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**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:

Tonight I present a plan of action to prepare our people for the next century.

For four years, we have worked to get America moving, moving beyond division and gridlock toward the future. And America is on the move, with four years of solid job growth, crime rates and welfare rolls falling, and peace and freedom advancing. Our pursuit of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, community of all Americans is working.

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For all this we should be thankful and encouraged, but not complacent. We stand on the edge of a new century in a new millenium, a new era of vast possibility not merely for wealth and power but for building better lives, here and throughout the world. And we have much to do to get ready.

Because we enjoy prosperity and face no imminent threat, we are free to choose our course But xxxxxxxx??????? for decades to come.

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 20th 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; action to create a new government for a new century, that gives all our people the means and the power to make the most of their own lives; action to instill a new sense of responsibility among all citizens; action to forge 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 all of us. Regardless of our political or personal differences, the people put us all here 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 of this century: balancing our budget, renewing our democracy, and finishing the job of welfare reform.

Over the last four years, our strategy of cutting the deficit, expanding exports and investing in our people has spurred our economy to produce record numbers of new businesses and 11 million new jobs. But to keep our economy the strongest in the world, and to extend our progress to all our people, we must do more.

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.

This plan will balance the budget and invest in our people so they can make the most of their own lives. It will balance the budget and make government work better, even as it costs less, building on the Vice-President's groundbreaking reinvention project. It will balance the budget and provide tax relief for the middle class -- to buy and sell a home, and to pay for education, to raise a child, and for health care.

Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. As you know, I believe it is not only unnecessary but unwise for us to adopt a balanced budget amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis and force results such as judges impounding Social Security checks or increasing taxes. Let's balance the budget -- and do it the right way.

For the long-term health of our society, we must also come together, in a bipartisan

process, to preserve Social Security, and reform Medicare so that they will be as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

There is a second piece of unfinished business for us here. Tonight, with all America watching, we should commit to passing bipartisan campaign finance reform, now.

[We have just come through an election season in which more money was raised and spent on Congressional and Presidential campaigns than ever before. Our campaign finance laws were written in 1974. They have been overtaken by events. Raising the staggering amounts of money required takes too much time and raises too many questions. Every one of us here must take responsibility for fixing the system.]

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 alone; this is the responsibility of every American. I challenge every state to use tax credits and other incentives to turn welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I challenge especially every employer in this country who ever made a disparaging remark about the old welfare system: it's gone. Now do your part. Give someone on

welfare a chance to work. Indeed, I challenge every business, every community non-profit organization, every religious congregation: hire someone off welfare.

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 human 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 meet these goals: American children must have the best education in the world: Every 8 year old must be able to read, every 12 year old must be able to log on to the Internet, every 18 year old must be able to go to college, and every adult American must be able to keep on learning.

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion next year, the largest ever. But far more than money is required.

I have a Plan for American Education, based on [four] principles, to which we must commit ourselves tonight. *[hold up booklet]*

First, we must set rigorous national standards for education, and help our children to reach them. At long last, 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.

We must begin tonight a national effort to establish and meet these standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards that reflect what students must master to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st century. Every state and every school must develop a curriculum that reflects national standards and train our teachers to succeed in teaching them. Then, we must have national tests to measure how our schools and students are doing. There are lots of standardized tests, we need tests to measure national standards. Over the next two years, we will lead an effort to develop them.

Tonight, I issue a national challenge: Every state should set national standards, and by 1999 we should test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math.

Every state should require a tough standards-based exam in high school, so when seniors get a diploma, that diploma will mean something. And we should move towards national high school math and science tests, based on world-class standards.

Raising standards will not be easy. When we do, 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. Good 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 end social promotion, because no child should move from grade school to junior high or junior high to high school until he or she is ready.

These tests are far more than tests of our children. This is a test of our nation, of our will to meet the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age. Tonight, we have the strongest economy and the strongest democracy in the world. But we will not have them fifty years from now unless we make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

We know our children can do this. Last week, I visited the Chicago suburbs, where students from 20 school districts, in a project they called First in the World, took the Third International Math and Science Survey, the TIMSS test. This test is given to 4th, 8th, and 12th graders around the world. And those Illinois school districts tied for first in the world in science, and second in math. Two of those students are here tonight, with their teacher. *[introduce students and teacher]*

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.

The second principle of my Plan: we must have the best teachers to have the best schools. For years, many educators, led by North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. 400 of these master teachers have been certified since 1995. Under my budget, 100,000 more will be able to seek national certification. We should reward our best teachers, quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up, and challenge our finest young people to look at teaching as a career.

The third part of my plan: every state should let parents choose the right public school for their children. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. Beyond public school choice, we must do more to encourage teachers and parents to start charter schools that set and meet the highest standards, and stay open only as long as they do. My balanced budget doubles the funding to help start charter schools, so by the Year 2000, there will be 3,000 -- seven times as many as today.

We cannot raise our children up in schools that are literally falling down. Traditionally, the federal budget has played no role in school construction. But as the student population climbs, and school buildings continue to deteriorate, this is a serious concern across America. My budget includes \$5 billion to help communities issue bonds and spur \$20 billion in school construction over the next four years. [Moseley-Braun]

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, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and 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?*]

But we must not forget that learning begins before school, and goes on long after it. We now know much more about children's emotional and intellectual development in their earliest years. That's why my balanced budget expands Head Start to one million children by 2002. The First Lady has spent a lot of time studying and writing about early childhood learning. And I am pleased to announce that she and I 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 army of one million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by 3rd grade. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. We want at least 100,000 students in the work study program to help. And tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have pledged that tens of thousands of their work study students will serve one year as reading tutors.

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 especially to parents: Read to your children every night. This spring, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference to talk about parents and learning -- because parents are children's first teachers, and every home must be a place of learning

And to prepare our people for the 21st Century, learning must last a lifetime.

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, I propose America's HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college tuition, based on Georgia's HOPE scholarship

started by Governor Zell Miller. I propose a deduction of up to \$10,000 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.

All our people must have the chance to learn new skills. Nearly every American worker lives near a community college, offering a path to a better future. Government doesn't need to decide what kind of training workers need; they can decide for themselves. 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 I ask you to pass it now.

To prepare America for the 21st century, we must harness these powerful forces of knowledge, science and technology to the benefit 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. We are doing it, and giving them access at rates every school can afford. My plan increases funding to teach our children how to use computers by \$225 million.

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.

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.

Today, we are connecting every school so that for the first time in history, a child in the poorest inner city, the most isolated rural town, the most comfortable suburb, will all have access to the same universe of knowledge at the same time. But we cannot stop there. As the Internet becomes our new town square, a computer in every home -- a teacher of all subjects, a connection to all cultures -- is no longer a dream, but a necessity for the Information Age. And over the next decade, that must be our goal.

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. For the first time, we have a drug that can stop a stroke in progress.

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 succeed at home and at work. 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.

We must continue, step-by-step, to give more families access to affordable, quality health care.

[check with chris jennings] We must never lose sight of our ultimate goal: to find a way to work together and cover the 41 million Americans who are in working families, who pay their taxes and give all of us health insurance, but who still lack health insurance for themselves. I don't think that's right, and I know you don't either. We cannot rest until we change it.

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.

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 tonight is Dr. Kristen Zarfos, a Connecticut surgeon whose outrage at this practice spurred a national movement and inspired this legislation.

And we must protect our children by standing by our action to ban cigarette ads that endanger their lives.

Every parent must uphold their most sacred responsibility -- to their child. I am very

proud of the fact that we have increased child support collections by 50% in the last four years, and that the welfare reform law will increase it further. But we should do more; we should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her obligations.

We must build stronger communities to prepare America for the 21st Century.

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 mobilize and empower communities to create the conditions in which people can live and children can flourish, and to create jobs through investment by business and loans by banks.

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 1.7 million acres of the Grand Staircase Escalante in Utah, created 3 national parks in the California desert, begun the work of restoring the Florida Everglades.

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.

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.

In the end, it is not punishing our troubled children that will save America in the 21st Century. We must keep our children out of trouble. Because so many of them do not have what they need to grow and learn in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, the rest of us have to do more. That is 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 70,000 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.

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 that future. Succeed in school, stay off drugs, steer clear of violent gangs. Nothing your parents do, nothing anyone can do, can stop the rise in teen drug use if you don't stop. The school standards won't work if you don't learn. The streets won't be safe if you embrace violence. If's your life. Soon America will be in your hands. It's up to you.

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 continue to lead in the world, to harness the forces of change for the security, prosperity and freedom of our people.

Fifty years ago, America led in creating the institutions that secured victory in the Cold War and built a growing world economy. Today, more people than ever before share the ideals that define America and the interests we defend.

Now, we face another moment of change and choice. We already have dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided our parents' world. But we still must meet a bold new set of challenges -- to change and adapt old institutions for new demands... old thinking for new times... so the world works for our children and brings America fifty more years of security and prosperity.

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

NATO was created to strengthen Europe's west. Now, we must do the same for Europe's

east by opening NATO's doors to new democracies. This summer, we will hold a special summit to begin the process of expanding NATO by 1999. Countries that were once our adversaries now can become our allies. And we will build a strong NATO-Russia partnership to meet the challenges of a new era.

Second, America must look to the East no less than the West. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia this century. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend on trade with Asia.

We are helping an Asian Pacific community to take shape. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. We must assure that North Korea continues to implement its agreement to freeze and dismantle its nuclear weapons program. I call on Congress to fund America's contribution to this effort. Together with South Korea, we must advance peace talks with North Korea and bridge the Cold War's last armed divide.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China -- for the sake of our interests and our ideals. An isolated, inward looking China is not good for America. A China playing its rightful role in the world is. I will go to China and I have invited China's president to come here not because we agree on everything, but because engaging with China is the best way to work on common challenges like ending nuclear testing -- and to deal frankly with fundamental differences like human rights.

Third, the American people must prosper in the global economy. We have made it our mission to tear down trade barriers abroad that create good jobs at home. Today, America is again the world's number one exporter -- leading in agriculture and aviation, automobiles and entertainment, semiconductors and software.

Now, we must build on that momentum, especially in the two most dynamic regions on earth, Asia and Latin America. If we fail to act now, these emerging economies will find their economic future with other nations -- and we will be left behind. That's why I will ask Congress to give us the tools to make -- and enforce -- trade agreements that expand America's competitive opportunities. I will travel to Latin America this Spring to continue the work we began at the Summit of the Americas in Miami to build a community of democracies linked by shared values and expanding trade.

When Mexico's peso collapsed -- threatening our economic stability -- we came to our neighbor's aid. Last month, Mexico repaid the United States three years ahead of schedule, with half a billion dollars profit -- and today our exports to Mexico are at an all time high. We must continue to help nations embrace open markets and improve living standards. But we can succeed only if we meet our obligations to the World Bank and the other organizations that multiply our contributions to progress many times over.

Fourth, America must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Haiti... from Northern Ireland to Africa. Taking reasonable risks for peace keeps us from

being drawn into far more costly conflicts. It encourages other nations to focus on future hopes, not past hatreds. It creates partners willing to seize the opportunities of a new century.

With American leadership, the killing has stopped in Bosnia. Now, the habits of peace must take hold. The follow-on NATO force will help speed reconstruction and reconciliation. 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: weapons of mass destruction... terrorism... international crime and drugs... environmental degradation. The American people are more secure because we won an historic accord to ban nuclear testing. With Russia, we have cut our nuclear arsenals and stopped targeting each other's citizens. We are acting to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of landmines. And we are working with others, with renewed intensity, to stop terrorists and drug traffickers before they act -- and to hold them accountable if they do.

Now, we must rise to a new test of leadership: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. It will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism. This treaty has been bipartisan from the beginning -- negotiated and supported by Republican and Democratic administrations. Together, we must act to outlaw poison gas from this earth.

Finally, we must have the tools to meet all these challenges.

We must maintain a strong and ready military. We will, by increasing funding for weapons modernization and taking care of our men and women in uniform.

We must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy -- and pay our debts and dues to a reforming United Nations. Every dollar we devote to preventing conflicts... promoting democracy... stopping the spread of disease and starvation... brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending today totals just one percent of the federal budget -- compared to sixteen percent when another generation led America to choose engagement over escapism at the very start of the Cold War. If America is to continue to lead the world, we here who lead America must find the will and pay the way.

And we must do it together, with the bipartisan support for American leadership that has been a source of our strength in the world.

Almost exactly fifty years ago, as America began the long struggle of the Cold War, President Harry Truman stood before a Republican Congress and called on our country to meet its responsibilities of leadership. "If we falter," he warned, "we may endanger the peace of the world -- and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation." That Congress, led by great Republicans like Arthur Vandenberg, answered Truman's call. Together, they made the commitments that strengthened our country for fifty years. Now, we must do what it takes to keep America strong, secure and prosperous for another fifty years -- to keep America the

indispensable nation.

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 of our 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. 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. His son, Frank, Jr., is with us tonight. 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. He was denied that recognition simply because he was black. Last month, I had the privilege of righting that wrong and awarding the Medal of Honor to Mr. Baker, and his six courageous comrades. He is the only one still alive. He is here ~~today~~ and I'd like to ask him to

tonight

stand.

Rev. Schuller, Kristin Tanner, Chris Getsla, Sue Winski, Dr. Kristen Zarfes, Frank Tejeda, Governor Locke and Lieutenant Vernon Baker -- they are all 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 it is America's most important mission. Money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It must rise from the human spirit, the spirit that moved our founders to establish our true creed -- that all of us are created equal, endowed by God with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The future before us can bring us closer to that creed. We don't have a moment to waste. A child born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20th 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.

Tomorrow morning, there will be just over 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.

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

Draft 2/2/97 in progress 3:15pm

**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 with a challenge as great as any in our peacetime history -- and a plan of action to meet that challenge, to prepare our people for the bold new world of the 21st Century.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of growth, we have won back the basic strength of our economy. With crime and welfare rolls declining, we are winning back our basic optimism, the enduring faith of America that we can master any difficulty. With the Cold War receding and global commerce at record levels, we are helping to win unrivaled peace and prosperity all across the world. Now, the new promise of the global economy, the Information Age, brilliant new careers, life-enhancing technology -- all these are ours to seize for our people. America must not have won the struggles of the 20th century, only to lose this moment of opportunity to build the future of our dreams in the 21st century.

My fellow Americans, the state of our union is strong, but now we must rise to the decisive moment, to make a nation and a world better than we have ever known. That is our honor and our challenge. For if we do not act, the moment will pass -- and we will lose the best possibilities of our future. Though we face no threat to our existence, we do have an enemy: the

enemy of our time is inaction.

So tonight, I issue a call to action -- action by this Congress, by our states, by all our people, to prepare America for the 21st Century. Action to keep our economy and our democracy strong and working for all our people; action to strengthen education and harness the forces of technology and science; action to build stronger families and stronger communities and a safer environment; action to keep America the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And above all, action to build a more perfect union here at home.

The spirit we bring to our work will determine its success. The people of this nation elected us all. They want us to be partners, not partisans. They put us all right here in the same boat . . . they gave us all oars . . . and they have told us to row. [And I'm ready to go.]

First, we must move quickly to finish the unfinished business of our country -- balancing our budget, renewing our democracy, finishing the job of welfare reform.

Over the last four years, we have brought new economic growth by investing in our people, expanding our exports, cutting our deficits, creating over 11 million new jobs. Now we must keep our economy the strongest in the world.

We here tonight have an historic opportunity. Let this Congress 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.

This plan will balance the budget and invest in our people while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. It will balance the budget and build on the Vice President's efforts to make this government work better, even as it costs less. It will balance the budget and provide middle class tax relief to pay for education and health care, to help raise a child, and to buy and sell a home.

Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. It is unnecessary and unwise to adopt a balanced budget amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis and force unthinkable results such as judges impounding Social Security checks or increasing taxes. We don't need an amendment -- we need action.

Whatever our differences, we should balance the budget now, and then, for the long-term health of our society, we must agree to a bipartisan process to preserve Social Security and reform Medicare, so that these fundamental programs will be as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

Our second piece of unfinished business requires us to commit ourselves tonight, before the eyes of America, to enacting bipartisan campaign finance reform.

Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines to craft tough and fair campaign reform. [I ask them to stand.] Their proposal 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 that both parties receive. It would also ban contributions from foreign owned companies and noncitizens.

Delay will mean the death of reform. So let's set our own deadline. Let's work together to write campaign finance reform into law, [and pass McCain-Feingold-Shays-Meehan], by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy -- July the 4th.

There is a third piece of unfinished business: Over the last four years, we moved a record two and a quarter million people off the welfare rolls. Then last year we enacted landmark welfare reform, demanding that all able-bodied recipients assume the responsibility of moving from welfare to work. Now each and every one of us has to fulfill our responsibility -- indeed, our moral obligation -- to make sure that people who now must work, can work. Now we must act to meet a new goal: two million more people off the welfare rolls by the Year 2000.

Here is my plan: Tax credits and other incentives to businesses that hire people off welfare. Incentives for job placement firms and for states that create jobs for welfare recipients. Training, transportation and childcare to help people go to work.

Now I challenge every state: turn those welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I

challenge every religious congregation, every community non-profit, and especially every business: hire someone off welfare. And I say to every employer in this country who has ever criticized the old welfare system: You cannot blame the old system anymore. We have torn it down. Now do your part. Give someone on welfare the chance to work.

If we all do that, we can end the permanent underclass by lifting it up into a growing middle class.

Tonight, I am proud to announce that five major corporations -- Sprint, Monsanto, UPS, Burger King, and United Airlines -- will be the first to join with us in a new national effort to marshal America's businesses to hire people off welfare.

And we must join together to do something else too -- something Republican and Democratic governors alike have asked us to do -- restore basic health, nutrition, and disability benefits when misfortune strikes immigrants who came to this country legally, and who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law. To do otherwise is unworthy of a great nation of immigrants.

We passed welfare reform. We were right to do it. But no one can walk out of this chamber with a clear conscience unless you are prepared to finish the job.

Then, the greatest step of all -- the high threshold to the future we now must cross -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to ensure that

**Americans have the best education in the world. Let's work together to meet these goals:
Every 8 year old must be able to read; every 12 year old must be able to log on to the
Internet; every 18 year old must be able to go to college, and every adult American must be
able to keep on learning.**

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion next year. But far more than money is required.

I have a plan, a Call to Action for American Education, including ten points to which we must commit ourselves tonight. [*hold up booklet*]

First, we must set rigorous national standards for education, and help our children to reach them. We must finally say: Fourth graders must be able to read. Eighth graders must be able to do algebra. And all our children must master the basics.

To do this, we must begin a national crusade for standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards representing what students must know to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st Century. Every state and every school must shape the curriculum to reflect these standards, and train teachers to lift students up to them. To help schools meet the standards and measure their progress, we will lead an effort over the next two years to develop national tests for student achievement.

Tonight, I issue a challenge to the nation: Every state should adopt high national standards, and by 1999, every state should test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met.

Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. The point is not to put our children down, but to lift them up. Good tests will show us who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools to improve. And they can help us to end social promotion. No child should move from grade school to junior high, or junior high to high school until he or she is ready.

These tests are far more than tests of our children. They are a test of our nation, of our will to meet the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age.

Last week, along with my partner in this effort, Secretary of Education Dick Riley, I visited schools in [tk] county in Northern Illinois, where 8th grade students from 20 school districts, in a project they called "First in the World," took the Third International Math and Science Study, the TIMSS test -- a test that reflects the world-class standards our children must meet for the new era. And those Illinois students tied Singapore for first in the world in science, and they came in second in math. Two of them are here tonight, with their teacher. *[introduce Kristin Tanner, and Chris Getsla; teacher: Sue Winski]* They prove that when we aim high and challenge our students, they will be the best in the world.

The second principle of my Plan recognizes this simple truth: to have the best schools, we must have the best teachers. Most of us -- certainly including me -- would not be here tonight without the help of such teachers. For years, many educators, led by North Carolina's Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. 400 of these master teachers have been certified since 1995. My budget will enable 100,000 more to seek national certification as master teachers. *We should reward our best teachers, quickly and fairly remove those who don't measure up, and challenge our finest young people to consider teaching as a career.*

Third: we must do more to help all our children read. 40% of our 8 year olds cannot read on their own -- 40%. That's why we have just launched the America Reads initiative -- a critical national effort to build a citizen army of one million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by the end of 3rd grade. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. We want at least 100,000 college students to help. And tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have answered my call, and pledged that tens of thousands of their work study students will serve for one year as reading tutors.

This is also a challenge to every teacher and every principal: create a program to train and use these tutors to help your children read. This is especially a challenge to our parents: Read with your children every night.

And that leads to the fourth part of my plan: We can't start teaching our children too

early. We are learning more and more about young children's emotional and intellectual development. Parents' quiet moments with very young children make a big difference in their lives. Parents are their children's first teachers, and every home must be a place of learning. The First Lady has spent years studying and writing about this issue. And I am proud to announce that she and I will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this Spring, to explore how parents and policy-makers can use these new scientific discoveries. [In June, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference to talk about parents and learning. We want parents to be more involved in their children's education every step of the way, meeting with teachers, helping with homework.]

We already know what a difference good preschool can make, and that's why my plan also expands Head Start to one million children by 2002.

The fifth part of my plan calls on every state to give parents the power to choose the right public school for them. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. And we must do more to encourage parents and teachers to start charter schools, schools that set and meet the highest standards, and survive only as long as they do. My plan will help America create 3,000 charter schools by the year 2000 -- nearly seven times as many as there are today, so that parents will have more choice in sending their children to the best public schools.

Sixth: we must make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We must teach our children to be good citizens, and continue to promote order and discipline, supporting

communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs.

Seventh: we cannot expect our children to raise themselves up in schools that are literally falling down. Traditionally, the federal government has played no role in school construction. But with the student population at record levels, and record numbers of school buildings falling into disrepair, this has become a serious national concern. My budget includes \$5 billion to help communities finance \$20 billion in school construction over the next four years. [Moseley-Braun]

Eighth: We must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- just as universal in America as a high school education is today.

To do that, I propose America's HOPE scholarship, based on Governor Zell Miller's pioneering program in Georgia: two years of a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college. I also propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school; an expanded IRA you can withdraw from tax free for education; and the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships for deserving students in 20 years.

This plan will give most families the ability to pay no taxes on money saved for college tuition. I ask you to pass it -- to give every American who works hard the chance to go to college.

Ninth: In the 21st Century, we must expand the frontiers of learning across a lifetime. All our people, of whatever age, must have the chance to learn new skills. Most American workers live near a community college. The roads that take them there can be paths to a better future. 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 too long, this bill has sat before you without action -- and I ask you to pass it now.

Tenth: we must harness the Information Age to make our schools equal to the 21st Century. Last year, I challenged America to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, so that, for the first time in history, a child in the poorest inner city, the most isolated rural town, the most comfortable suburb, will all have the same access to the same universe of knowledge. I ask your support to complete this historic mission.

That is my plan -- a Call to Action for American Education.

One of the greatest sources of our national strength in the 20th century has been a bipartisan foreign policy; politics stopped at the water's edge. I ask you -- and I ask the governors from the many states who have joined us here tonight -- and teachers, parents and citizens all across America -- for a new nonpartisan commitment to education -- because education is the national security issue of our future -- and politics should stop at the classroom door.

We have the strongest economy and the strongest democracy in the world. But if we miss this moment of opportunity in education, then fifty years from the America of tomorrow's children will not be the strongest economy and the strongest democracy on earth.

That's why tonight, I pledge to take this call to action to the country. If we work together, we can make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

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

This is the first State of the Union carried live over the Internet. But we have only begun to spread the benefits of a technology revolution that should be the modern birthright of every citizen.

Our effort to connect every classroom is just the beginning. I challenge the private sector to connect every children's hospital to the Internet as soon as possible, so a child in bed can stay in touch with school, family and friends. [check re: telecomm bill]

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.

But we cannot stop there. As the Internet becomes our new town square, a computer in every home -- a teacher of all subjects, a connection to all cultures -- will no longer be a dream, but a necessity. Over the next decade, that must be our goal.

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, all of which will have practical applications here on Earth.

We must speed the remarkable advances in medical science. In the last year alone, American scientists discovered genes linked to breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and medication that stops a stroke in progress and begins to reverse its effects -- and we have discovered treatments that dramatically lengthen the lives of people with AIDS.

Since I took office, funding for HIV and AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health has gone up 40%, to [\$1.5 billion] next year. With these new resources, NIH 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 [3 million] lives around the world. If you approve this plan, scientists from business, universities and our national labs will be able to work together more efficiently so that we can end the threat of AIDS.

To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families and help parents pass on their values to their children.

With new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we should expand the Family and Medical Leave Law so workers can take time off for teacher conferences or a child's medical checkup. Now we should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for overtime in income, or trade it in for time off to be with their families.

We must continue, step-by-step, to give more families access to affordable, quality health care.

We must find a way to work together to cover the 40 million Americans -- most of them in working, taxpaying families, who still lack health insurance.

Today, 10 million children lack health insurance -- 80% of them have working parents who pay taxes. This is unacceptable. My balanced budget will extend health coverage to up to five million of those children. It will help all working Americans by ensuring that people who temporarily lose their jobs can still afford to keep their health insurance. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

My Medicare plan helps the many families taking care of loved-ones afflicted with Alzheimers -- and for the first time, it would pay for annual mammograms.

Just as we ended drive through deliveries last year, we must now end the dangerous and

demeaning practice of sending women home from the hospital only hours after a mastectomy. With us tonight is Dr. Kristen Zarfes, a Connecticut surgeon whose outrage at this practice spurred a national movement and inspired this legislation. We thank you, Dr. Zarfes.

We must protect our children by standing by our action to ban the advertising and marketing of cigarettes that endanger their lives.

In the last four years, we have increased child support collections by 50%. Now, we should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her most sacred obligations.

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

Our strong and growing economy has helped revive many urban areas, but we still have more to do. Our approach is to empower poor urban and rural communities to create the conditions in which families can flourish, and to create jobs through investment by business and loans by banks.

We should double the number of empowerment zones. They have already brought hope to communities like Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half in four years. We should expand the network of community development banks. We should enact the brownfields initiative to restore contaminated urban land and buildings to productive use.

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

We must protect our environment in every community. In the last four years, we cleaned up as many toxic waste sites as in the previous twelve; cut the amount of toxic pollution in half; protected 1.7 million acres of Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, created three national parks in California's desert; began to protect Florida's Everglades, and strengthened the nation's safe food and clean water laws.

[Across the country, from Seattle to Chattanooga, communities are coming together to clean up their rivers and reinvigorate their waterfronts. This year, I will designate 10 rivers as American Heritage Rivers, so those communities can get more help for waterfront development and environmental cleanup.]

Now we should clean up over 500 more toxic waste sites, so that two-thirds 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 we must also protect our global environment, working to close the hole in the ozone layer and reducing greenhouse gasses that challenge our health as they change our climate.

Next, we must press our fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 community police on our streets. We should also pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

And I ask you to join me in mounting a full scale assault on juvenile crime, with legislation that declares war on gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; extends the Brady Bill so violent teenage criminals will not be able to buy handguns; requires gun safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and helps to keep our schools open after dark, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

And 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 from them.

Because so many of our young children do not have what they need to grow and learn in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, the rest of us must do more. That is why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros will join Vice President Gore and me to lead the Presidents's Summit of Service in Philadelphia in April. We intend to mobilize millions of Americans to serve in thousands of ways. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 70,000 young people 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.

Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics. But the enduring worth of our nation lies in our values and soaring spirit. So instead of cutting back on our modest effort to support the arts and humanities, we should stand by them, and challenge our artists and writers, our museums and our theaters, to join with all Americans to make the Year 2000 a national celebration of the American spirit in every community -- a celebration of our culture in the century that has passed, and in the new one to come, so that we can remain the world's beacon of liberty and creativity, long after the fireworks have faded.

And to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of change in the world and keep American leadership strong and sure for an uncharted time.

Fifty years ago, a farsighted America led in creating the institutions that secured victory in the Cold War and built a growing world economy. As a result, today, more people than ever embrace our ideals and share our interests.

Already, we have dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided our parents' world. For the first time, more people live under democracy than dictatorship, including every nation in our own hemisphere but one -- and its day too will come.

Now, we stand at another moment of change and choice -- and another time to be farsighted and bring America 50 more years of security and prosperity.

Our first task is to help build, for the first time, an undivided, democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, prosperous and at peace, America is more secure.

We must expand NATO by 1999, so countries that were once our adversaries can become our allies. We must strengthen NATO's Partnership for Peace with non-member nations. And we must build a stable NATO-Russia partnership. Under our leadership, NATO kept us safe for half a century. Now, let's build a new NATO in an undivided Europe to make the future safe for our children.

[Let all of Europe's democracies define their future not in terms of what they can do to each other, but in terms of what they can do together for the good of all.]

Second, America must look to the East no less than the West. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia this century. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend upon trade with Asia.

There, too, we are helping to shape an Asian Pacific community of cooperation, not discord and dominance. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. Together with South Korea, we must advance peace talks with North Korea and bridge the Cold War's last armed divide. And I call on Congress to fund our share of the agreement to that North Korea will continue to freeze -- and then dismantle -- its nuclear weapons program.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China -- for the sake of our interests and our ideals. An isolated, inward looking China is not good for America. A China playing its rightful role in the world is. I will go to China and I have invited China's president to come here, not because we agree on everything, but because engaging with China is the best way to work on common challenges like ending nuclear testing -- and to deal frankly with fundamental differences like human rights.

Third, the American people must prosper in the global economy. We have made it our mission to tear down trade barriers abroad to create good jobs at home. And we are succeeding. I am proud to tell you that today, America is once again the number one exporter and the most competitive nation on Earth.

Now, we must act to expand our exports to Asia and Latin America, the two fastest growing regions on earth -- or be left behind as these emerging economies forge new ties with other nations. That is why we need authority now to conclude trade agreements that open markets to our goods and services even as we preserve our values.

[We cannot shrink from the challenge of the global economy. We have the best workers and the best products.] Give Americans the opportunity of an open market, and we can outcompete anyone in the world.

We should all be proud that America led the effort to rescue Mexico from its economic crisis -- and we should all be proud that last month, Mexico repaid the United States, three full years ahead of schedule, with half a billion dollars profit. Today our exports to Mexico are at an all time high. I will travel to Latin America this Spring and continue the work we began at the Summit of the Americas in Miami. We must link this entire hemisphere with bonds of democracy and prosperity.

Fourth, America must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Haiti . . . from Northern Ireland to Africa. Taking reasonable risks for peace keeps us from being drawn into far more costly conflicts later.

With American leadership, the killing has stopped in Bosnia. Now, the habits of peace must take hold. The NATO force will allow reconstruction and reconciliation to accelerate. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. Our troops are doing a remarkable job for America -- and America must do right by them.

Fifth, we must strongly move against new threats to our security: weapons of mass destruction . . . terrorism . . . international crime and drugs. In the past four years, we agreed to ban nuclear testing; with Russia, we dramatically cut our nuclear arsenals, and stopped targeting each others citizens. We are acting to rid the world of landmines, and prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands. We are building a global coalition against terrorism and drug trafficking, and we are telling those who would do us harm: we will not rest until are prosecuted, and you are punished. We will do everything we can to see to it that you will have no place to run, and no place to hide.

Now, we must rise to a new test of leadership: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. It will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism. This treaty has been bipartisan from the beginning, supported by Republican and Democratic administrations alike -- and already approved by 68 nations. Together, we must make the Chemical Weapons Convention law and begin to outlaw poison gas from this earth.

Finally, we must have the tools to meet all these challenges.

We must maintain a strong and ready military. We must increase funding for weapons modernization and we must take good care of our men and women in uniform.

We must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy as well -- and pay our debts and dues to international financial institutions such as the World Bank, and to a reforming United Nations. Every dollar we devote to preventing conflicts . . . to promoting democracy . . . to stopping the spread of disease and starvation . . . brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending today totals just one percent of the federal budget -- a small fraction of what America invested to choose engagement over escapism at the start of the Cold War. If America is to continue to lead the world, we here who lead America simply must find the will and pay the way. A farsighted America has moved the world to a better place over these last fifty years. It can do so for another fifty years. But the words of a shortsighted America will soon fall on deaf ears all around the world.

Almost exactly fifty years ago, in the first winter of the Cold War, President Harry Truman stood before a Republican Congress and called on our country to meet its responsibilities of leadership. "If we falter," he warned, "we may endanger the peace of the world -- and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation." That Congress, led by great Republicans like Senator Arthur Vandenberg, answered President Truman's call. Together, they made the commitments that strengthened our country for fifty years. Now let us do what it takes to remain the indispensable nation -- to keep America strong, secure and prosperous for another fifty years.

In the end, more than anything else, our world leadership grows out of the power of our example, out of our ability to remain strong as One America.

All over the world, people are being torn asunder by racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts that fuel fanaticism and terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy. And the world looks to us to show it is possible to live and advance together across those kinds of differences.

America has always been a nation of immigrants. From the start, 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. We have grown into an experiment in democratic diversity fueled by openness and promise.

So much of America's future is tied to how we relate to the rest of the world. My fellow Americans, we must never believe that our diversity is a weakness in this -- it is our greatest strength. For people on every continent can look to us and see the reflection of their own greatness, as long as we give all of our citizens, whatever their background, the opportunity to achieve their greatness.

We have not done that yet. Evidence of lingering division is all around us. We see it every day in the sullen, hopeless faces worn by too many of our young people. Too often, we see it in the corridors of power, in the schoolyards and streets of our cities. We see it in the burned houses of worship and bombed clinics. Too many people still seek to exploit our differences.

A few days before my second inauguration, one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller, suggested I read Isaiah 58:12. 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." I placed my hand on that verse when I took the oath of office, on behalf of all Americans. For no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, our backgrounds, our politics -- we must all be repairers of the breach. 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 a third, 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, only 51 years old, who earned a Silver Star and a Purple Heart fighting for freedom in Vietnam, and who went on to serve Texas and America fighting for our future in this chamber. His mother, is with us tonight. Gary Locke, a Chinese-American, is the newly elected Governor of Washington and the very first Asian American Governor in our history, a proud representative of immigrants who have strengthened America with their hard work, strong families, and good citizenship.

There is someone else I want to talk to you about tonight. On April 5, 1945, in the hills of Italy, Lieutenant Vernon Baker faced one of greatest challenges of his life. At the moment of supreme peril, he pressed forward into a dark canyon where the enemy lay in wait. That day, Lt. Baker fought side by side with black and white soldiers alike. And only seven of the 25 men in his platoon survived. Because of his heroism, America won the battle that day. For 50 years, he was denied the recognition he deserved -- simply because he is an African-American. Last

month, I had the privilege of righting that wrong and awarding the Medal of Honor to Mr. Baker, and six of his courageous comrades. He could not be here tonight from his home in St. Maries, Idaho. But his spirit is here with us -- the spirit that says we can meet the challenges we face, and we can meet them best when we work together.

Rev. Schuller, Kristin Tanner, Chris Getsla, Sue Winski, Dr. Kristen Zarfes, Congressman Frank Tejeda, Governor Locke and Lieutenant Vernon Baker -- in their own way, they are all repairers of the breach. They show us how to build our common future. And we should thank them all.

The work of staying together as a nation is hard work. But it is America's most important mission. "The foundation of many generations," of every other strength we must build for the new century. Money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It must rise from the human spirit.

America is far more than a place. It is an idea, the most powerful idea in the history of nations. We are now the bearers of that idea, leading a great people into a new world. We don't have a moment to waste. The children born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20th Century. Everything they will know of America, they will know only through the work we do now to build a new century.

Tomorrow morning, there will be just over 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 have work to do. Let us seize the days and the century.

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

Draft 2/2/97

**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 with a plan of action and a challenge as great as any in our peacetime history -- to prepare our people for the next century and a global economic revolution.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of growth, we have won back the basic strength of our economy. With crime and welfare rolls all declining, we are winning back our basic optimism, the enduring faith of America that we can master any difficulty. We won the Cold War, and now we are helping to bring unrivaled peace and prosperity across the world.

It would be easy to be complacent, to rest at this moment. But we are not a people made for complacency. We must not win the struggles of the past only to lose this moment of opportunity.

Though we face no enemy bent on destroying us, the great enemy of our time is inaction. It is the enemy within. The new promise of the global economy, the Information Age, new careers, and life-enhancing technology are ours to seize for our people. But if we do not act, the chance will slip from our grasp or even be turned to our disadvantage in this vigorous new era of competition.

Our moment of opportunity is fleeting. We must be shapers of events, not observers. Our task is not to ask what the future means for us, but what meaning we can give to 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 -- a call to this Congress, to our states, and to all our people to welcome a future that will be what we make of it. 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 the work will determine its success. The people of this nation elected us all. They want us to be partners, not partisans. What matters is not the applause when we arrive, but the judgment when we leave.

Here is what I believe we, together, must do for our country:

First we must move 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 brought new economic growth 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. Let this Congress be the Congress that finally balances the budget.

In two days, I will propose a detailed plan to balance the budget by the Year 2000.

This plan will balance the budget and invest in our people so they can make the most of their lives, protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. It will balance the budget and build on the Vice President's work to make this government work better, even as it costs less. It will balance the budget and provide tax relief to pay for education and health care, to help raise a child, and to buy and sell a home.

Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. It is unnecessary and unwise to adopt a balanced budget amendment could cripple our country in time of crisis and force unthinkable results such as judges impounding Social Security checks or increasing taxes. We don't need an amendment -- we need action.

Whatever our differences, for the long-term health of our society, we must act together, in a bipartisan process, to safeguard Social Security and reform Medicare so these fundamental programs will be as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

The second piece of unfinished business relates not just to our economy, but to our democracy itself. Tonight, before the eyes of America, we must commit ourselves to enacting bipartisan campaign finance reform.

Senator McCain and Senator Feingold, Representative Shays and Representative Meehan have reached across party lines to craft tough and fair campaign reform. Their proposal would curb spending, reduce the role of special interests, create a level playing field between challenges and incumbents and ban the large soft money contributions that both parties receive. And it would ban contributions from foreign owned companies and people who are not American citizens.

Delay will mean the death of reform. So let's set our own deadline. Let's work together to write campaign finance reform into the law, by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy -- July 4th.

There is a third piece of unfinished business for us here: Last year we enacted landmark welfare reform, demanding that able-bodied recipients assume the responsibility of moving from welfare to work. Now each and every one of us has to fulfill our responsibility -- indeed, our moral obligation -- to make sure people who must work, can work. Only then can the permanent underclass lift themselves into our growing middle class.

Over the last four years, we moved a record two and a quarter million people off the welfare rolls. Now we must act to meet a new goal -- one million more people moving from the dependence of welfare to the dignity of work by the Year 2000.

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

I challenge every state: turn welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I challenge every religious congregation, every community non-profit, and especially every business: hire someone off welfare. I say to every employer in this country who ever criticized the old welfare system: You can't blame the old system anymore. We have torn it down. Now do your part. Give someone on welfare the chance to work. If we all do that, we can solve this problem once and for all.

Tonight, I am proud to announce that five major corporations -- Sprint, Monsanto, UPS, Burger King, and United Airlines -- will be the first to join with us in a new national effort to marshal America's businesses to hire people off welfare.

And we must join together to do something else -- something that Republican and Democratic governors alike have asked -- restore basic health, nutrition, and disability benefits to legal immigrants who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law. To do otherwise, is unworthy of a nation of immigrants.

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 finish the job.

The greatest step of all -- the high threshold to the future that we must now cross -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to ensure that America's children have the best education in the world. Let's work together to meet these goals: Every 8 year old must be able to read; every 12 year old must be able to log on to the Internet; every 18 year old must be able to go to college, and every adult American must be able to keep on learning.

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion next year, the largest ever. But far more than money is required.

I have a Plan for American Education, based on ten principles, to which we must commit ourselves tonight. *[hold up booklet]*

First, we must set rigorous national standards for education, and help our children to reach them. Finally, we 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.

To do this, we must begin a national crusade for standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards representing what students must know to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st century. Every state and every school must shape the curriculum to reflect these standards, and train teachers to lift our students up to them. To help schools meet the standards and measure their progress, we will lead an effort over the next two years to develop national tests for student achievement.

Tonight, I issue a national challenge: Every state should adopt high national standards, and by 1999, every state should test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met.

Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. The point is not to put them down, but lift them up. Good tests will show us who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools to improve. And they can help us end social promotion, because no child should move from grade school to junior high, or junior high to high school until he or she is ready.

These tests are far more than tests of our children. This is a test of our nation, of our will to meet the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age. Tonight, we have the strongest economy and the strongest democracy in the world. But we will not have them fifty years from now unless American education, like America itself, is the envy of the world.

Last week, I visited schools outside Chicago, where 8th grade students from 20 school districts, in a project they called "First in the World," took the Third International Math and Science Study, the TIMSS test -- a test that reflects the world-class standards are children must meet for the new era. Those Illinois students tied for first in the world in science, and second in math. Two of them are here tonight, with their teacher. [*introduce Kristin Tanner, and Chris Getsla; teacher: Sue Winski*] When we aim high and challenge our students, they will be the best in the world.

The second principle of my Plan recognizes this simple truth: to have the best schools, we must have the best teachers. Most of us -- including myself -- would not be here tonight without the help of such teachers. For years, many educators, led by North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. 400 of these master teachers have been certified since 1995. My budget will enable 100,000 more to seek national certification. We should reward our best teachers, quickly and fairly remove those who don't measure up, and challenge our finest young people to consider 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. Beyond public school choice, we must do more to encourage teachers and parents to start charter schools that set and meet the highest standards, and survive only as long as they do. My balanced budget doubles the funding to help start charter schools, so by the Year 2000, there will be 3,000 charter schools -- nearly seven times as many as today. We want parents to be more involved in their

children's education -- not just choosing schools, but every step of the way, meeting their teachers, helping with homework. This spring, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference to talk about parents and learning.

Fourth: we must make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We cannot raise standards 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, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs.

Fifth: we cannot expect our children to raise themselves up in schools that are literally falling down. Traditionally, the federal budget has played no role in school construction. But with the student population at record levels, and record numbers of school buildings in disrepair, this has become a serious national concern. My budget includes \$5 billion to help communities issue bonds that will spur \$20 billion in school construction over the next four years. [Moseley-Braun]

Sixth: we must do more to help all our children read. 40% of our 8 year olds cannot read on their own. We have just launched the America Reads initiative -- a critical national effort to build a citizen army of one million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by 3rd grade. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. We want at least 100,000 college students in the work study program to help. And tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have answered my call, and pledged that tens of thousands of their work study students will serve one year as reading tutors.

This is a challenge to every teacher and every principal: create a program to train and use these tutors to help your children read. This is especially a challenge parents: Read to your children every night.

And that leads us to the seventh part of my plan: We can't start teaching our children too early. We are learning more and more about young children's emotional and intellectual development. Parents small moments with their children make a big difference throughout their lives. Parents are children's first teachers, and every home must be a place of learning. The First Lady has spent years studying and writing about this issue. And I am pleased to announce that she and I will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this Spring, to [help us learn more about the ways very young children learn]. We already know what a difference good preschool can make, and that's why my plan expands Head Start to one million children by 2002.

Eighth: In the 21st Century, we must expand the frontiers of learning across a lifetime. 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, I propose America's HOPE scholarship, based Governor Zell Miller's HOPE scholarship in Georgia: two years of a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the

typical community college. I propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school; an expanded IRA you can withdraw from tax free for education; and the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships for deserving students in 20 years.

This plan will give most families the ability to eliminate taxes on money saved for college tuition. I ask you to pass it -- to give every American who works hard the chance to go to college.

Ninth: all our people must have the chance to learn new skills. Most American workers live near a community college. The roads that take them there can be a path to a better future. Government doesn't need to decide what kind of training workers need; they can decide for themselves. 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 I ask you to pass it now.

Tenth: we must harness the Information Age to make our schools worthy of the 21st Century. Last year, I challenged America to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, so that, for the first time in history, a child in the poorest inner city, the most isolated rural town, the most comfortable suburb, will all have access to the same universe of knowledge at the same time. I ask your support to complete this historic mission.

Tonight, I pledge to take this Plan for American Education to the country. All Americans must enlist in this crusade for tomorrow's children.

One of the greatest sources of our national strength in the 20th century was a bipartisan foreign policy; politics stopped at the water's edge. Tonight, I ask you for a new bipartisan commitment to education -- because education is the national security of our future -- and politics should stop at the classroom door.

To prepare America for the 21st century, we must harness the powerful forces of knowledge, science and technology -- not just for our schools, but to benefit all Americans.

This is the first State of the Union carried live over the Internet. But we have only begun to spread the benefits of a technology revolution that should be the modern birthright of every citizen.

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.

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.

But we cannot stop there. As the Internet becomes our new town square, a computer in every home -- a teacher of all subjects, a connection to all cultures -- will no longer be a dream,

but a necessity. Over the next decade, that must be our goal.

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, all of which will have practical applications here on Earth.

We must speed the remarkable advances in medical science. In the last year alone, American scientists discovered genes linked to breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and medication that stops a stroke in progress and begins to reverse its effects -- and we have discovered drug treatments that dramatically lengthen the lives of people with AIDS.

Since I took office, funding for AIDS research has gone up nearly 50%, to [\$1.5 billion] next year. 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.

To prepare America for the 21st Century, with new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we must build stronger families and help parents pass on their values to their children.

For four years, the Family and Medical Leave Law has done that for millions of our people. Now we should expand Family Leave so workers can take time off for teacher conferences or a child's 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.

We must continue, step-by-step, to give more families access to affordable, quality health care.

We must find a way to work together to cover the 40 million Americans -- most in working, taxpaying families, who still lack health insurance.

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 working Americans by ensuring that people who temporarily lose their jobs don't lose their health insurance. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

My Medicare plan helps millions of families taking care of a loved-one afflicted with Alzheimers -- and for the first time, we would pay for mammograms for older women.

Just as we ended drive through deliveries last year, we must end the dangerous and demeaning practice of drive-through mastectomies. With us tonight is Dr. Kristen Zarfos, a Connecticut surgeon whose outrage at this practice spurred a national movement and inspired this legislation. Thank you, Dr. Zarfos.

We must protect our children by standing by our action to ban cigarette ads and marketing that endangers their lives.

In the last four years, we have increased child support collections by 50% in the last four years. But we can do more. We should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her most sacred obligations.

We must build stronger communities to prepare America for the 21st Century.

Our strong and growing economy has helped revive many urban areas, but we still have more to do. Our approach to renewing poor urban and rural communities is to empower them to create the conditions in which families can live and flourish, and to create jobs through investment by business and loans by banks.

We should double the number of empowerment zones. They have already brought hope to communities like Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half in four years. We should expand the network of community development banks. We should enact the brownfields initiative to restore contaminated urban land and buildings 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 that Washington, D.C. is once again the proud face America shows the world.

We must protect our environment in every community. In the last four years, we cleaned up as many toxic waste sites as in the previous twelve; we cut the amount of toxic pollution in half; we protected the 1.7 million breathtaking acres of the Grand Staircase-Escalante in Utah.

Now we should clean up over 500 more toxic waste sites, so that two-thirds 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.

We must press our fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 police on our streets. We should pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution. We will deport a record 100,000 criminals and illegal aliens this year.

For the next four years, we must mount a full scale assault on juvenile crime. I will submit comprehensive legislation that declares war on gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; extends the Brady Bill so violent teenage criminals will not be able to buy handguns; requires gun safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and helps to keep schools open late, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

And 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 from them..

Because so many of our children do not have what they need to grow and learn in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, the rest of us must do more. That is why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros will join Vice President Gore and me to lead the Presidents's Summit of Service in Philadelphia in April. We intend to mobilize millions of Americans to serve in thousands of ways. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 70,000 young people 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.

[Let me say a word directly to our children: As we work to build a strong future for you, you have to take responsibility for that future. Nothing anyone can do can stop the rise in teen drug use if you don't stop. Better schools won't matter if you don't study. The streets won't be safe if you embrace violence. Soon America will be in your hands. It's up to you.]

[As the new century approaches, we will have a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our diverse American community. We can give new life to the ideas and ideals that have shaped our culture from the beginning -- through our arts and culture, our great writers and thinkers. Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics. But the real worth of our nation lies in our values and soaring spirit. Instead of cutting back on our modest effort to support the arts and humanities, we should stand by them. We should challenge our artists and writers, our museums and theaters to join with all Americans to make the Year 2000 a national celebration of American culture in every community -- a celebration of our culture in the century that has passed and in the new one ahead, so that we can remain the world's beacon of liberty and creativity, long after the fireworks have faded.]

And to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of change and keep American leadership strong and sure for an uncharted time.

Fifty years ago, a farsighted America led in creating the institutions that secured victory in the Cold War and built a growing world economy. As a result, today, more people than ever before embrace our ideals and share our interests.

Now, we stand at another moment of change and choice -- another time to be farsighted. We already have dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided our parents' world. For the first time, more people live under democracy than dictatorship, including every nation in our hemisphere but one -- and its day too will come.

But we still face bold new challenges -- to adapt old institutions for new demands... old thinking for new times... so the world works for our children and brings America fifty more years of security and prosperity.

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

NATO was created to strengthen Europe's west. Now, we must do the same for Europe's east. This summer, we will hold a special summit to begin the process of expanding NATO by

1999. Countries that were once our adversaries now can become our allies. We also will strengthen the Partnership for Peace for non-member nations. And we will build a strong NATO-Russia partnership so that all Europe's democracies define their future not in terms of what they can do to each other, but in terms of what they can do together for the good of all.

Second, America must look to the East no less than the West. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia this century. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend on trade with Asia.

There, too, we are helping to shape an Asian Pacific community of cooperation, not discord and dominance. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. We must assure that North Korea continues to implement its agreement to freeze and dismantle its nuclear weapons program. I call on Congress to fund America's contribution to this effort. Together with South Korea, we must advance peace talks with North Korea and bridge the Cold War's last armed divide.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China -- for the sake of our interests and our ideals. An isolated, inward looking China is not good for America. A China playing its rightful role in the world is. I will go to China and I have invited China's president to come here not because we agree on everything, but because engaging with China is the best way to work on common challenges like ending nuclear testing -- and to deal frankly with fundamental differences like human rights.

Third, the American people must prosper in the global economy. We have made it our mission to tear down trade barriers abroad that create good jobs at home. Today, America is again the world's number one exporter -- leading in agriculture and aviation, automobiles and entertainment, semiconductors and software.

Now, we must build on that momentum, especially in the two most dynamic regions on earth, Asia and Latin America. If we fail to act now, these emerging economies will find their economic future with other nations -- and we will be left behind. That is why we need authority to conclude trade agreements that open markets to American exports, that preserve our values and promote our interests. And that is why I will travel to Latin America this Spring and continue the work we began at the Summit of the Americas in Miami to build a community of democracies linked by shared values and expanding trade.

When Mexico's peso collapsed -- threatening our economic stability -- we led the world to help our neighbor through its crisis. Last month, Mexico repaid the United States three years ahead of schedule, with half a billion dollars profit -- and today our exports to Mexico are at an all time high. We must continue to help nations embrace open markets, improve living standards and advance freedom. But we can succeed only if we meet our obligations to the World Bank and the other organizations that multiply our contributions to progress many times over.

Fourth, America must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Haiti... from Northern Ireland to Africa. Taking reasonable risks for peace keeps us from

being drawn into far more costly conflicts. It encourages other nations to focus on future hopes, not past hatreds. It creates partners willing to seize the opportunities of a new century.

With American leadership, the killing has stopped in Bosnia. Now, the habits of peace must take hold. The follow-on NATO force will help speed reconstruction and reconciliation. 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: weapons of mass destruction... terrorism... international crime and drugs... environmental degradation. The American people are more secure because we won an historic accord to ban nuclear testing. With Russia, we have cut our nuclear arsenals and stopped targeting each other's citizens. We are acting to prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands and to rid the world of landmines. We are working with others, with renewed intensity, to stop terrorists and drug traffickers before they act -- and to hold them accountable if they do. And we are protecting the global environment -- managing our forests, stopping the spread of toxic chemicals, closing the hole in the ozone layer, reducing the greenhouse gasses that challenge our health as they change our climate.

Now, we must rise to a new test of leadership: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. It will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism. This treaty has been bipartisan from the beginning, supported by Republican and Democratic administrations alike -- and already approved by 68 nations. Together, we must make the Chemical Weapons Convention law and begin to outlaw poison gas from this earth.

Finally, we must have the tools to meet all these challenges.

We must maintain a strong and ready military. We will, by increasing funding for weapons modernization and taking care of our men and women in uniform.

We must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy -- and pay our debts and dues to a reforming United Nations. Every dollar we devote to preventing conflicts... promoting democracy... stopping the spread of disease and starvation... brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending today totals just one percent of the federal budget -- a small fraction of what America invested to choose engagement over escapism at the very start of the Cold War. If America is to continue to lead the world, we here who lead America must find the will and pay the way. A farsighted America has moved the world to a better place over these last fifty years. It can do so for another fifty years. But the words of a shortsighted America soon will fall on deaf ears.

Almost exactly fifty years ago, in the first winter of the Cold War, President Harry Truman stood before a Republican Congress and called on our country to meet its responsibilities of leadership. "If we falter," he warned, "we may endanger the peace of the world -- and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation." That Congress, led by great Republicans like Senator Arthur Vandenberg, answered President Truman's call. Together, they made the

commitments that strengthened our country for fifty years. With Truman and Vandenberg as our guiding lights, let us do what it takes to keep America strong, secure and prosperous for another fifty years -- let us keep America the indispensable nation.

In the end, more than anything else, our world leadership grows out of the power of our example, our ability to remain strong as One America.

All over the world, people are being torn asunder by racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts that fuel 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 advance together across all differences.

America has always been a nation of immigrants. From the start, 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. We have grown 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 on every continent can look to us and see the reflection of their greatness, as long as we give all of our citizens, whatever their background, the opportunity to achieve their own greatness.

We have not done that yet. Evidence of lingering division is all around us. We see it every day in the sullen, hopeless faces worn by too many of our youth. Too often, we see it in the corridors of power, and the schoolyards and streets of our cities. We see it in burned and defaced houses of worship. Too many people still seek to exploit our differences.

A few days before my second inauguration, one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller, suggested I read Isaiah 58:12. 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." I placed my hand on that verse when I took the oath of office, on behalf of all Americans. No matter what our differences -- in our faiths, our backgrounds, our politics -- we all must be repairers of the breach. For 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. His mother, [TK], is with us tonight. Gary Locke, a Chinese-American, is the newly elected Governor of Washington and the first Asian American governor in our history, a proud representative of immigrants who have strengthened America with their hard work, strong faith, and good citizenship.

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 our country [in

World War II]. He was denied that recognition simply because he is black. Last month, I had the privilege of righting that wrong and awarding the Medal of Honor to Mr. Baker, and his six courageous comrades.

Rev. Schuller, Kristin Tanner, Chris Getsla, Sue Winski, Dr. Kristen Zarfes, Mrs. Tejeda, Governor Locke and Lieutenant Vernon Baker -- they are all 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 it is America's most important mission. "The foundation of many generations," of every other strength we must build for the new century. Money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It must rise from the human spirit.

America is far more than a place. It is an idea, the most powerful idea in the history of nations. We are now the bearers of that idea, leading a great people into a new world. We don't have a moment to waste. The children born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20th Century. Everything they will know of America, they will know only through the work we do to build the new century.

Tomorrow morning, there will be just over 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, let us seize the days and the century.

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

Draft 2/2/97 8:15pm

**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, my fellow Americans:

[Thank you for inviting me back.]

I come before you tonight with a challenge as great as any in our peacetime history -- and a plan of action to meet that challenge, to prepare our people for the bold new world of the 21st Century.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of growth, we have won back the basic strength of our economy. With crime and welfare rolls declining, we are winning back our basic optimism, the enduring faith of America that we can master any difficulty. With the Cold War receding and global commerce at record levels, we are helping to win unrivaled peace and prosperity all across the world.

Now, the new promise of the global economy, the Information Age, brilliant new careers, life-enhancing technology -- all these are ours to seize for our people. America must not have won the struggles of the 20th century, only to lose this moment of opportunity to build the future of our dreams in the 21st century.

My fellow Americans, the state of our union is strong, but now we must rise to the decisive moment, to make a nation and a world better than we have ever known. That is our honor and our challenge. For if we do not act, the moment will pass -- and we will lose the best possibilities of our future. Though we face no threat to our existence, we do have an enemy: the enemy of our time is inaction.

So tonight, I issue a call to action -- action by this Congress, by our states, by all our people, to prepare America for the 21st Century. Action to keep our economy and our democracy strong and working for all our people; action to strengthen education and harness the forces of technology and science; action to build stronger families and stronger communities and a safer environment; action to keep America the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And above all, action to build a more perfect union here at home.

The spirit we bring to our work will determine its success. The people of this nation elected us all. They want us to be partners, not partisans. They put us all right here in the same boat . . . they gave us all oars . . . and they have told us to row. Now let's get going.

First, we must move quickly to finish the unfinished business of our country -- balancing our budget, renewing our democracy, finishing the job of welfare reform.

Over the last four years, we have brought new economic growth by investing in our people, expanding our exports, cutting our deficits, creating over 11 million new jobs. Now we must keep our economy the strongest in the world.

We here tonight have an historic opportunity. Let this Congress 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.

This plan will balance the budget and invest in our people while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. It will balance the budget and build on the Vice President's efforts to make this government work better, even as it costs less. It will balance the budget and provide middle class tax relief to pay for education and health care, to help raise a child, and to buy and sell a home.

Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. It is unnecessary and unwise to adopt a balanced budget amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis and force unthinkable results such as judges impounding Social Security checks or increasing taxes. We don't need an amendment -- we need action.

Whatever our differences, we should balance the budget now, and then, for the long-term health of our society, we must agree to a bipartisan process to preserve Social Security and reform Medicare, so that these fundamental programs will be as strong for our children as they are for our parents.

Our second piece of unfinished business requires us to commit ourselves tonight, before the eyes of America, to enacting bipartisan campaign finance reform.

Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines to craft tough and fair campaign reform. [I ask them to stand.] Their proposal 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 that both parties receive. It would also ban contributions from foreign owned companies and noncitizens.

Delay will mean the death of reform. So let's set our own deadline. Let's work together to write bipartisan campaign finance reform into law by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy -- July the 4th.

There is a third piece of unfinished business: Over the last four years, we moved a record

two and a quarter million people off the welfare rolls. Then last year we enacted landmark welfare reform, demanding that all able-bodied recipients assume the responsibility of moving from welfare to work. Now each and every one of us has to fulfill our responsibility -- indeed, our moral obligation -- to make sure that people who now must work, can work. Now we must act to meet a new goal: two million more people off the welfare rolls by the Year 2000.

Here is my plan: Tax credits and other incentives to businesses that hire people off welfare. Incentives for job placement firms and for states that create jobs for welfare recipients. Training, transportation and child care to help people go to work.

Now I challenge every state: turn those welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I challenge every religious congregation, every community non-profit, and especially every business: hire someone off welfare. And I say to every employer in this country who has ever criticized the old welfare system: You cannot blame the old system anymore. We have torn it down. Now do your part. Give someone on welfare the chance to work.

If we all do that, we can end the permanent underclass by lifting it up into a growing middle class.

Tonight, I am proud to announce that five major corporations -- Sprint, Monsanto, UPS, Burger King, and United Airlines -- will be the first to join in a new national effort to marshal America's businesses to hire people off welfare.

And we must join together to do something else too -- something Republican and Democratic governors alike have asked us to do -- restore basic health, nutrition, and disability benefits when misfortune strikes immigrants who came to this country legally, and who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law. To do otherwise is unworthy of a great nation of immigrants.

We passed welfare reform. We were right to do it. But no one can walk out of this chamber with a clear conscience unless you are prepared to finish the job.

Then, the greatest step of all -- the high threshold to the future we now must cross -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to ensure that Americans have the best education in the world. Let's work together to meet these goals: Every 8 year old must be able to read; every 12 year old must be able to log on to the Internet; every 18 year old must be able to go to college, and every adult American must be able to keep on learning.

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion next year. But far more than money is required.

I have a plan, a Call to Action for American Education, including ten points to which we must commit ourselves tonight. [*hold up booklet*]

First, we must set rigorous national standards for education, and help our children to reach them. We must finally say: Fourth graders must be able to read. Eighth graders must be able to do algebra. And all our children must master the basics.

To do this, we must begin a national crusade for standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards representing what students must know to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st Century. Every state and every school must shape the curriculum to reflect these standards, and train teachers to lift students up to them. To help schools meet the standards and measure their progress, we will lead an effort over the next two years to develop national tests for student achievement.

Tonight, I issue a challenge to the nation: Every state should adopt high national standards, and by 1999, every state should test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met.

Raising standards will not be easy. Some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. The point is not to put our children down, but to lift them up. Good tests will show us who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools to improve. And they can help us to end social promotion. No child should move from grade school to junior high, or junior high to high school until he or she is ready.

These tests are far more than tests of our children. They are a test of our nation, of our will to meet the challenges of the global economy and the Information Age.

Last month, along with my partner in this effort, Secretary of Education Dick Riley, I visited schools in [tk] county in Northern Illinois, where 8th grade students from 20 school districts, in a project they called "First in the World," took the Third International Math and Science Study, the TIMSS test -- a test that reflects the world-class standards our children must meet for the new era. And those Illinois students tied Singapore for first in the world in science, and they came in second in math. Two of them, Kristin Tanner, and Chris Getsla are here tonight, with their teacher, Sue Winski. They prove that when we aim high and challenge our students, they will be the best in the world.

The second point of my plan recognizes this simple truth: to have the best schools, we must have the best teachers. Most of us -- certainly including me -- would not be here tonight without the help of such teachers. For years, many educators, led by North Carolina's Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. 400 of these master teachers have been certified since 1995. My budget will enable 100,000 more to seek national certification as master teachers. We should reward our best teachers, quickly and fairly remove those who don't measure up, and challenge our finest young people to consider teaching as a career.

Third: we must do more to help all our children read. 40% of our 8 year olds cannot read on their own -- 40%. That's why we have just launched the America Reads initiative -- a critical national effort to build a citizen army of one million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by the end of 3rd grade. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. We want at least 100,000 college students to help. And tonight, I am proud to announce that 60 college presidents have answered my call, and pledged that tens of thousands of their work study students will serve for one year as reading tutors.

This is also a challenge to every teacher and every principal: create a program to train and use these tutors to help your children read. This is especially a challenge to our parents: Read with your children every night.

And that leads to the fourth part of my plan: We can't start teaching our children too early. We are learning more and more about young children's emotional and intellectual development. Parents' quiet moments with very young children make a big difference in their lives. Parents are their children's first teachers, and every home must be a place of learning. The First Lady has spent years studying and writing about this issue. And I am proud to announce that she and I will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this Spring, to explore how parents and policy-makers can use these new scientific discoveries. [And in June, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference to highlight the importance of parent's involvement throughout a child's education.]

We already know what a difference good preschool can make, and that's why my plan also expands Head Start to one million children by 2002.

The fifth part of my plan calls on every state to give parents the power to choose the right public school for them. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. And we must do more to encourage parents and teachers to start charter schools, schools that set and meet the highest standards, and survive only as long as they do. My plan will help America create 3,000 charter schools by the year 2000 -- nearly seven times as many as there are today, so parents will have more choice in sending their children to the best public schools.

Sixth: we must make sure character education is a part of every curriculum. We must teach our children to be good citizens, and continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs.

Seventh: we cannot expect our children to raise themselves up in schools that are literally falling down. Traditionally, the federal government has played no role in school construction. But with the student population at record levels, and record numbers of school buildings falling into disrepair, this has become a serious national concern. My budget includes \$5 billion to help communities finance \$20 billion in school construction over the next four years. [Moseley-Braun]

Eighth: We must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- just as universal in America as a high school education is today.

To do that, I propose America's HOPE scholarship, based on Governor Zell Miller's pioneering program in Georgia: two years of a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college. I also propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school; an expanded IRA you can withdraw from tax free for education; and the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships for deserving students in 20 years.

This plan will give most families the ability to pay no taxes on money saved for college tuition. I ask you to pass it -- to give every American who works hard the chance to go to college.

Ninth: In the 21st Century, we must expand the frontiers of learning across a lifetime. All our people, of whatever age, must have the chance to learn new skills. Most American workers live near a community college. The roads that take them there can be paths to a better future. My G.I. Bill for Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant that will go directly into eligible workers' hands. For too long, this bill has sat before you without action -- and I ask you to pass it now.

Tenth: we must harness the Information Age to make our schools equal to the 21st Century. Last year, I challenged America to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, so that, for the first time in history, a child in the poorest inner city, the most isolated rural town, the most comfortable suburb, will all have the same access to the same universe of knowledge. I ask your support to complete this historic mission.

That is my plan -- a Call to Action for American Education.

One of the greatest sources of our national strength in the 20th century has been a bipartisan foreign policy; politics stopped at the water's edge. I ask you -- and I ask the governors from the many states who have joined us here tonight -- and teachers, parents and citizens all across America -- for a new nonpartisan commitment to education -- because education is the national security issue of our future -- and politics should stop at the classroom door.

We have the strongest economy and the strongest democracy in the world. But if we miss this moment of opportunity in education, then fifty years from now, the America of tomorrow's children will not be the strongest economy and the strongest democracy on earth.

That's why tonight, I pledge to take this call to action to the country. If we work together, we can make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

To prepare America for the 21st century, we must harness the powerful forces of

science and technology to benefit all Americans.

This is the first State of the Union carried live over the Internet. But we have only begun to spread the benefits of a technology revolution that should be the modern birthright of every citizen.

Our effort to connect every classroom is just the beginning. I challenge the private sector to connect every children's hospital to the Internet as soon as possible, so a child in bed can stay in touch with school, family and friends.

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.

But we cannot stop there. As the Internet becomes our new town square, a computer in every home -- a teacher of all subjects, a connection to all cultures -- will no longer be a dream, but a necessity. Over the next decade, that must be our goal.

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, all of which will have practical applications ~~here on Earth~~. *for our everyday lives*

We must speed the remarkable advances in medical science. In the last year alone, American scientists discovered genes linked to breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and medication that stops a stroke in progress and begins to reverse its effects -- and we have discovered treatments that dramatically lengthen the lives of people with AIDS.

Since I took office, funding for HIV and AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health has gone up 40%, to [\$1.5 billion] next year. With these new resources, NIH 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 [3 million] lives around the world. If you approve this plan, scientists from business, universities and our national labs will be able to work together more efficiently so that we can end the threat of AIDS.

To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families and help parents pass on their values to their children.

With new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we should expand the Family and Medical Leave Law so workers can take time off for teacher conferences or a child's medical checkup. Now we should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for overtime in income, or trade it in for time off to be with their families.

We must continue, step-by-step, to give more families access to affordable, quality health

care. ~~We must find a way to work together to cover~~ the 40 million Americans -- most of them in working, taxpaying families, who still lack health insurance.

~~Today~~, 10 million children lack health insurance -- 80% of them have working parents who pay taxes. This is unacceptable. My balanced budget will extend health coverage to up to five million of those children. It will help all working Americans by ensuring that people who temporarily lose their jobs can still afford to keep their health insurance. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

My Medicare plan helps the many families taking care of loved-ones afflicted with Alzheimers -- and for the first time, it would pay for annual mammograms.

Just as we ended drive through deliveries last year, we must now end the dangerous and demeaning practice of sending women home from the hospital only hours after a mastectomy. With us tonight is Dr. Kristen Zarfos, a Connecticut surgeon whose outrage at this practice spurred a national movement and inspired this legislation. We thank you, Dr. Zarfos.

We must protect our children by standing by our action to ban the advertising and marketing of cigarettes that endanger their lives.

In the last four years, we have increased child support collections by 50%. Now, we should make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her most sacred obligations.

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

Our strong and growing economy has helped revive many urban areas, but we still have more to do. Our approach is to empower poor urban and rural communities to create the conditions in which families can flourish, and to create jobs through investment by business and loans by banks.

We should double the number of empowerment zones. They have already brought hope to communities like Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half in four years. We should expand the network of community development banks. We should enact the brownfields initiative to restore contaminated urban land and buildings to productive use.

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

We must protect our environment in every community. In the last four years, we cleaned up as many toxic waste sites as in the previous twelve; we strengthened the nation's safe food and clean water laws; we saved some of America's rarest, most beautiful land in Utah's Red

TO give the people who live here new hope

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Rocks region, created three new national parks in the California desert; and began to protect Florida's Everglades.

We must be as vigilant with our rivers as we are with our land. Tonight, I am announcing that this year I will designate 10 American Heritage Rivers, helping communities to come together and develop their waterfronts, restoring the lifeblood of America, our nation's great rivers.

Now we should clean up over 500 more toxic waste sites, so that two-thirds 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 we must also protect our global environment, working to ban the worst toxic chemicals and to reduce greenhouse gasses that challenge our health as they change our climate.

Next, we must press our fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 community police on our streets. We should also pass a Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

And I ask you to join me in mounting a full scale assault on juvenile crime, with legislation that declares war on gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; extends the Brady Bill so violent teenage criminals will not be able to buy handguns; requires gun safety locks to prevent unauthorized use; and helps to keep our schools open after dark, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

And 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 from them.

Because so many of our young children do not have what they need to grow and learn in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, the rest of us must do more. That is why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros will join Vice President Gore and me to lead the Presidents's Summit of Service in Philadelphia in April. We intend to mobilize millions of Americans to serve in thousands of ways. Already, AmeriCorps, our national service program, has helped 70,000 young people 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.

I'd like to make one

Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics. But the enduring worth of our nation lies in our values and soaring spirit. So instead of cutting back on our modest effort to support the arts and humanities, we should stand by them, and challenge our artists and writers, our museums and our theaters, to join with all Americans to make the Year 2000 a national celebration of the American spirit in every community -- a celebration of our culture in the

century that has passed, and in the new one to come, so that we can remain the world's beacon of liberty and creativity, long after the fireworks have faded.

And to prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of change in the world and keep American leadership strong and sure for an uncharted time.

Fifty years ago, a farsighted America led in creating the institutions that secured victory in the Cold War and built a growing world economy. As a result, today, more people than ever embrace our ideals and share our interests.

Already, we have dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided our parents' world. For the first time, more people live under democracy than dictatorship, including every nation in our own hemisphere but one -- and its day too will come.

Now, we stand at another moment of change and choice -- and another time to be farsighted and bring America 50 more years of security and prosperity.

Our first task is to help build, for the first time, an undivided, democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, prosperous and at peace, America is more secure.

We must expand NATO by 1999, so countries that were once our adversaries can become our allies. At the special NATO summit this summer, that is what we will do. We must strengthen NATO's Partnership for Peace with non-member nations. And we must build a stable partnership with a democratic Russia. Under our leadership, NATO kept us safe for half a century. Now, let's build a new NATO in an undivided Europe to make the future safe for our children. *[We suggest losing: Let all of Europe's democracies define their future not in terms of what they can do to each other, but in terms of what they can do together for the good of all.]*

Second, America must look to the East no less than the West. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia this century. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend upon trade with Asia.

There, too, we are helping to shape an Asian Pacific community of cooperation, not conflict. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. Together with South Korea, we must advance peace talks with North Korea and bridge the Cold War's last armed divide. And I call on Congress to fund our share of the agreement under which North Korea must continue to freeze -- and then dismantle -- its nuclear weapons program.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China -- for the sake of our interests and our ideals. An isolated, inward looking China is not good for America. A China playing its rightful role in the world is. I will go to China and I have invited China's president to come here, not because we agree on everything, but because engaging with China is the best way to work on common challenges like ending nuclear testing -- and to deal frankly with fundamental

differences like human rights.

Third, the American people must prosper in the global economy. We have made it our mission to tear down trade barriers abroad to create good jobs at home. I am proud to tell you that today, America is once again the number one exporter and the most competitive nation on Earth.

Now, we must act to expand our exports, especially to Asia and Latin America, the two fastest growing regions on earth -- or be left behind as these emerging economies forge new ties with other nations. That is why we need authority now to conclude trade agreements that open markets to our goods and services even as we preserve our values.

We cannot shrink from the challenge of the global economy. We have the best workers and the best products. Give Americans the opportunity of an open market, and we can out compete anyone in the world.

We should all be proud that America led the effort to rescue Mexico from its economic crisis -- and we should all be proud that last month, Mexico repaid the United States, three full years ahead of schedule, with half a billion dollars profit. Today our exports to Mexico are at an all time high. I will travel to Latin America this Spring and continue the work we began at the Summit of the Americas in Miami. We must link this entire hemisphere with bonds of democracy and prosperity.

Fourth, America must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Haiti . . . from Northern Ireland to Africa. Taking reasonable risks for peace keeps us from being drawn into far more costly conflicts later.

With American leadership, the killing has stopped in Bosnia. Now, the habits of peace must take hold. The new NATO force will allow reconstruction and reconciliation to accelerate. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops. Our troops are doing a remarkable job for America -- and America must do right by them.

Fifth, we must strongly move against new threats to our security: weapons of mass destruction . . . terrorism . . . international crime and drugs. In the past four years, we agreed to ban nuclear testing; with Russia, we dramatically cut our nuclear arsenals, and stopped targeting each others citizens. We are acting to rid the world of landmines, and prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands. We are working with other nations, with renewed intensity, to stop terrorists and drug traffickers before they act, and to hold them fully accountable if they do.

Now, we must rise to a new test of leadership: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. It will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us fight terrorism. This treaty has been bipartisan from the beginning, supported by Republican and Democratic administrations alike -- and already approved by 68 nations. Together, we must make the Chemical Weapons Convention law and begin to outlaw poison gas from this earth.

Finally, we must have the tools to meet all these challenges.

We must maintain a strong and ready military. We must increase funding for weapons modernization and we must take good care of our men and women in uniform.

We also must renew our commitment to America's diplomacy -- and pay our debts and dues to international financial institutions such as the World Bank, and to a reforming United Nations. Every dollar we devote to preventing conflicts . . . to promoting democracy . . . to stopping the spread of disease and starvation . . . brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending today totals just one percent of the federal budget -- a small fraction of what America invested to choose engagement over escapism at the start of the Cold War. If America is to continue to lead the world, we here who lead America simply must find the will and pay our way. A farsighted America has moved the world to a better place over these last fifty years. It can do so for another fifty years. But the words of a shortsighted America will soon fall on deaf ears all around the world.

Almost exactly fifty years ago, in the first winter of the Cold War, President Harry Truman stood before a Republican Congress and called on our country to meet its responsibilities of leadership. "If we falter," he warned, "we may endanger the peace of the world -- and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation." That Congress, led by great Republicans like Senator Arthur Vandenberg, answered President Truman's call. Together, they made the commitments that strengthened our country for fifty years. Now let us do what it takes to remain the indispensable nation -- to keep America strong, secure and prosperous for another fifty years.

In the end, more than anything else, our world leadership grows out of the power of our example, out of our ability to remain strong as One America.

All over the world, people are being torn asunder by racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts that fuel fanaticism and terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy. And the world looks to us to show it is possible to live and advance together across those kinds of differences.

America has always been a nation of immigrants. From the start, 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. We have grown into an experiment in democratic diversity fueled by openness and promise.

~~So much of America's future is tied to how we relate to the rest of the world.~~ My fellow Americans, we must never believe that our diversity is a weakness ~~in this~~ -- it is our greatest strength. For people on every continent can look to us and see the reflection of their own greatness, as long as we give all of our citizens, whatever their background, the opportunity to achieve their greatness.

We have not done that yet. Evidence of lingering division is all around us. We see it

every day in the sullen, hopeless faces worn by too many of our young people. Too often, we see it in the corridors of power, in the schoolyards and streets of our cities. We see it in the burned houses of worship and bombed clinics. Too many people still seek to exploit our differences.

A few days before my second inauguration, one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller, suggested I read Isaiah 58:12. 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." I placed my hand on that verse when I took the oath of office, on behalf of all Americans. For no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, our backgrounds, our politics -- we must all be repairers of the breach. We may not all share a common past, but surely we share a common future.

I ask you to reflect on 2 other Americans
and the Along with Rev. Schuller, we are joined tonight by another American, and the spirit of *whose* *Waggs* ~~two others~~, 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, only 51 years old, who earned a Silver Star and a Purple Heart fighting in Vietnam, and who went on to serve Texas and America fighting for our future in this chamber. His mother, is with us tonight. Gary Locke, a Chinese-American, is the newly elected Governor of Washington and the very first Asian American Governor in our history, *the son of 2 other Americans* ~~and~~ a proud representative of immigrants who have strengthened America with their hard work, strong families, and good citizenship.

There is someone else I want to talk to you about tonight. On April 5, 1945, in the hills of Italy, Lieutenant Vernon Baker faced one of greatest challenges of his life. That day, he fought side by side with black and white soldiers alike, and only seven of the 25 men in his platoon survived. But America won that battle, because he pressed forward into a dark canyon where the enemy lay in wait. For 50 years, he was denied the recognition he deserved -- simply because he is an African-American. Last month, I had the privilege of righting that wrong and awarding the Medal of Honor to Mr. Baker, and six of his courageous comrades. He could not come here tonight from his home in St. Maries, Idaho, because of a family illness. But his example shines brightly in this chamber tonight.

~~Rev. Schuller, Kristin Tamm, Chris Getsla, Sue Winski, Dr. Kristen Zarfes,~~
Congressman Frank Tejeda, Governor Locke and Lieutenant Vernon Baker -- in their own way, they are all repairers of the breach. They show us how to build our common future. And we should thank them all.

The work of staying together as a nation is hard work. But it is America's most important mission. "The foundation of many generations," of every other strength we must build for the new century. Money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It must rise from the human spirit.

America is far more than a place. It is an idea, the most powerful idea in the history of nations. We are now the bearers of that idea, leading a great people into a new world. We don't

have a moment to waste. The children born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20th Century. Everything they will know of America, they will know only through the work we do now to build a new century.

Tomorrow morning, there will be just over 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 have work to do. Let us seize the days and the century.

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

Draft 2/4/97 1am

**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, my fellow Americans:

Thank you for inviting me back.

I come before you tonight with a challenge as great as any in our peacetime history -- and a plan of action to meet that challenge, to prepare our people for the bold new world of the 21st Century.

We have much to be thankful for. With four years of growth, we have won back the basic strength of our economy. With crime and welfare rolls declining, we are winning back our basic optimism, the enduring faith of America that we can master any difficulty. With the Cold War receding and global commerce at record levels, we are helping to win unrivaled peace and prosperity all across the world.

My fellow Americans, the state of our union is strong, but now we must rise to the decisive moment, to make a nation and a world better than any we have ever known. The new promise of the global economy, the Information Age, brilliant new careers, life-enhancing technology -- are ours to seize. That is our honor and our challenge. *[We must be shapers of events, not observers. The question before us is not what the future means for us, but what meaning we can give to the future.]* But if we do not act, the moment will pass -- and we will lose the best possibilities of our future.

Tonight, we face no imminent threat, but we do have an enemy: The enemy of our time is inaction.

So tonight, I issue a call to action -- action by this Congress, by our states, by all our people, to prepare America for the 21st Century. Action to keep our economy and our democracy strong and working for all our people; action to strengthen education and harness the forces of technology and science; action to build stronger families and stronger communities and a safer environment; action to keep America the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And above all, action to build a more perfect union here at home.

The spirit we bring to our work will determine its success. The people of this nation elected us all. They want us to be partners, not partisans. They put us all right here in the same

boat . . . they gave us all oars . . . and they told us to row. Now let's get going.

First, we must move quickly to finish the unfinished business of our country -- to balance our budget, renew our democracy, finish the job of welfare reform.

Over the last four years, we brought new economic growth by investing in our people, expanding our exports, cutting our deficits, creating over 11 million new jobs. Now we must keep our economy the strongest in the world.

We here tonight have an historic opportunity. Let this Congress be the Congress that finally balances the budget.

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

This plan will balance the budget and invest in our people while protecting Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment. It will balance the budget and build on the Vice President's efforts to make our government work better, even as it costs less. It will balance the budget and provide middle class tax relief to pay for education and health care, to help raise a child, to buy and sell a home.

Balancing the budget requires only your vote and my signature. It does not require us to rewrite our Constitution. I believe it is unnecessary and unwise to adopt a balanced budget amendment that could cripple our country in time of crisis later on, and force unwanted results such as judges impounding Social Security checks or increasing taxes. We don't need an amendment -- we need action.

Whatever our differences, we should balance the budget now, and then, for the long-term health of our society, we must agree to a bipartisan process to preserve Social Security and reform Medicare, so that these fundamental programs will be as strong for our children as they are for our parents.*[can't read your writing on p. 4]*

Our second piece of unfinished business requires us to commit ourselves, before the eyes of America tonight, to enacting bipartisan campaign finance reform.

Senators McCain and Feingold, Representatives Shays and Meehan, have reached across party lines to craft tough and fair campaign reform. [I ask them to stand.] Their proposal would curb spending, reduce the role of special interests, create a level playing field between challengers and incumbents and ban contributions from noncitizens and all corporate sources -- the large soft money contributions that both parties receive.

You know and I know that delay will mean the death reform. So let's set our own deadline. Let's work together to write bipartisan campaign finance reform into law, [and pass McCain-Feingold] by the day we celebrate the birth of our democracy -- July the 4th.

There is a third piece of unfinished business: Over the last four years, we moved a record two and a quarter million people off the welfare rolls. Then last year we enacted landmark welfare reform, demanding that able-bodied recipients assume the responsibility of moving from welfare to work. Now each and every one of us has to fulfill our responsibility -- indeed, our moral obligation -- to make sure that people who must work, can work. Now we must act to meet a new goal: two million more people off the welfare rolls by the Year 2000.

Here is my plan: Tax credits and other incentives to businesses that hire people off welfare. Incentives for job placement firms and for states to create jobs for welfare recipients. Training, transportation and child care to help people go to work.

Now I challenge every state: turn those welfare checks into private sector paychecks. I challenge every religious congregation, every community non-profit, and every business: hire someone off welfare. And I say especially to every employer in this country who has ever criticized the old welfare system: You cannot blame the old system anymore. We have torn it down. Now do your part. Give someone on welfare the chance to work.

If we all do that, we can end the permanent underclass by lifting it up into a growing middle class.

Tonight, I am proud to announce that five major corporations -- Sprint, Monsanto, UPS, Burger King, and United Airlines -- will be the first to join in a new national effort to marshal America's businesses to hire people off welfare.

And we must join together to do something else too -- something Republican and Democratic governors alike have asked us to do -- to restore basic health, nutrition, and disability benefits when misfortune strikes immigrants who came to this country legally, who work hard, pay taxes, and obey the law. To do otherwise is simply unworthy of a great nation of immigrants.

We passed welfare reform. We were right to do it. But no one can walk out of this chamber with a clear conscience unless you are prepared to finish the job.

Next, the greatest step of all -- the high threshold to the future we now must cross -- and my number one priority as President for the next four years -- is to ensure that Americans have the best education in the world. Let's work together to meet these goals: Every 8 year old must be able to read; every 12 year old must be able to log on to the Internet; every 18 year old must be able to go to college, and every adult American must be able to keep on learning.

My balanced budget makes an unprecedented commitment to these goals -- \$51 billion dollars next year. But far more than money is required.

I have a plan, a Call to Action for American Education, with ten principles to which we must commit ourselves tonight. *[hold up booklet]*

First, we must begin a national crusade for education standards -- not federal government standards, but national standards representing what all of our students must know to succeed in the knowledge economy of the 21st Century. Every state and every school must shape the curriculum to reflect these standards, and train teachers to lift students up to meet them. To help the schools to meet the standards and to measure their progress, we will lead an effort over the next two years to develop national tests of student achievement.

Tonight, I issue a challenge to the nation: Every state should adopt high national standards, and by 1999, every state should test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math to make sure these standards are met.

Raising standards will not be easy, and some of our children will not be able to meet them at first. The point is not to put our children down, but to lift them up. Good tests will show us who needs help, what changes in teaching to make, and which schools to improve. And they can help us to end social promotion. For no child should move from grade school to junior high, or junior high to high school until he or she is ready.

Last month, along with my partner in this effort, Secretary of Education Dick Riley, I visited schools in [tk] county in Northern Illinois, where 8th grade students from 20 school districts, in a project they called "First in the World," took the Third International Math and Science Study, called the TIMSS test -- a test that reflects the world-class standards our children must meet for the new era. And those students in Illinois were tied for first in the world in science, and came in second only to Singapore in math. Two of them, Kristin Tanner, and Chris Getsla are here tonight, with their teacher, Sue Winski. They prove that when we aim high and challenge our students, they will be the best in the world.

The second point of my plan recognizes this simple truth: to have the best schools, we must have the best teachers. Most of us -- certainly including myself -- would not be here tonight without the help of such teachers. For years, many educators, led by North Carolina's Governor Jim Hunt and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, have worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching. 400 of these master teachers have been certified since 1995. My budget will enable 100,000 more to seek national certification as master teachers. We should reward our best teachers, quickly and fairly remove those few who don't measure up, and challenge our finest young people to consider teaching as a career.

Third: we must do more to help all our children read. 40% of our 8 year olds cannot read on their own. That's why we have just launched the America Reads initiative -- to build a citizen army of one million volunteer tutors to make sure every child can read independently by the end of 3rd grade. We will use thousands of AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize this citizen army. We

want at least 100,000 college students to help. And tonight, I am pleased that 60 college presidents have answered my call, and pledged that thousands of their work study students will serve for one year as reading tutors.

This is also a challenge to every teacher and every principal: create a system to use these tutors to help your children read. And it's especially a challenge to our parents: Read with your children every night.

That leads to the fourth part of my plan: We can't start teaching children too soon. My budget expands Head Start to one million children by 2002.

Yet what we are learning more and more now about very young children's emotional and intellectual development teaches us we must start even earlier. Parents' quiet moments with their children makes a big difference in their lives. The First Lady has spent years studying and writing about this issue. She and I will convene a White House Conference on Early Learning and the Brain this Spring, to explore how parents and educators can best use these startling new scientific discoveries. Then, in June, the Vice President and Mrs. Gore will host their sixth annual family conference. This one will focus on the importance of parents' involvement throughout a child's education.

Fifth, every state should give parents the power to choose the right public school for their children. Innovation and competition will make our public schools better. And we must do more to encourage parents and teachers to start charter schools, schools that set and meet the highest standards, and survive only as long as they do. Our plan will help America create 3,000 of these charter schools by the next century -- that's nearly seven times as many as there are today -- so that parents will have more choice in sending their children to the best public schools.

Sixth: character education must be taught in our schools. We must teach our children to be good citizens, and continue to promote order and discipline, supporting communities that introduce school uniforms, impose curfews, enforce truancy laws, remove disruptive students from the classroom, and have zero tolerance for guns and drugs.

Seventh: we cannot expect our children to raise themselves up in schools that are literally falling down. Traditionally, the federal government has played no role in school construction. But with the student population at an all time high, and record numbers of school buildings falling into disrepair, this has become a serious national concern. My budget, therefore, includes \$5 billion to help communities finance \$20 billion in school construction over the next four years. [Moseley-Braun]

Eighth: We must make the 13th and 14th years of education -- at least two years of college -- just as universal in America as a high school education is today, and open the doors of college to all.

To do that, I propose America's HOPE scholarship, based on Governor Zell Miller's

pioneering program in Georgia: two years of a \$1,500 tax credit for college tuition, enough to pay for the typical community college. I also propose a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for all tuition after high school; an expanded IRA you can withdraw from tax free for education; and the largest increase in Pell Grant scholarships in 20 years. This plan will give most families the ability to pay no taxes on money saved for college tuition. I ask you to pass it -- to give every American who works hard the chance to go to college.

Ninth: In the 21st Century, we must expand the frontiers of learning across a lifetime. All our people, of whatever age, must have the chance to learn new skills. Most American workers live near a community college. The roads that take them there can be paths to a better future. My G.I. Bill for Workers will transform the confusing tangle of federal training programs into a simple skill grant that will go directly into eligible workers' hands. For too long, this bill has sat before you without action -- and I ask you to pass it now. Let's give more of our workers the chance to learn what they need, to earn a better life.

Tenth: we must harness the Information Age to make our schools equal to the 21st Century. Last year, I challenged America to connect every classroom and library to the Internet by the year 2000, so that, for the first time in history, a child in the poorest inner city school, the most isolated rural town, the most comfortable suburb, will have the same access to the same universe of knowledge. I ask your support to complete this historic mission.

That is my plan -- a Call to Action for American Education.

It reflects a basic insight: One of the greatest sources of our national strength throughout the 20th Century has been a bipartisan foreign policy; politics stopped at the water's edge. Now I ask you -- and I ask the governors from the many states who have joined us here tonight -- and teachers, parents and citizens all across America -- for a new nonpartisan commitment to education -- because education is the national security issue of our future -- and politics should stop at the classroom door.

We have the strongest economy and the strongest democracy in the world. If we want tomorrow's children to enjoy these blessings 50 years from now, we dare not fall prey to inaction and miss this moment of opportunity in education.

I pledge to take this Call to Action to the country, so that together, we can make American education, like America itself, the envy of the world.

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

This is the first State of the Union carried live over the Internet. But we have only begun to spread the benefits of a technology revolution that should be the modern birthright of every citizen.

Our effort to connect every classroom is just the beginning. 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 touch with school, family and friends. A sick child should not be a child alone.

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.

But we cannot stop there. As the Internet becomes our new town square, a computer in every home -- a teacher of all subjects, a connection to all cultures -- this will no longer be a dream, but a necessity. And over the next decade, that must be our goal.

We must continue to explore the heavens, pressing on with the Mars probes, the international space station, both of which will have practical applications for our everyday living.

We must speed the remarkable advances in medical science. The human genome project is now decoding the genetic mysteries of life. In the last year alone, American scientists discovered genes linked to breast cancer and ovarian cancer, and medication that stops a stroke in progress and begins to reverse its effects -- and we have discovered treatments that dramatically lengthen the lives of people with HIV and AIDS.

Since I took office, funding for AIDS research at the National Institutes of Health has increased dramatically, to \$1.5 billion next year. With these new resources, NIH will now become the primary discovery engine for an AIDS vaccine. And every year we move up the discovery of an AIDS vaccine, we can save 3 million lives around the world. If you approve this budget, scientists from the private sector, universities, and our national labs will be able to work together more efficiently so that we can end the threat of AIDS.

To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must build stronger families, and help parents pass on their values to their children.

With new pressures on people in the way they work and live, we should expand the Family and Medical Leave Law so workers can take time off for teacher conferences and a child's medical checkup. Now we should pass flextime so workers can choose to be paid for overtime in income, or trade it in for time off to be with their families.

We must continue, step-by-step, to give more families access to affordable, quality health care. 40 million Americans -- most of them in working, taxpaying families, still lack health insurance.

10 million children lack health insurance -- 80% of them have working parents who pay taxes. That is wrong. My balanced budget will extend health coverage to up to five million of those children. It will help all working Americans by ensuring that people who temporarily lose

their jobs can still afford to keep their health insurance. No child should be without a doctor just because a parent is without a job.

My Medicare plan provides support for respite care for the many families taking care of loved-ones afflicted with Alzheimers -- and for the first time, it would pay for annual mammograms.

Just as we ended drive through deliveries of babies last year, we must now end the dangerous and demeaning practice of sending women home from the hospital only hours after a mastectomy. With us tonight is Dr. Kristen Zarfos, a Connecticut surgeon whose outrage at this practice spurred a national movement and inspired this legislation. We thank her for her efforts.

In the last four years, we have increased child support collections by 50%. Now, we should go further and make it a felony for any parent to cross state lines in an attempt to flee from his or her most sacred obligations.

We must protect our children by standing by our action to ban the advertising and marketing of cigarettes that endangers their lives.

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

Our growing economy has helped revive poor urban and rural neighborhoods. But we have more to do, to empower them to create the conditions in which families can flourish, and to create jobs through investment by business and loans by banks.

We should double the number of empowerment zones. They have already brought hope to communities like Detroit, where the unemployment rate has been cut in half in four years. We should expand the network of community development banks. We should restore contaminated urban land and buildings to productive use.

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

We must protect our environment in every community. In the last four years, we cleaned up 250 toxic waste sites, as many as in the previous twelve. Now we should clean up 500 more of the worst toxic waste sites, so our children grow up next to parks, not poison. 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.

In the last four years, we strengthened the nation's safe food and clean water laws. We protected some of America's rarest, most beautiful land in Utah's Red Rocks region, created three new national parks in the California desert, and began to protect Florida's Everglades. Now

we must be as vigilant with our rivers as we are with our land. Tonight, I announce that this year I will designate 10 American Heritage Rivers, and help communities develop their waterfronts and clean up pollution in their rivers, proving once again that we can grow the economy as we protect the environment.

And we must also protect our global environment, working to ban the worst toxic chemicals and to reduce greenhouse gasses that challenge our health as they change our climate.

Next, we must press our fight against crime and violence. Serious crime has dropped five years in a row. The key has been community policing -- and we must finish the job of putting 100,000 community police on our streets. We should pass the Victims' Rights Amendment to the Constitution. And I ask you to join me in mounting a full scale assault on juvenile crime, with legislation that: declares war on gangs, with new prosecutors and tougher penalties; that extends the Brady Bill so violent teenage criminals will not be able to buy handguns; that requires child safety locks on handguns to prevent unauthorized use; and helps keep our schools open after dark, on weekends, and in the summer, so young people have someplace to go and something to say yes to.

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 from them.

Because so many of our young children do not have what they need to grow and learn in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, the rest of us must do more. That is why President Bush, General Colin Powell, and former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros will join Vice President Gore and me to lead the Presidents's Summit of Service in Philadelphia in April. We intend to mobilize millions of Americans to serve in thousands of ways. Our national service program, Americorps, has already helped 70,000 young people work their way through college as they serve America. It is an American responsibility, which all Americans should embrace in their daily lives.

I'd like to make one last point about our national community. Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics. But the enduring worth of our nation lies in our values and our soaring spirit. So instead of cutting back on our modest efforts to support the arts and humanities, we should stand by them, and challenge our artists and writers, our museums and our theaters, to join with all Americans to make the Year 2000 a national celebration of the American spirit in every community -- a celebration of our culture in the century that has passed, and in the new one to come, so that we can remain the world's beacon of liberty and creativity, long after the fireworks have faded.

To prepare America for the 21st Century, we must master the forces of change in the world and keep American leadership strong and sure for an uncharted time.

Fifty years ago, a farsighted America led in creating the institutions that secured victory

in the Cold War and built a growing world economy. As a result, today, more people than ever embrace our ideals and share our interests.

Already, we have dismantled many of the blocs and barriers that divided our parents' world. For the first time, more people live under democracy than dictatorship, including every nation in our own hemisphere but one -- and its day too will come.

Now, we stand at another moment of change and choice -- and another time to be farsighted, to bring America 50 more years of security and prosperity.

Our first task is to help build, for the first time, an undivided, democratic Europe. When Europe is stable, prosperous and at peace, America is more secure.

We must expand NATO by 1999, so countries that were once our adversaries can become our allies. At the special NATO summit this summer, that is what we will do. In addition, we must strengthen NATO's Partnership for Peace with non-member allies. And we must build a stable partnership between NATO and a democratic Russia. An expanded NATO is good for America. And a Europe in which all democracies define their future not in terms of what they can do to each other, but in terms of what they can do together for the good of all, that kind of Europe is good for America.

Second, America must look to the East no less than the West. Our security demands it: Americans have fought three wars in Asia this century. Our prosperity requires it: more than 2 million American jobs depend upon trade with Asia.

There, too, we are helping to shape an Asian Pacific community of cooperation, not conflict. But we must not let our progress mask the peril that remains. Together with South Korea, we must advance peace talks with North Korea and bridge the Cold War's last divide. And I call on Congress to fund our share of the agreement under which North Korea must continue to freeze -- and then dismantle -- its nuclear weapons program.

We must pursue a deeper dialogue with China -- for the sake of our interests and our ideals. An isolated China is not good for America. A China playing its proper role in the world is. I will go to China and I have invited China's president to come here, not because we agree on everything, but because engaging with China is the best way to work on common challenges like ending nuclear testing -- and to deal frankly with fundamental differences like human rights.

Third, the American people must prosper in the global economy. We have made it our mission to tear down trade barriers abroad, so that we can create good jobs at home, and to promote prosperity and freedom around the world. I am proud to tell you that today, America is once again the most competitive nation, and the number one exporter in the world.

Now, we must act to expand our exports, especially to Asia and Latin America, the two

fastest growing regions on earth -- or be left behind as these emerging economies forge new ties with other nations. That is why we need authority now to conclude trade agreements that open markets to our goods and services even as we preserve our values.

We cannot shrink from the challenge of the global economy. We have the best workers and the best products. Give Americans the opportunity of an open market, and we can out compete anyone in the world.

We should all be proud that America led the effort to rescue our neighbor Mexico from its economic crisis -- and we should all be proud that last month, Mexico repaid the United States, three full years ahead of schedule, with a half a billion dollars profit for us. And today our exports to Mexico are at an all time high.

The events of the last few years prove that if we can link this entire hemisphere in a network of open and fair trade, it will not only increase our prosperity, it will advance the cause of freedom and democracy.

Fourth, America must continue to be an unrelenting force for peace -- from the Middle East to Haiti . . . from Northern Ireland to Africa. Taking reasonable risks for peace keeps us from being drawn into far more costly conflicts later.

With American leadership, the killing has stopped in Bosnia. Now, the habits of peace must take hold. The new NATO force will allow reconstruction and reconciliation to accelerate. Tonight, I ask Congress to continue its strong support for our troops there. They are doing a remarkable job for America -- and America must do right by them.

Fifth, we must strongly move against new threats to our security: weapons of mass destruction . . . terrorism . . . international crime and drugs. In the past four years, we agreed to ban nuclear testing; with Russia, we dramatically cut our nuclear arsenals, and stopped targeting each others citizens. We are acting to rid the world of landmines, and prevent nuclear materials from falling into the wrong hands. We are working with other nations, with renewed intensity, to stop terrorists and drug traffickers before they act, and to hold them fully accountable if they do.

Now, we must rise to a new test of leadership: ratifying the Chemical Weapons Convention. It will make our troops safer from chemical attack. It will help us to fight terrorism. This treaty has been bipartisan from the beginning, supported by Republican and Democratic administrations alike -- and already approved by 68 nations. Together, we must make the Chemical Weapons Convention law, so that we can begin to outlaw poison gas from this earth.

Finally, we must have the tools to meet all these challenges.

We must maintain a strong and ready military. We must increase funding for weapons modernization and we must take good care of our men and women in uniform.

We must also renew our commitment to America's diplomacy -- and pay our debts and dues to international financial institutions such as the World Bank, and to a reforming United Nations. Every dollar we devote to preventing conflicts . . . to promoting democracy . . . to stopping the spread of disease and starvation . . . brings a sure return in security and savings. Yet international affairs spending today is just one percent of the federal budget -- a small fraction of what America invested to choose engagement over escapism at the start of the Cold War. If America is to continue to lead the world, we here who lead America simply must find the will and pay our way.

A farsighted America moved the world to a better place over these last fifty years. And it can do so for another fifty years. But the words of a shortsighted America would soon fall on deaf ears all around the world.

Almost exactly fifty years ago, in the first winter of the Cold War, President Harry Truman stood before a Republican Congress and called upon our country to meet its responsibilities of leadership. "If we falter," he warned, "we may endanger the peace of the world -- and we shall surely endanger the welfare of this nation." That Congress, led by Republicans like Senator Arthur Vandenberg, answered President Truman's call. Together, they made the commitments that strengthened our country for fifty years. Now let us do the same. Let us do what it takes to remain the indispensable nation -- to keep America strong, secure and prosperous for another fifty years.

In the end, more than anything else, our world leadership grows out of the power of our example, out of our ability to remain strong as one America.

All over the world, people are being torn asunder by racial, ethnic, and religious conflicts that fuel fanaticism and terror. We are the world's most diverse democracy. And the world looks to us to show that it is possible to live and advance together across those kinds of differences.

America has always been a nation of immigrants. From the start, 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. We have grown into an experiment in democratic diversity fueled by openness and promise.

My fellow Americans, we must never believe that this diversity is a weakness -- it is our greatest strength. For people on every continent can look to us and see the reflection of their own greatness, as long as we give all of our citizens, whatever their background, an opportunity to achieve their greatness.

We have not done that yet. Evidence of lingering division is all around us. We see it every day in the sullen, hopeless faces worn by too many of our young people. Too often, we see it in the corridors of power, in the schoolyards, in the streets of our cities. We see it in burned-

out houses of worship and bombed-out clinics. Too many people still seek to exploit our differences. We must respect our differences, and each other. And we must never hate. We must never, ever hate.

A few days before my second inauguration, one of America's best known pastors, Rev. Robert Schuller, suggested I read Isaiah 58:12. 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." I placed my hand on that verse when I took the oath of office, on behalf of all Americans. For no matter what our differences -- in our faiths, our backgrounds, our politics -- we must all be repairers of the breach. We may not all share a common past, but surely we share a common future.

I want to say a word about two other Americans whose lives show us the way to that common future. Congressman Frank Tejeda was buried yesterday, [a proud American whose family came from Mexico.] He was only 51 years old. He earned the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart fighting in Vietnam, and he went on to serve Texas and America fighting for our future in this chamber. We are honored to have his mother, Lillie Tejeda, with us tonight.

Gary Locke, [a proud American whose family came from China], is the newly elected Governor of Washington, the son of two of the millions of Asian American immigrants who have strengthened America with their hard work, family values, and good citizenship.

Rev. Schuller, Congressman Tejeda, Governor Locke, along with Kristin Tanner, Chris Getsla, Sue Winski and Dr. Kristen Zarfos -- Americans from different roots, whose lives reflect our shared values and the best of what we can become when we are one America.

Building that one America is our most important mission, "the foundation of many generations," of every other strength we must build for the new century. Money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It must rise from the human spirit.

America is far more than a place. It is an idea, the most powerful idea in the history of nations. We are now the bearers of that idea, leading a great people into a new world. We don't have a moment to waste. The children born tonight will have almost no memory of the 20th Century. Everything they will know of America, they will know only through the work we do now to build a new century.

Tomorrow morning, there will be just over 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 have work to do. Let us seize the days and the century.

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