society can gain strength. I look forward to exchanging state visits with President Jiang -- not because we agree on everything, but because a constructive U.S.-China relationship matters to the world.

Third, the American people will only know true security if they have the opportunity to prosper in the global economy. These past four years, we made it our mission to open markets abroad and create good jobs at home. More than two hundred trade agreements later, America is once again the world's number one exporter and most competitive nation.

Now, we must build on that momentum throughout Asia and Latin America -- and to place the United States at the hub of the two most dynamic regions on earth. I am pleased to announce tonight that I will travel to Mexico in April, then to [tk] in May, to advance that goal. And I will work with Congress to make -- and enforce -- trade agreements that are good for America.

Fourth, we must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Africa. Considered risks for peace lessen the likelihood of more costly conflicts. It encourages other nations to focus on their people, not their arsenals. It helps build a

community willing to tackle shared problems together.

In Bosnia, with American leadership, the killing has stopped -- but the habits of peace are slow to take hold. That is why I agreed for our troops to take part in a smaller follow-on force that should complete its mission by June 1998. The force will help prevent hostilities from resuming so economic reconstruction and political reconciliation can accelerate -- and Bosnia's peace can become self-sustaining. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. They are doing a remarkable job for America -- America must do right by them.

Fifth, we must move strongly against new threats to our security that respect no borders: weapons of mass destruction... terrorism... international crime and drug trafficking. The American people are more secure -- and should be proud -- because we have dramatically reduced the threat of weapons of mass destruction. We reached an historic accord to end nuclear testing for all time. We extended the treaty to halt the spread of nuclear weapons. With Russia, we made deep cuts in our nuclear arsenals and agreed to stop targeting each other's citizens. We are working to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of landmines.

But the American people will have no cause for pride if we fail the test of leadership that lies ahead: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Convention will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism and isolate rogue states. That is why the Reagan Administration negotiated the Convention... the Bush Administration signed it... and

XX nations have approved it. Together, let us make the Chemical Weapons Convention law -- and begin to banish poison gas from this earth.

Preparing America for the 21st century cannot be done on the cheap; the price of neglect would be far greater. We must maintain a strong and ready military -- and we will, by increasing weapons modernization funding 40 percent by the Year 2000. Our men and women in uniform have preserved our freedom in the past. They must have the equipment and training to preserve it in the future.

We must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy. Every dollar we devote to diplomacy and to the international financial institutions brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending totals just one percent of the federal budget -- versus sixteen percent when Harry Truman asked America to choose engagement over escapism. We have to do better.

The United Nations can help us spread the risks and the costs of leadership -- saving children's lives, sheltering refugees, giving peace a chance to take hold. Its new Secretary General is committed to reform. As the UN cuts waste and streamlines staff, the United States should pay our debts and our dues.

At the key points of the second half of this century, Republicans and Democrats have disagreed on specific policies. But we have always agreed on the need for American leadership.

That bipartisan support has fortified our strength.

Before this month is out, I will ask the leadership of both houses and both parties to meet with me to work on America's foreign policy agenda. The actions we take, much like the actions we took 50 years ago, will shape the lives of every American for decades to come.

**Finally, perhaps our most important leadership of the world grows out of the power of our example -- and our ability to remain strong as One America.**

People all over the world are splitting apart because of conflicts of race or religion or ethnicity. This division is fueling the fanaticism of terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy. And the world looks to us to show it is possible to live and learn together across all differences.

America has always been a nation of immigrants. Throughout our history, a steady stream of people, in search of freedom and opportunity, have left their own lands to make this land their home. We started as an experiment in democracy fueled by Europeans, and have evolved into an experiment in diversity fueled by openness and promise.

So much of America's future is tied to how we relate to the rest of the world. Our diversity is not a weakness -- it is our greatest strength. People around the world can look to us and see the reflection of their greatness. And we must give every one of our citizens the

opportunity achieve their own greatness.

But we still see evidence all around us that we have not yet healed our divisions. We see it every day in the sullen, hopeless faces worn by too many youth. Too often, we see it in the corridors of business, and the schoolyards and streets of our daily lives. Too many people still spend time trying to drive wedges between us -- black against white, haves against have nots, old immigrants against new.

A few days before my second inauguration, one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller, suggested I read Isaiah 58:12. He knew what he was talking about. I placed my hand on that verse when I took the oath of office. It says: "Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations, and thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." That scripture reminds us that no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, our backgrounds, our politics -- we all must be repairers of the breach. ~~For~~ <sup>But</sup> we may not all share a common past, but surely we share a common future.

Along with Rev. Schuller, we are joined tonight by two other Americans, and the spirit of another, who come from different backgrounds but show us how to come together to build a stronger future. Congressman Frank Tejeda was buried yesterday, a proud Mexican-American who earned a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart fighting for freedom in Vietnam, and served Texas and America fighting for our future in this chamber. <sup>As is Frank Tejeda with Vespers</sup> Gary Locke, a Chinese-American, is the newly elected Governor of Washington and the first Asian American governor in our history.

And Vernon Baker. Along with six comrades-in-arms, he waited fifty years for the recognition he deserved -- for bravery, for patriotism, for risking his life for his country, -- simply because he <sup>he was denied that</sup> was black. Last month, I had the privilege of <sup>nothing that wrong and</sup> awarding the Medal of Honor to Mr. Baker, and his six courageous comrades. He is the only one still alive, and he is here today.

*V. Baker* *Thos. Kecker*  
Rev. Schuller, Governor Locke and ~~Lieutenant Baker~~ -- I'd like to ask them all to stand up in the box. They are repairers of the breach. They show us how to build America's common future. And we should thank them all.

The work of staying together as a nation is hard work. But there is nothing more important we can do. Our unity is our greatest strength. It is the "foundation of many generations," the foundation of every other strength we must build for the 21st century.

*The future is for us. Can you bring it closer to that the Creed?*  
— We don't have a moment to waste. Remember that child born tonight, and the new century she will inherit. Tomorrow morning, there will be barely 1,000 days until the Year 2000. 1,000 days to prepare our people. 1,000 days to work together. 1,000 days to our land of new promise. My fellow Americans, we must answer our call to action. Our obligation is clear. We have work to do.

*Dr.*

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

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[001]

Maura Keefe

Rosa DeLora -

Dr. coming - option  
life sentence - right  
after the bill -