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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Francisco, California)

For Immediate Release

June 23, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO 65TH ANNUAL U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Fairmont Hotel
San Francisco, California

9:50 A.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Well, we were outside and they played "Ruffles and Flourishes," and we had a momentary delay when we tried to decide whether Mayor Brown or I should walk in first. (Laughter.) We finally got it right, if you saw how -- (laughter.)

I am delighted to be here. I thank Mayor Daley for his warm introduction, fulfilling one of Clinton's laws of politics -- always be introduced by someone whose brother is in the Cabinet. (Laughter.) I'm glad to be here with Secretary Cuomo, Secretary Herman. Senator Boxer, thank you for joining us this morning. Representative Lofgren I think is here. Mayor Brown, thanks for putting on such a good show. Thanks for giving me another reason to come to San Francisco. To all the mayors here on the stage and in the audience, especially to Mayor Helmke and Mayor Cordini, who are about to assume their respective offices.

I saw my good friend, Mayor Rice. He said that today is his wife's birthday, so happy birthday -- there you are. Happy birthday. (Applause.)

I know that Mayor and Mrs. Webb are here. They hosted us at the Summit of the 8, and if they fall asleep during the speech, I give them advance permission because they've been up for two or three days. (Laughter.) Denver did a great job.

Thank you, Tom Cochran, for the work you've done with us. I'd also like to just make a special note of my new Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at the White House who has been here with you, Mickey Abarra, and Lynn Cutler who has also been here. We're glad to have them working with you and I know you'll enjoy working with them.

And I'd like to announce my intention to fill Secretary Cuomo's former job as Assistant Secretary of HUD for Community Planning with the Mayor of Laredo, Texas, Sol Ramirez, who is right over here. Sol, stand up. (Applause.) Why anyone would be willing to leave Laredo to move to White House is beyond me, but I'm glad he agreed.

I always look forward to this meeting because I do believe America's most creative and gifted and effective public officials today are to be found among the mayors. I've always thought of you as friends and allies in doing America's work, and I've always thought that a lot of my job was to help you do your jobs better.

I imagine I have been in more urban neighborhoods, meeting with more different kinds of people about more different kinds of issues than any of my predecessors. I've certainly tried to make that the case because when I ran for President I knew that I needed to spend time in our cities to get to know the people, the problems, and the promise of the cities; to connect our cities with our suburbs and make people understand that these problems we share are common problems, and that the promise of America in this new century is a shared promise.

I also believed fervently, and I still believe, that America can never fulfill its complete promise until all our cities fulfill theirs. And I have watched you -- I see out in this audience -- I see Mayor White over there with his sympathetic arm injury with my leg there. Thank you very much. You'll be the company misery loves for me for a while. I have seen so many of you work so hard day in and day out to fulfill your own dreams, and I have seen the unique culture and richness of every city.

Mayor Abramson actually once took me to the Louisville Slugger Baseball Bat Factory -- and for all you baseball fans, they have a bat that Babe Ruth used in the season that he hit 60 home runs there. You can only find these kinds of things uniquely differently in all of our cities in America, where the various richness and diversity of America is wound together in a wonderful fabric of strong, united values.

So, to me, when I come here I think of you the way I thought of myself when I ran as -- in the derogatory term that my opponent put on me in 1992 -- as the governor of a small, southern state -- because in my former life and in your present life, we did not get hired to make speeches and to posture; we got hired to mobilize people, unite people and get things done, and denial was not an option. So I'm very glad to be here and I want to thank you for all you have done.

What a long way we have come. It wasn't so very long ago that huge numbers of Americans had just simply given up on the prospect of our cities. But as Secretary Cuomo's compelling report, *The State of the Cities*, proves, our cities are back. We've got the biggest economic resurgence in cities since World War II; the unemployment rate down by a third in our 50 largest cities; more downtowns coming back to life with sports and tourism and local business booming. Congratulations on your two new stadiums, Mayor Brown. We're taking back our

streets from the worst ravages of crime. New waves of immigrants in our cities are making positive contributions with new energy and new businesses.

And because of your disciplined and creative leadership, the fiscal health of our cities is stronger than it has been in decades. Our cities are literally bursting with new ideas for reform that are actually changing people's lives.

I have seen what the empowerment zone has done in Detroit. I went to Toledo to see the oldest auto plant in America up and running and bursting at the seams with new employees, selling their products to Japan in large numbers. I have been to Boston where not a single child has been killed with a handgun in a year and a half. I know what the cities are doing, and I want America to know that the mayors of this country have literally changed the shared life of America in ways that affect not only our largest cities, but our smaller cities, and as I said, the relationship that is inexorably intertwined between the cities and the suburbs.

You have helped America come back. And I am grateful. But I also know, and you know, that we have much more to do. We have to have more jobs for those who must now leave the welfare rolls because they're able-bodied. We must meet the challenge of absorbing new immigrants. We must deal with the rising tide of juvenile violence and juvenile drug abuse which has in our country continued to rise even as the overall crime rate has dropped dramatically.

We must deal with the continued flight of the middle class to the suburbs. We must deal with the poor performance of too many of our schools, with the continuing health problems of too many people who live in the cities, and perhaps most important of all, with the continuing almost physical isolation of the poor in our cities -- most of them young adults and little children.

During my time as President, instead of trying to either impose ready-made solutions from Washington or ignore the problems altogether, we have tried to give you and your communities the support you need and the tools you need to meet your own challenges -- to use the national government to empower local leaders, to make the grass-roots progress that each and every one of you can celebrate.

We started with the economic program in 1993, which replaced trickle-down economics with invest-and-grow economics, and included a number of initiatives for the cities -- the empowerment zones and enterprise communities, the community development financial institutions, the Earned Income Tax Credit, the dramatic increases in child nutrition. We continued with the urban initiatives of HUD, led by former Secretary Cuomo -- former Secretary Cisneros and his able team, including Andrew Cuomo -- that included an initiative on homelessness, on cleaning up our housing projects, on innovative ways to empower people who were dependent upon public housing.

We continued with the crime bill, which was largely written by big-city mayors,

prosecutors, and police officers. Its strategy was hotly disputed in the Congress by people who believed in rhetoric instead of reality. But the strategy is now no longer open to doubt, as we've just seen our fifth year of declining crime, in the last year the steepest decline in violent crime of all.

We continued with the initiatives before the welfare reform law was signed -- local initiatives in welfare which moved record numbers of people from welfare to work, and all the analysis showed that a great deal of them moved because of the local efforts that people were making.

The key to all this was to give individuals, families, and communities the power and the responsibility to solve their problems and make the most of their own lives. I want to press forward with this empowerment agenda. And today I would like to briefly discuss seven things that I think are important if our cities and, therefore, our country are to reach their full promise in the 21st century.

First, we've got to keep working until we extend the prosperity of this recovery to every neighborhood in America. Second, we have to do more to take back our streets from crime, and especially to prevent young people from falling into a life that will destroy themselves and people around them.

Third, we have to finish the job of welfare reform by creating enough jobs for all who can, and now must, work. Fourth, we have to extend the benefits of homeownership even more widely to meet our national goal of having more than two-thirds of the American people living in their own homes for the first time in history by the year 2000.

Fifth, we have to raise the standards in our schools and invest more in our young people. Sixth, we have to meet public health challenges, including HIV and AIDS. And, seventh, we have to create in our cities our national ideal of one America that crosses all racial, ethnic and other lines that divide us, committed to giving every child a chance to flourish and every citizen a chance to serve.

I want to work with you to put this agenda into action. HUD must be a good partner, the Labor Department will be a good partner, the rest of our administration must be a good partner. But we are working for you, to help you and your people do what they know how to do to make the most of their lives and their prospects.

First, let's talk about extending the benefits of the economic recovery. Our national economic strategy changed dramatically in 1993. We went from trickle-down economics to what I call invest and growth -- reduce the deficit, but invest more in our people and technology and in the progress of people in the future, and open the world to trade in American products and services.

This is clearly working. Our economy is the strongest in the world, the strongest it's been in a generation. America is now the world's number one exporter. Unemployment has been below five percent now for a few months for the first time in 24 years, inflation at its lowest point in 30 years; over 12 million new jobs; the largest decline in income inequality since the 1960s -- a 77 percent cut in the deficit before the balanced budget agreement -- a 77 percent cut in the deficit -- from \$290 billion a year to less than \$70 billion this year. They said we could not cut the deficit and invest more in our people, but they were wrong. And you are reaping the benefits of that.

In this urban economic strategy that was a part, as I said, of the 1993 economic plan, the most important thing was to try to attract businesses and jobs back to our cities. We've created already 105 empowerment zones and enterprise communities, which provide a common combination of tax incentives and freedom from government red tape for you to attract new investment. And we are establishing a network of community development financial institutions to infuse our cities with capital.

It's very interesting to me -- I discovered when I became President that we had been funding such efforts all over the world for years in the poorest places in the world, places with far more limited prospects than poor people in the neighborhoods of America, to grow and to build businesses and to build a future -- and we had never done it in our country except on a very limited basis in Chicago and a few other cities. Now we are trying to do that all over the nation.

We reformed the Community Reinvestment Act so that it works better to steer private capital from mainstream commercial banks into poor inner city and rural communities. Now, since we reformed the Community Reinvestment Act there have been a number of studies which show that as much as \$100 billion had been invested in these communities, which means that since the Community Reinvestment Act was passed in 1977, 70 percent of all investments it was designed to direct have been made since 1993. I am proud of that and that also has contributed to the revitalization of many American communities. (Applause.)

We also recognize that a major barrier to urban economic growth is the contamination of otherwise attractive sites for development, known to you as brownfields -- a word that is still a total mystery to most Americans. But you know what they are and a lot of you have cleaned them up. We have worked hard to make those brownfields into productive assets and to clean up a record number of toxic waste sites, more in the first three and a half years of our administration than in the previous 12 years.

When I reached our historic bipartisan budget agreement with the leaders of Congress, they pledged to work with us to keep this initiatives going -- to expand the empowerment zones, to expand the enterprise communities, to expand the brownfields tax incentives. Furthermore, they also agreed to funds necessary to clean up 500 more toxic waste sites, to more than double the amount of investment in the community development financial institutions, to

provide for urban transportation needs for people on welfare who must travel to new jobs, and to help people on welfare get more work.

Now, all these initiatives are essential to the health of our cities. They also agreed to enough funds to cover half of the 10 million children in America who have no health insurance. That will make a dramatic difference to those of you who have severe health costs that are unmet and unfunded in your cities.

But on the tax side -- that is, dealing with the brownfields and the empowerment zones and the other tax incentives for the cities -- the plans put together by the House and Senate committees simply do not live up to the explicit commitment of the budget agreement -- and that is wrong.

I know that many in Congress do not share my enthusiasm for these programs. Many of them have never seen your reforms at work -- perhaps they cannot be blamed for not voting for what they don't know about. But the truth is that that budget agreement passed by overwhelming margins of both parties in both Houses. And I would think every member of Congress, without regard to party, would like to be known as a person who keeps his or her word. It is up to you to make sure that they have the chance to keep their word. Do not let Congress get out of the commitment they made on this issue. (Applause.)

The second thing we have to do is to keep up with our fight against crime and violence. You and I know that crime has been going down for years, and that the strategy we put together -- together -- of more police on the street, tougher punishment, fewer guns in the hands of criminals and more prevention programs to give people young people a chance to say yes to a brighter future -- we know this is historically effective. We know we had the largest decline in crime in 36 years last year. Murders dropped a stunning 11 percent. Cities all around the country, including our host city here, have had big declines in crime. I have been on the streets of so many of the cities here present to see you and listen to you and your police officers and community leaders talk about what you've done on crime.

But a nationally publicized poll just last week asked the American people whether crime was going up or down; 25 percent said down and 60 percent said up. Why is that? Partly, it takes a while for public perception always to catch up with reality. Partly, it's that the local news still leads with the crime story every night. And that's a problem for a lot of you and the image you're trying to fashion for your cities. But partly it's because, with all the drops in crime, America is a place with too much violence and too much crime -- still, with all the progress we have made.

We have to finish the job of putting 100,000 police on the street. I will fight to make sure we keep that commitment. (Applause.) We have to continue to push for real juvenile justice legislation. We put a bill before the Congress that has more prosecutors, more probation officers, more after-school and other programs for at-risk young people. It's not very long on

rhetoric; it's real long on results. And it basically grew out of what I have seen working.

I mentioned the Boston program. I went to Houston and Mayor Lanier showed me what he did, mobilizing 3,000 inner-city kids in a soccer league, and before Tiger Woods won the Masters, 2,500 inner-city kids in a golf league. Giving our children something to say yes to -- that's a part of juvenile justice.

I've been to places where the probation officers and the police officers make house calls, and where people walk the streets and try to keep kids out of trouble. We just need a national bill which gives you the tools to do what you know you can do to save these kids lives. That's all I want to do. And I want you to help me pass that kind of juvenile justice bill through the Congress, so that you can save the children of your cities. And I believe we can do that. (Applause.)

Let me say, you can go from New York to San Diego, from Seattle and Portland all the way to Southern Florida, and if you go to city to city to city, you see that it seems to be the everyday presence of law enforcement officers on our streets, working with citizens, that has done the most to bring the crime rate down.

We have done our part by trying to help you put 100,000 more police on the street. We've come a long way from 1992, when we've seen the violent crime rate triple in the preceding 30 years, with only a 10-percent increase in police officers. And you have learned so much more about how to deploy those police officers. It's been really impressive.

I want to increase that presence even more by getting police to live in the communities they serve. Today I am pleased to announce that over the coming year we will start an Officer Next Door program through HUD. It will make it possible for police officers and their families to buy HUD-owned single-family homes in our central cities at a 50 percent discount. (Applause.)

You have shown me how more police officers on our streets have made so many our neighborhoods feel like home again. Just imagine what it will be like when more police make those neighborhoods their homes again.

And let me say just parenthetically -- I want to give a little pat to Secretary Cuomo here -- when I appointed him, I said, you know, I don't understand why HUD needs to keep all this surplus property all the time. Why do we need all this inventory. It's not doing any good just laying out there. And this is just the first of what I hope will be many initiatives. But if we can give these police officers and their families 50 percent discounts to move back into the inner cities, it will be some of the best money the federal government ever spent, and we want to do more of those things. (Applause.)

The third thing we have to do is to make sure we create jobs for the roughly 1 million

people that have to move from welfare to work by the year 2000. Under the present welfare reform law, whatever happens to the economy, we have to move nearly a million people from welfare to work. We moved nearly a million people, about 900,000, from welfare to work in the last four years when we had welfare reform experiments going in 40 of the 50 states, and many of those only in part of the states. But when our economy in four years produced over 11 million new jobs, that had never happened before in a four-year administration. In the next four years, we have to move that many people whether we produce 11 million more jobs or not. Can we do it? I believe we can.

I know a lot of you thought I made a mistake by signing the welfare reform bill. Remember, I vetoed two previous bills because I thought they were too tough on kids and too weak on work. But when we put back the guarantee of nutrition and health care to our children, when we came up with \$4 billion for child care, when we agreed to leave the funding at the states equal to the amount they were getting when welfare rolls were at their all-time high, I thought it was worth the chance to change the culture of dependency.

Today, on the front page of the local newspaper, there is a study by the Federal Reserve of San Francisco saying that the rolls have dropped another 500,000 since the law came into effect, and they are no going down in virtually every state in the Union. We've finally got a big drop here in California, which because it didn't come back as quickly as the other states, it didn't have drops as soon. We can make this work. We can make this work.

In the budget agreement, we got agreement to restore the most egregious cuts in aid to immigrants, which I thought were wrong -- the cuts to legal immigrants who come here, live by the rules and work hard, through no fault of their own become disabled. We are going to restore those cuts, and I will not sign the bill unless Congress keeps its commitment in the budget agreement to do that. (Applause.)

But that's in the agreement. We have \$600 billion through the Department of Transportation to help people on welfare travel to work, because there are a lot of cities in which right now, and maybe by the time the benefits run out, there won't be jobs but they're are willing workers.

There was an interesting study involving Atlanta not very long ago, which said that in inner-city Atlanta, something like 80 percent of the jobs in the restaurants, fast-food restaurants, were held by low-income people who lived in the cities; in the suburbs, only slightly more than 50 percent were. Obviously, if there was more transportation availability, we could do a better job of moving people that have to go to work where the jobs are -- sometimes even within the cities themselves. So Secretary Slater and I are committed to that.

Most important of all, I have fought hard for, and it is in the budget agreement, and so far it's moving along nicely through the Congress for \$3 billion in welfare-to-work funds, which specifically gives our cities, working with the Department of Labor as well as with HUD and

HHS and others, the resources that you need to create good jobs for people who can't get them otherwise.

This is very important. Last year in Chicago there were six applicants for every entry-level job that opened up; in St. Louis there were nine. It is not true that these people don't go to work. And it is not realistic to expect that we can get all of them to work within the time deadlines unless we put this money out there where you can use it to create jobs, good jobs for people who need them. So I ask you to help me pass that in the Congress. (Applause.)

And, finally, let me say I know a lot of you are making new partnerships with the private sector. Mayor Brown told me this morning that the private sector here in San Francisco had pledged to him that they would take 2,000 people from welfare to work on their own initiative. In this bill there is a new tax credit, very tightly drawn, that gives a 50-percent credit for up to \$10,000 in wages for people who are hired from welfare to work. That also is in the budget agreement and must pass. (Applause.)

Let me say, finally -- I want to emphasize this again just in case there are some of you who don't know it -- the states of this country are getting over 20 percent more money today for welfare than they would have gotten under the old welfare law. They are still getting the same amount of money they got when welfare rolls were at an all-time high. We have had the largest reduction in welfare rolls in the history of the United States by far. They still have that money. What are they doing with it? You have to make sure that that money is spent in a way that helps the people, most of whom live in your jurisdictions, to go to work. If they need training, get them training.

And let me say one other thing. One of the problems we have ameliorated in this deal but not completely solved is what happens to the single men who aren't on welfare in the first place? Most Americans when they talk about welfare reform are thinking about all able-bodied people who are idle because of the system. The biggest social problems out there, I would argue, are with the young, single men. What's going to happen to them? This money can be spent to help you put them to work.

Now, I cannot do anything directly about that, but I implore you to go back to the people who represent you in the state legislatures and see how much money your states got, and ask them to use some of that money to give these young men a chance to build their lives, too, because they need to be a part of our future. (Applause.)

The fourth thing we need to do to make our cities places that anybody would be proud to call home is to make it easier for people to have homes in our cities. Homeownership is one of the most empowering things we can ever do for anyone. Since I took office, 4.7 million people across America have become homeowners for the first time. Homeownership has had big, big increases. As I said, our goal is to have more than two-thirds of the American people in their own homes by the year 2000 for the first time ever.

But you know and I know not enough homes are in our cities. In the last four years we've reduced FHA mortgage premiums three times, to lower the average closing cost on a new home by \$1,200. That's made a lot of difference to a lot of young people, and I'm proud of that. Today, we're going to cut the premium another \$200 for people if they buy homes in our central cities. (Applause.) This will bring the total reduction since we took office of closing costs to those families to \$1,400.

Also, we know that there are many hard-working families who receive Section 8 assistance who are ready to assume the responsibility of owning their own homes, but they can't take the first step. HUD now has a very innovative program before the Congress that would allow those families to use their rent vouchers to help to buy a home. Today, I'm happy to announce that Freddie Mac is going to help us launch this homeownership empowerment voucher initiative by financing up to 2,000 of these mortgages.

Together with the Officer Next-Door program, this represents almost \$700 million in down payment toward our priority of strengthening our cities family by family, by helping more people buy a home in the cities of America. And I hope you will support that as well. (Applause.)

The fifth thing we need to do is to make sure that our schools work and that all our children, no matter where they live, get the best education in the world. I know only a few mayors actually have any control over the school systems in your cities, but every mayor must be concerned about quality of education in your cities. We know one of the main reasons families continue to leave cities is they simply don't think the schools are doing a good enough job.

Just this week, Hillary was visiting in a school system where junior high kids were talking to her about the problems they face. We know that these years are especially critical. But we also know our schools are capable of working.

Let me just give you one example. I hope that all of you noticed that for the very first time since we started participating in the international test on math and science, our 4th graders -- only a few thousand of them, about 13,000 of them around the country took these tests, but they are representative by race, income, and region -- scored well above the international average in math and science for the first time. We can make all our schools work. You know that, and I know it, but we have to.

Our 8th graders are still below the international average, and all of you know from your own experience what happens to these kids when they're subject to difficult influences and tough circumstances, when they get into those early teenage years. That's when we're losing so many of them. And we have to make our schools work if we're going to bring them back. We just have to do it. (Applause.)

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WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/15 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 7/15 6:30pmSUBJECT: NAAEP Convention Remarks

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	☒	☐	McCURRY	☐	☒
BOWLES	☒	☐	McGINTY	☐	☐
McLARTY	☐	☐	NASH	☒	☐
PODESTA	☒	☐	RUFF	☐	☐
MATHEWS	☒	☐	SMITH	☒	☐
RAINES	☒	☐	REED	☒	☐
BAER	☐	☐	SOSNIK	☒	☐
ECHAVESTE	☒	☐	LEWIS	☒	☐
EMANUEL	☒	☐	YELLEN	☐	☐
GIBBONS	☐	☐	STREETT	☐	☐
IBARRA	☐	☐	SPERLING	☒	☐
RADD	☐	☐	TARULLO	☐	☐
MARSHALL	☒	☐	VERVEER	☐	☐
HILLEY	☒	☐	WALDMAN	☒	☐
KLAIN	☐	☐	Cohen	☒	☐
BERGER	☐	☐	Kagan	☒	☐
LINDSEY	☐	☐	Moore	☒	☐
			Johnson	☒	☐

REMARKS:

Comments to Terry Edmonds

RESPONSE:

Staff secretary

we fought hard for more child care resources to help families move from welfare to work.

flexibility

crime in 36 years. Murders dropped an astounding 11 percent. And we have seen a stunning drop in our welfare rolls. I know many of you did not support my signing of the welfare reform bill. But, remember we fought hard to make sure there was a guarantee of nutrition and health care ~~and child care~~ for our children. And we made sure states would have the maximum amount of ~~money~~ to assist the truly needy. And so far, welfare reform is working. There are 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took office – and 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law. This is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, giving us the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. We have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate our values of work, family and responsibility. But, we still have more to do.

I am determined that we must do more to make sure that all our people are able to reap the rewards of prosperity. We must bring the spark of private enterprise into the inner city. The balanced budget agreement that I reached with the Congress includes [\$3] billion to help create private sector jobs in our poorest neighborhoods. It will double the number of Empowerment Zones that have helped cities like Detroit cut the unemployment rate in half. And we must take other steps to help welfare recipients get to the new jobs, which are often outside their neighborhoods. That is why we included \$3 billion in our balanced budget to create jobs and move people from welfare to work. Transportation Secretary Slater and I also recently proposed legislation providing \$600 million to help states and local communities devise transportation strategies to move people from welfare to work. And we have enlisted the business community in our Welfare-to-Work partnership to ensure they do their part in hiring welfare recipients and recruiting others to do the same.

Equal opportunity, equal access to good jobs, racial reconciliation and a renewed commitment to personal responsibility are important to our efforts to prepare our people and our nation for the 21st century. But we will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

Today, more than ever, we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills and make a renewed commitment to life-long learning.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability – of our students, our schools, and our teachers. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics – not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by testing every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

*Comment by Appel (Jennifer Friedman)
OMB X54846*

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/15 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 7/15 5:30pm

SUBJECT: NAAEP Convention Remarks

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	☒	☐	McCURRY	☐	☒
BOWLES	☒	☐	McGINTY	☐	☐
McLARTY	☐	☐	NASH	☒	☐
PODESTA	☒	☐	RUFF	☐	☐
MATHEWS	☒	☐	SMITH	☒	☐
RAINES	☒	☐	REED	☒	☐
BAER	☐	☐	SOSNIK	☒	☐
ECHAVESTE	☒	☐	LEWIS	☒	☐
EMANUEL	☒	☐	YELLEN	☐	☐
GIBBONS	☐	☐	STREETT	☐	☐
IBARRA	☐	☐	SPERTING	☒	☐
RADD	☐	☐	TARULLO	☐	☐
MARSHALL	☒	☐	VERVEER	☐	☐
HILLEY	☒	☐	WALDMAN	☒	☐
KLAIN	☐	☐	Cohen	☒	☐
BERGER	☐	☐	Kagan	☒	☐
LINDSEY	☐	☐	Moore	☒	☐
			Johnson	☒	☐

REMARKS:

Comments to Terry Edmonds

RESPONSE:

DRAFT

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997**

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams; Kweisi Mfume; I also want to congratulate General Ronald R. Fogelman, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard -- this year's recipients of the NAACP Meritorious Service Awards which were presented last night.

I am honored to be here to add my voice to your discussion of what we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. [But, before I begin -- *Flight 800 anniversary moment of silence?*]

great!
It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference. For 88 years now, this great American treasure has been a leading voice for equality of opportunity in America. And you have always emphasized education as the key to helping all our people make the most of their God-given abilities. That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its "elementary duty in preparing [African-Americans] through education for the best exercise of citizenship." It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in our schools. And it is true today, when we know that, more than ever, knowledge is power. I want to talk with you today about our national obligation to give every American child, regardless of race or economic status, an equal chance at a quality education. More than anything else we do, that is how we will reach our goal of building One America for the 21st century.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and looming possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP. The echoes of the NAACP's original call for racial justice are still ringing in the hearts of many Americans. Just a few days ago in Washington, the great scholar, John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of our Advisory Board on racial reconciliation. I am pleased that Judith Winston, general counsel at the Department of Education, has agreed to serve as the board's executive director. She too has stood on the front lines for many years as a soldier for justice. The goal of the advisory board, my goal and your goal is the same -- to help us find a way to make our vibrant and growing diversity, not the great problem, but the great promise of the 21st century.

In that new century, America will face an explosion of diversity. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? We know that we are a stronger, more secure and healthier nation when we unite around our shared values and work together to solve

our common problems.

super
As we work to address new challenges, we must draw upon the great moral lesson that this organization has taught America. The battle and victory against forced segregation was one of the finest chapters in American history. But, today, 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. We must make sure that all schools in our society meet the highest standards. But we must also recognize the essential truth of what the NAACP fought for in 1954 and fights for today. Separate but equal can never be truly equal. America must never retreat from our goal of a fully integrated society. We may argue about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and especially in our schools. As the great Thurgood Marshall once said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together."

During the past four-and-a-half years, I have worked hard to expand opportunity and strengthen those values that bind all Americans together.

We have worked to strengthen the civil rights protections that are essential to moving this nation forward: From our commitment to mend, not end affirmative action ... to our determination to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws ... to our insistence that Congress give us the resources to deal with the current backlog of discrimination claims. We know that a strong commitment to civil rights is not about protecting one group of Americans at the expense of another. Civil rights guarantees are America's great promise of inclusion and fairness and they lift up all our citizens.

That is the vision that drives the person I have nominated to become the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. He has devoted his life to social justice -- spending most of his career as a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. I want to thank President Mfume and the NAACP for your strong support of his nomination. We all know he will do an outstanding job.

We have also worked to expand economic opportunity and ensure that prosperity touches every community.

In 1993, I put in place a new economic strategy that I call "invest and grow." With the strong support of [members of Congress in attendance], we cut the deficit, expanded investment in our people, and expanded exports abroad. Our strategy has worked. Our economy is once again the strongest in the world. Unemployment is the lowest it has been since 1973; 12.5 million new jobs; the largest decline in income inequality since the 1960s; typical family income for African Americans has increased by \$3,000 since 1992; home mortgage lending to African Americans has increased 70 percent since 1993; a 77% cut in the deficit.

We are also building a more cohesive society. Last year, we had the largest decline in

crime in 36 years. Murders dropped an astounding 11 percent. And we have seen a stunning drop in our welfare rolls. I know many of you did not support my signing of the welfare reform bill. But, remember we fought hard to make sure there was a guarantee of nutrition and health care and child care for our children. And we made sure states would have the maximum amount of money to assist the truly needy. And so far, welfare reform is working. There are 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took office -- and 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law. This is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, giving us the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. We have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate our values of work, family and responsibility. But, we still have more to do.

I believe this is the same 3 billion.
I am determined that we must do more to make sure that all our people are able to reap the rewards of prosperity. We must bring the spark of private enterprise into the inner city. The balanced budget agreement that I reached with the Congress includes [\$3] billion to help create private sector jobs in our poorest neighborhoods. It will double the number of Empowerment Zones that have helped cities like Detroit cut the unemployment rate in half. And we must take other steps to help welfare recipients get to the new jobs, which are often outside their neighborhoods. ~~That is why we included \$3 billion in our balanced budget to create jobs and move people from welfare to work.~~ Transportation Secretary Slater and I also recently proposed legislation providing \$600 million to help states and local communities devise transportation strategies to move people from welfare to work. And we have enlisted the business community in our Welfare-to-Work partnership to ensure they do their part in hiring welfare recipients and recruiting others to do the same.

Equal opportunity, equal access to good jobs, racial reconciliation and a renewed commitment to personal responsibility are important to our efforts to prepare our people and our nation for the 21st century. But we will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

Today, more than ever, we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills and make a renewed commitment to life-long learning.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by testing every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. **We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations.** ✓

We know that there is a disturbing gap in achievement and attainment between low income students and the more advantaged, between black and white.

This is due in large part to the wide disparity of burdens between urban and suburban schools. Too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. And due to size, complexity, extreme infrastructure problems and the great need for professional development and other priorities, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

While more money and resources are acutely needed in our urban schools, the real problem is the tyranny of low expectations. We know that African American, Latino and other minority students can achieve at the highest levels if they are taught at the highest levels. Despite the dire conditions of many urban schools, some urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

And as we hold all our students to high standards, we must give all our students the tools they need to meet those high standards. We must frankly recognize that today, too many schools are not serving our children well; that too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they will need to get good jobs. That is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents to high standards too. ✓

It is clear: we need a bold, national effort to improve schools that serve minority inner city and rural children. We should not have to wait for integration to fix this problem. This is not an either/or proposition. While we continue to pursue our long-term goal of a truly integrated society, we must lift up our failing schools -- and we must do it now. ✎

Here is what I believe we must do as a nation to make sure that all our schools meet the highest standards.

The first thing we must do, very simply, is to commit as a society that all our children will have the help they need to meet these standards. This is a cause that must enlist every parent, every businessperson, every community leader. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

Second, we must make sure that all our schools in every community have high-quality teachers. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms – a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Fifteen percent, or 345,000 of those teachers will be needed in central city schools with large concentrations of low-income students. An additional 207,000 teachers will be needed in isolated, and often poor, rural areas.

Today, I am announcing a new initiative to help recruit and prepare a diverse group of teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. Next month, I will forward to the Congress our proposal to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. I will propose a new national effort to attract quality teachers to central city schools. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. While a third of America's students are minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. Our nation's schools need a diverse and excellent teaching force. And our plan moves us in that direction.

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools. We know that students in distressed areas who need the best teachers, often have teachers who are the least qualified. Right now, 71 percent of physical science students and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who lack even a college minor in their field. Our proposal will not only focus on training future teachers well; it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now through partnerships between the schools and teacher training institutions.

Third, I know that many of you have concerns about the charter schools movement. But I think they can be an important tool for improving education, especially for children who are not making it in traditional public schools. We must give parents and local communities the flexibility to create performance based charter schools that are open to everyone. Our balanced budget plan will include the funds for 3000 more charter schools. Charter schools, open to all, offer an example of excellence and accountability that can spread to all other public schools. Charter schools offer parents and community residents a chance to take matters into their own hands and work to build high quality. It is no accident that Rosa Parks today is working to open a charter school in Detroit.

Fourth, we must make the advantages of technology available to all students wherever they live. I have challenged the nation to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the Year 2000; to make it affordable, [and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning.] If we do this, for the very first time, a child in the poorest central city or the most isolated rural hamlet will have access to the same universe of knowledge, at the same time, as a child in the wealthiest suburb. -

seems "repetition"
of the teaching
point

Fifth, I believe our nation must commit to rebuilding rundown schools — many of which are located in our central cities. Today, 40% of school buildings need major repair or outright replacement. We will keep working to get Congress to pass a School Construction Initiative to help local communities renovate and repair schools that need it, and to build new schools if necessary. Congress balked at including this in the budget agreement, but we will continue to fight for it. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded.

And finally, our children have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of their daily routine. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

I'd think about flipping these — they'll really like the construction stuff — we should conclude with it.

Preparing all our children to meet high standards. Getting and keeping good teachers in our urban and poor rural schools. Creating performance based charter schools. Putting technology at the fingertips of every student. Rebuilding dilapidated schools. And creating safe and drug free schools. If we commit ourselves to taking these actions, we will enter the new century stronger and better prepared than ever before. While education is largely a state and local responsibility, I believe it must be a national priority. That is why I am calling on everyone in this room and everyone across America to step up to this challenge.

flip

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by armed troops on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, let us honor the spirit of Daisy Bates and so many others who gave their lives in the cause of freedom and equality by joining hands and walking with our children into a new era of excellence in education that leaves no one behind.

Thank you and God bless you all.

3:45
Draft 7/16/97 1:00 p.m.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS BEFORE THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JULY 17, 1997

[Acknowledgments: Arthur Fennell (fen- NELL), NABJ president; Joanne Lyons Wootten, NABJ Executive Director; Secretary Herman, Secretary Riley, Christopher Edley, Judy Winston]

During my first campaign for president, the National Association of Black Journalists took the time to hear me out on my vision for America. At your 1992 convention in Detroit, I said I would come back and speak to you if I became President. Well, I'm sorry that this return-engagement ended up such a long time coming. But I'm glad to be back. And I am grateful for this opportunity to join all of you tonight.

I've met quite a few journalists over the years and while our relationship hasn't been easy, I want you to know that I do respect your calling. Many of you chose to become journalists because you believed it was the best way you could use your God-given talents -- your gift with words, your knack for getting answers to tough questions, your instinct with the camera or the microphone -- not just to make living, but to make a difference, and I thank you for that.

As journalists, you strive to bring the light of truth and knowledge into the lives of your fellow citizens. The information, insight and analysis that you share with readers and viewers from all walks of life, from all corners of America, have the power both to highlight the serious differences and disparities in our society and to promote a greater appreciation of our common humanity.

As you already know -- maybe some of you were there to report on it -- last month in San Diego, I called upon all Americans to begin addressing what I believe is the greatest challenge facing us in the 21st century. I called upon all Americans to embark on a serious examination of the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity.

I've come to Chicago today to tell you more about this new initiative and to call upon each of you to recognize the vital role you, as journalists and as African-Americans, can play in leading your newsrooms, your communities and all of America in our dialogue.

Five years ago, I shared with you my ideas on how we could best prepare our country and our people for the 21st century. I spoke of the importance of forging an America where every single person who is willing to work hard and take responsibility would have opportunities to build better lives and better futures for themselves and for their children.

I believe we have already made great strides toward reaching this goal. In 1993, I put in

place a new strategy to cut the deficit, expand investment in our people, and expand exports abroad. As a result, our economy is the healthiest in a generation and once again the strongest in the world. Our social problems, from crime to poverty, are finally bending to our efforts.

Now, at this time of great prosperity, when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven to it by some emergency or social cataclysm, I believe we have an unprecedented opportunity to address and perhaps finally resolve the most vexing, perplexing, and often painful issue in the history of America -- the issue of race.

In the coming century, we have an opportunity to become the world's first truly multi-racial democracy. Today the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already, five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. And in just fifty years from now, there will be no majority race in America.

As part of the Race Initiative, I am asking every American to become a part of a national dialogue, to share with each other their thoughts on how we could respect -- even celebrate -- our differences while embracing the many things we have in common. I am challenging all Americans to speak frankly about the misunderstandings, disagreements and just plain bigotry that continue to haunt our communities and divide our society by race and ethnicity. Most importantly, I am calling upon all Americans to listen carefully to each other, to find in this frank dialogue a way to make our growing diversity not the great problem but the great promise of the 21st century.

This week in Washington, the great scholar John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of the Advisory Board on racial reconciliation. And I am pleased that Judith Winston, general counsel at the Department of Education, has agreed to serve as the board's executive director. The first meeting was full of lively debate and disagreement. Already, we are discovering that even among people who are firmly committed to advancing this dialogue, the process is not going to be easy. But we can't afford to shrink from the task.

Earlier today, at the NAACP Convention in Pittsburgh, I reiterated my long-held belief that the single most important way to build One America for the 21st century is through education. We will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

I am calling for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st century. I believe we should begin by testing every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by

1999 to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. I know that too many children in our inner cities carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods.

When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our hearts, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations. [We cannot allow our parents to lower their expectations and their children to limit their ambitions simply because they belong to poorer school districts]

That is why I am promoting a new initiative to help recruit and prepare a diverse group of teachers to help children living in our poorest urban and rural communities meet the highest standards of academic achievement. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high-poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities and teaching. We will also strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and rural schools.

Your voices and your observations will be very valuable to our continuing dialogue on race. As African-American journalists, you have experienced firsthand the progress and the continuing challenge of race relations in our country. Some of you in this audience are pioneers in your fields, perhaps the first people of color ever to claim a desk, a phone, a typewriter in the newsrooms of our big-city papers and stations. When you were beginning your careers a generation ago, it was hard enough to find one editor who would consider your work, let alone the hundreds of newspaper and broadcasting executives who this week have descended on the NABJ job fair -- which I believe is the largest of its kind in the nation. They've come here not just because they recognize the value of a diverse and racially representative staff, but also because they know from experience that they'll find some of the best talent in American journalism at this Convention.

But we all know that while our newsrooms have come a long way, they still have a long way to go. Just as in other workplaces in America, minority representation on many staffs are not what they should be. Wide gaps continue to exist between whites and minorities in the way they perceive their workplaces and in the way they perceive each other.

We must bridge this gap everywhere in America. I encourage you to continue reaching out to your colleagues, to listen to each other and try to understand where we are all coming from, to lead your organizations in the task of writing, editing or broadcasting fair and thought-provoking stories about the world we live in.

There is so much more we all can and must do to build One America in the 21st century. In my heart, I know that we are all up to the challenge.

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Draft 7/16/97 2pm

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997**

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams; Kweisi Mfume; Mayor Murphy; Sec. Herman; Sec. Slater; I also want to congratulate all the NAACP award winners of this convention -- especially two outstanding government servants: General Ronald R. Fogelman, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard -- winners of this year's NAACP Meritorious Service Awards which were presented last night.

I am honored to be here to add my voice to your discussion of what we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference. For 88 years now, this great American treasure has been a leading voice for equality of opportunity in America. And you have always emphasized education as the key to helping all our people make the most of their God-given abilities. That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its "elementary duty in preparing [African-Americans] through education for the best exercise of citizenship." It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in our schools. And is true today, when we know that, more than ever, knowledge is power.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP. Through sit-ins and marches, lobbying and legal action, the NAACP has been in the forefront of the greatest non-violent social revolution the world has ever seen.

You have constantly held up a mirror to the soul of America and challenged us to reflect the highest ideals of our great democracy. Your leadership has helped us tear down the legal barriers to equality. But barriers still remain in the hearts and minds of too many people. Together, let us look to the future. Nothing is more important to me than this initiative on race; no subject is more important to the NAACP; and no organization in America is more critical to the struggle for justice and reconciliation. This is our moment of opportunity. We must seize it. I ask you to stand with us now as we embark on this year-long journey to speak the truth, change attitudes and make our dream of One America a living reality.

The battle against forced segregation was one of the noblest chapters in American history. But, today, 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. We must never forget the essential truth of what the NAACP fought for in 1954 and fights for today: separate but equal can never

be truly equal. America must never retreat from our goal of a fully integrated society. We may disagree about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and especially in our schools. As the great Thurgood Marshall once said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together." That is the dream that unites us.

But each generation must fight its own battles in the ongoing struggle for equal rights. A generation ago, it was the fight simply to open the schoolhouse door that united Americans from every race and background. Today, the doors are open -- but too many children who sit inside simply are not learning. The struggle for educational excellence must be our great mission. We must demand high standards of every student -- demand that our schools and teachers meet world-class standards -- demand that every child be given the opportunity to succeed in the new economy. We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations. Today, that is the cause that must unite all Americans of every race and every background.

For we know that in the 21st Century, more than ever, knowledge will be power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills. Those who have the skills to compete in the new economy will thrive; those who lack those skills will not. We will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. And it means we must give all our students the tools to meet these standards and master the basics. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve. We have already taken the first major step by overhauling the Title I program to raise expectations and end the watered down curriculum that was routinely offered up to low income children.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by giving every community and state the opportunity to test every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. Yes, demanding high standards can be painful, but not worse than the pain and betrayal of meaningless diplomas: students graduating without the knowledge and skills demanded in today's global economy.

So, I challenge you work with us. The NAACP did not get where it is today by setting low standards. You have always aimed high and demanded that the rest of America do the same. Now, we must ask our children and our schools to aim high, we must measure how well they are doing, and we must hold them accountable. That is our duty we owe them. That is the duty we owe America.

As we hold all our students to high standards, we must give all our students the tools they need to meet those high standards.

We know that many urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

But we must frankly recognize that today, far too many schools are not serving our children well; that too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they will need to get good jobs. That is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents to high standards too.

There are many reasons why so many central city and poor rural schools fail our children. Too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. For these and other reasons, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

It is clear: we need a bold, national effort to improve schools that serve minority inner city and rural children. This is not an either/or proposition. While we continue to pursue our long-term goal of a truly integrated society, we must lift up our failing schools -- and we must do it now.

Here is what I believe we must do as a nation to make sure that all our schools meet the highest standards.

First, we must commit that all our children will have the help they need to meet these standards. This is a cause that must enlist every parent, every businessperson, every community leader. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

Second, we must make sure that all our schools in every community have high-quality

teachers. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Fifteen percent, or 345,000 of those teachers will be needed in central city schools with large concentrations of low-income students. An additional 207,000 teachers will be needed in isolated, and often poor, rural areas.

Today, I am announcing a new initiative to help recruit and prepare teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. Next month, as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, I will forward to the Congress my proposal for a new national effort to attract quality teachers to central city schools. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. While a third of America's students are minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. Our nation's schools need a diverse and excellent teaching force. And our plan moves us in that direction.

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools. We know that students in distressed areas who need the best teachers, often have teachers who are the least qualified. Right now, 71 percent of students taking courses in chemistry and physics and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who lack even a college minor in their field. Our proposal will not only focus on training future teachers well; it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now through partnerships between the schools and teacher training institutions.

Third, I believe our nation must commit to rebuilding rundown schools -- many of which are located in our central cities. Today, 40% of school buildings need major repair or outright replacement. My tax plan includes tax credits to finance the rehabilitation and construction of schools in distressed neighborhoods. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded.

Fourth, we must make the advantages of technology available to all students wherever they live. I have challenged the nation to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the Year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning. If we do this, for the very first time, a child in the poorest central city or the most isolated rural hamlet will have access to the same universe of knowledge, at the same time, as a child in the wealthiest suburb.

Fifth, I believe that charter schools can be an important tool for improving education, especially for children who are not making it in traditional public schools. We must give

parents and local communities the flexibility to create performance based charter schools that are open to everyone. We also continue to support increased resources for magnet schools. Our balanced budget plan will include funds for 3000 more charter schools. Charter schools, open to all, offer an example of excellence and accountability that can spread to all other public schools. Charter schools offer parents and community residents a chance to take matters into their own hands and work to build high quality. I am pleased to know that Rosa Parks, who taught us so much about dignity and equality, is working to open a charter school in Detroit.

And finally, our children have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of their daily routine. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

And as we do all this, let's be honest. The crisis in education faced by millions of black and brown students is about more than numbers, statistics and a plan of action. Underlying the problems of urban and minority schools is the problem of race. We know we have to do more to improve the schools and quality of education available to millions of black and brown children in America, but color keeps getting in the way. It is time to get beyond the color line. It is time to roll up our sleeves and go to work to provide quality schools and quality education to all our children.

There is much more for us to do together in the months to come.

We must work together on behalf of the person I will nominate to become the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. He prepared for this new assignment the best way anyone can: with years as a lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

We must work together to pass the right kind of balanced budget, with tax cuts that help those who need them most. Our balanced budget agreement dramatically increases Pell Grant scholarships for college -- and I intend to see to it that this becomes law.

We must work together on the urban agenda I outlined last month before the U.S. Conference of Mayors in San Francisco. We are moving from a social service approach to an economic growth and private development approach in our efforts to create jobs and opportunity in our central cities -- and we need your help to make this work.

And above all, I ask for your leadership, your partnership and your support as we work to recommit to our national ideal of One America that unites us across all racial and ethnic lines.

The presidential initiative I outlined last month in San Diego will call upon the involvement and leadership of you and your members in every community. It will have as one of its central focuses educational opportunity, one of the central issues you have discussed this week. I ask you to work with my advisory panel, whose chair is one of America's great educators and preeminent scholars -- Dr. John Hope Franklin, and whose executive director is the Acting Undersecretary of Education, Judy Winston. We need your help, and we know you will give it.

The NAACP has been a moral beacon throughout this century. And in the next century, our nation will need the light of that vision more than ever. For America will be more diverse than ever before. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? Can we muster the wisdom and strength of spirit to treat each other with respect and not just abide each other's differences? Can we actually relish our differences and rejoice in our great diversity? If we can do that and be united as One America by shared values, then we will be the world's most successful multiracial democracy in the 21st century.

While divisions between black and white are still the most striking in our society, our challenge is no longer just a question of black and white. The NAACP has always known that. While you have fought valiantly for the rights and dignity of African Americans, you have inspired all Americans to come together in unity and you have welcomed people of every race, gender and age, to stand shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for real equality in America.

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by armed troops on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, let us honor the spirit of Daisy Bates and so many others who gave their lives in the cause of freedom and equality by joining hands and walking with our children into a new era of excellence in education that leaves no one behind.

Thank you and God bless you all.

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997**

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams; Kweisi Mfume; Mayor Murphy; Sec. Herman; Sec. Slater; I also want to congratulate all the NAACP award winners of this convention -- especially two outstanding government servants: General Ronald R. Fogelman, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard -- winners of this year's NAACP Meritorious Service Awards which were presented last night.

I am honored to be here to add my voice to your discussion of what we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference. For 88 years now, this great American treasure has been a leading voice for equality of opportunity in America. And you have always emphasized education as the key to helping all our people make the most of their God-given abilities. That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its "elementary duty in preparing [African-Americans] through education for the best exercise of citizenship." It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in our schools. And is true today, when we know that, more than ever, knowledge is power.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP. Through sit-ins and marches, lobbying and legal action, the NAACP has been in the forefront of the greatest non-violent social revolution the world has ever seen.

You have constantly held up a mirror to the soul of America and challenged us to reflect the highest ideals of our great democracy. Your leadership has helped us tear down the legal barriers to equality. But barriers still remain in the hearts and minds of too many people. Together, let us look to the future. I ask you to stand with us now as we embark on this year-long journey to speak the truth, change attitudes and make our dream of One America a living reality.

The battle against forced segregation was one of the noblest chapters in American history. But, today, 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. We must never forget the essential truth of what the NAACP fought for in 1954 and fights for today: separate but equal can never be truly equal. America must never retreat from our goal of a fully integrated society. We

may disagree about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and especially in our schools. As the great Thurgood Marshall once said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together." That is the dream that unites us.

But each generation must fight its own battles in the ongoing struggle for equal rights. A generation ago, it was the fight simply to open the schoolhouse door that united Americans from every race and background. Today, the doors are open -- but too many children who sit inside simply are not learning. The struggle for educational excellence must be our great mission. We must demand high standards of every student -- demand that our schools and teachers meet world-class standards -- demand that every child be given the opportunity to succeed in the new economy. We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations. Today, that is the mission that must unite all Americans of every race and every background.

For we know that in the 21st Century, more than ever, knowledge will be power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills. Those who have the skills to compete in the new economy will thrive; those who lack those skills will not. We will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. And it means we must give all our students the tools to meet these standards and master the basics. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve. We have already taken the first major step by overhauling the Title I program to raise expectations and end the watered down curriculum that was routinely offered up to low income children.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by giving every community and state the opportunity to test every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. Yes, demanding high standards can be painful, but not worse than the pain and betrayal of meaningless diplomas: students graduating without the knowledge and skills demanded in today's global economy.

So, I challenge you work with us. The NAACP did not get where it is today by setting low standards. You have always aimed high and demanded that the rest of America do the same. Now, we must ask our children and our schools to aim high, we must measure how well they are doing, and we must hold them accountable. That is our duty we owe them. That is the duty we owe America.

As we hold all our students to high standards, we must give all our students the tools they need to meet those high standards.

We know that many urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

But we must frankly recognize that today, far too many schools are not serving our children well; that too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they will need to get good jobs. That is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents to high standards too.

There are many reasons why so many central city and poor rural schools fail our children. Too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. For these and other reasons, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

It is clear: we need a bold, national effort to improve schools that serve minority inner city and rural children. This is not an either/or proposition. While we continue to pursue our long-term goal of a truly integrated society, we must lift up our failing schools -- and we must do it now.

Here is what I believe we must do as a nation to make sure that all our schools meet the highest standards.

First, we must commit that all our children will have the help they need to meet these standards. This is a cause that must enlist every parent, every businessperson, every community leader. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

Second, we must make sure that all our schools in every community have high-quality

teachers. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Fifteen percent, or 345,000 of those teachers will be needed in central city schools with large concentrations of low-income students. An additional 207,000 teachers will be needed in isolated, and often poor, rural areas.

Today, I am announcing a new initiative to help recruit and prepare teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. Next month, as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, I will forward to the Congress my proposal for a new national effort to attract quality teachers to central city schools. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. While a third of America's students are minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. Our nation's schools need a diverse and excellent teaching force. And our plan moves us in that direction.

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools. We know that students in distressed areas who need the best teachers, often have teachers who are the least qualified. Right now, 71 percent of students taking courses in chemistry and physics and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who lack even a college minor in their field. Our proposal will not only focus on training future teachers well; it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now through partnerships between the schools and teacher training institutions.

Third, I believe our nation must commit to rebuilding rundown schools -- many of which are located in our central cities. Today, 40% of school buildings need major repair or outright replacement. My tax plan includes tax credits to finance the rehabilitation and construction of schools in distressed neighborhoods. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded.

Fourth, we must make the advantages of technology available to all students wherever they live. I have challenged the nation to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the Year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning. If we do this, for the very first time, a child in the poorest central city or the most isolated rural hamlet will have access to the same universe of knowledge, at the same time, as a child in the wealthiest suburb.

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And as we do all this, let's be honest. The crisis in education faced by millions of black and brown students is about more than numbers, statistics and a plan of action. Underlying the problems of urban and minority schools is the problem of race. We know we have to do more to improve the schools and quality of education available to millions of black and brown children in America, but color keeps getting in the way. It is time to get beyond the color line. It is time to roll up our sleeves and go to work to provide quality schools and quality education to all our children.

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We must work together to pass the right kind of balanced budget, with tax cuts that help those who need them most. Our balanced budget agreement dramatically increases Pell Grant scholarships for college -- and I intend to see to it that this becomes law.

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And above all, I ask for your leadership, your partnership and your support as we work to recommit to our national ideal of One America that unites us across all racial and ethnic

lines.

The presidential initiative I outlined last month in San Diego will call upon the involvement and leadership of you and your members in every community. It will have as one of its central focuses educational opportunity, one of the central issues you have discussed this week. I ask you to work with my advisory panel, whose chair is one of America's great educators and preeminent scholars -- Dr. John Hope Franklin, and whose executive director is the Acting Undersecretary of Education, Judy Winston. We need your help, and we know you will give it.

The NAACP has been a moral beacon throughout this century. And in the next century, our nation will need the light of that vision more than ever. For America will be more diverse than ever before. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? Can we muster the wisdom and strength of spirit to treat each other with respect and not just abide each other's differences? Can we actually relish our differences and rejoice in our great diversity? If we can do that and be united as One America by shared values, then we will be the world's most successful multiracial democracy in the 21st century.

While divisions between black and white are still the most striking in our society, our challenge is no longer just a question of black and white. The NAACP has always known that. While you have fought valiantly for the rights and dignity of African Americans, you have inspired all Americans to come together in unity and you have welcomed people of every race, gender and age, to stand shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for real equality in America.

That is why our initiative on race is so important. It is only by talking with one another, and learning from one another that we can begin to reveal the truth, move beyond our divisions and find common ground.

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by armed troops on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, let us honor the spirit of Daisy Bates and so many others who gave their lives in the cause of freedom and equality by joining hands and walking with our children into a new era of excellence in education that leaves no one behind.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Education
our core
underpinning

Document No. _____

WHITE HOUSE STAFFING MEMORANDUM

DATE: 7/15 ACTION/CONCURRENCE/COMMENT DUE BY: 7/15 5:30pm

SUBJECT: NAACP Convention Remarks

6-2878

	ACTION	FYI		ACTION	FYI
VICE PRESIDENT	☒	☐	McCURRY	☐	☒
BOWLES	☒	☐	McGINTY	☐	☐
McLARTY	☐	☐	NASH	☒	☐
PODESTA	☒	☐	RUFF	☐	☐
MATHEWS	☒	☐	SMITH	☒	☐
RAINES	☒	☐	REED	☒	☐
BAER	☐	☐	SOSNIK	☒	☐
ECHAVESTE	☒	☐	LEWIS	☒	☐
EMANUEL	☒	☐	YELLEN	☐	☐
GIBBONS	☐	☐	STREETT	☐	☐
IBARRA	☐	☐	SPERLING	☒	☐
RADD	☐	☐	TARULLO	☐	☐
MARSHALL	☒	☐	VERVEER	☐	☐
HILLEY	☒	☐	WALDMAN	☒	☐
KLAIN	☐	☐	Cohen	☒	☐
BERGER	☐	☐	Kagan	☒	☐
LINDSEY	☐	☐	Moore	☒	☐
			Johnson	☒	☐

REMARKS:

Comments to Terry Edmonds

RESPONSE:

DRAFT

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997**

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams; Kweisi Mfume; I also want to congratulate General Ronald R. Fogelman, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard -- this year's recipients of the NAACP Meritorious Service Awards which were presented last night.

I am honored to be here to add my voice to your discussion of what we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. [But, before I begin -- *Flight 800 anniversary moment of silence?*]

It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference. For 88 years now, this great American treasure has been a leading voice for equality of opportunity in America. And you have always emphasized education as the key to helping all our people make the most of their God-given abilities. That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its "elementary duty in preparing [African-Americans] through education for the best exercise of citizenship." It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in our schools. And it is true today, when we know that, more than ever, knowledge is power. I want to talk with you today about our national obligation to give every American child, regardless of race or economic status, an equal chance at a quality education. More than anything else we do, that is how we will reach our goal of building One America for the 21st century.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and looming possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP. The echoes of the NAACP's original call for racial justice are still ringing in the hearts of many Americans. Just a few days ago in Washington, the great scholar, John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of our Advisory Board on racial reconciliation. I am pleased that Judith Winston, general counsel at the Department of Education, has agreed to serve as the board's executive director. She too has stood on the front lines for many years as a soldier for justice. The goal of the advisory board, my goal and your goal is the same -- to help us find a way to make our vibrant and growing diversity, not the great problem, but the great promise of the 21st century.

In that new century, America will face an explosion of diversity. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? We know that we are a stronger, more secure and healthier nation when we unite around our shared values and work together to solve

our common problems.

As we work to address new challenges, we must draw upon the great moral lesson that this organization has taught America. The battle and victory against forced segregation was one of the finest chapters in American history. But, today, 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. We must make sure that all schools in our society meet the highest standards. But we must also recognize the essential truth of what the NAACP fought for in 1954 and fights for today. Separate but equal can never be truly equal. America must never retreat from our goal of a fully integrated society. We may argue about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and especially in our schools. As the great Thurgood Marshall once said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together."

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During the past four-and-a-half years, I have worked hard to expand opportunity and strengthen those values that bind all Americans together.

We have worked to strengthen the civil rights protections that are essential to moving this nation forward: From our commitment to mend, not end affirmative action ... to our determination to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws ... to our insistence that Congress give us the resources to deal with the current backlog of discrimination claims. We know that a strong commitment to civil rights is not about protecting one group of Americans at the expense of another. Civil rights guarantees are America's great promise of inclusion and fairness and they lift up all our citizens.

That is the vision that drives the person I have nominated to become the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. He has devoted his life to social justice -- spending most of his career as a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. I want to thank President Mfume and the NAACP for your strong support of his nomination. We all know he will do an outstanding job.

will nominate

We have also worked to expand economic opportunity and ensure that prosperity touches every community.

In 1993, I put in place a new economic strategy that I call "invest and grow." With the strong support of [members of Congress in attendance], we cut the deficit, expanded investment in our people, and expanded exports abroad. Our strategy has worked. Our economy is once again the strongest in the world. Unemployment is the lowest it has been since 1973; 12.5 million new jobs; the largest decline in income inequality since the 1960s; typical family income for African Americans has increased by \$3,000 since 1992; home mortgage lending to African Americans has increased 70 percent since 1993; a 77% cut in the deficit.

We are also building a more cohesive society. Last year, we had the largest decline in

crime in 36 years. Murders dropped an astounding 11 percent. And we have seen a stunning drop in our welfare rolls. I know many of you did not support my signing of the welfare reform bill. But, remember we fought hard to make sure there was a guarantee of nutrition and health care and child care for our children. And we made sure states would have the maximum amount of money to assist the truly needy. And so far, welfare reform is working. There are 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took office -- and 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law. This is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, giving us the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. We have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate our values of work, family and responsibility. But, we still have more to do.

I am determined that we must do more to make sure that all our people are able to reap the rewards of prosperity. We must bring the spark of private enterprise into the inner city. The balanced budget agreement that I reached with the Congress includes [\$3] billion to help create private sector jobs in our poorest neighborhoods. It will double the number of Empowerment Zones that have helped cities like Detroit cut the unemployment rate in half. And we must take other steps to help welfare recipients get to the new jobs, which are often outside their neighborhoods. That is why we included \$3 billion in our balanced budget to create jobs and move people from welfare to work. Transportation Secretary Slater and I also recently proposed legislation providing \$600 million to help states and local communities devise transportation strategies to move people from welfare to work. And we have enlisted the business community in our Welfare-to-Work partnership to ensure they do their part in hiring welfare recipients and recruiting others to do the same.

Equal opportunity, equal access to good jobs, racial reconciliation and a renewed commitment to personal responsibility are important to our efforts to prepare our people and our nation for the 21st century. But we will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

Today, more than ever, we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills and make a renewed commitment to life-long learning.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by testing every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. **We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations.**

We know that there is a disturbing gap in achievement and attainment between low income students and the more advantaged, between black and white.

This is due in large part to the wide disparity of burdens between urban and suburban schools. Too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. And due to size, complexity, extreme infrastructure problems and the great need for professional development and other priorities, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

While more money and resources are acutely needed in our urban schools, the real problem is the tyranny of low expectations. We know that African American, Latino and other minority students can achieve at the highest levels if they are taught at the highest levels. Despite the dire conditions of many urban schools, some urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

And as we hold all our students to high standards, we must give all our students the tools they need to meet those high standards. We must frankly recognize that today, too many schools are not serving our children well; that too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they will need to get good jobs. That is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents to high standards too.

It is clear: we need a bold, national effort to improve schools that serve minority inner city and rural children. We should not have to wait for integration to fix this problem. This is not an either/or proposition. While we continue to pursue our long-term goal of a truly integrated society, we must lift up our failing schools -- and we must do it now.

Here is what I believe we must do as a nation to make sure that all our schools meet the highest standards.

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The first thing we must do, very simply, is to commit as a society that all our children will have the help they need to meet these standards. This is a cause that must enlist every parent, every businessperson, every community leader. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

Second, we must make sure that all our schools in every community have high-quality teachers. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms – a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Fifteen percent, or 345,000 of those teachers will be needed in central city schools with large concentrations of low-income students. An additional 207,000 teachers will be needed in isolated, and often poor, rural areas.

Today, I am announcing a new initiative to help recruit and prepare a diverse group of teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. Next month, I will forward to the Congress our proposal to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. I will propose a new national effort to attract quality teachers to central city schools. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. While a third of America's students are minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. Our nation's schools need a diverse and excellent teaching force. And our plan moves us in that direction.

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools. We know that students in distressed areas who need the best teachers, often have teachers who are the least qualified. Right now, 71 percent of physical science students and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who lack even a college minor in their field. Our proposal will not only focus on training future teachers well; it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now through partnerships between the schools and teacher training institutions.

Third, I know that many of you have concerns about the charter schools movement. But I think they can be an important tool for improving education, especially for children who are not making it in traditional public schools. We must give parents and local communities the flexibility to create performance based charter schools that are open to everyone. Our balanced budget plan will include the funds for 3000 more charter schools. Charter schools, open to all, offer an example of excellence and accountability that can spread to all other public schools. Charter schools offer parents and community residents a chance to take matters into their own hands and work to build high quality. It is no accident that Rosa Parks today is working to open a charter school in Detroit.

Fourth, we must make the advantages of technology available to all students wherever they live. I have challenged the nation to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the Year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning. If we do this, for the very first time, a child in the poorest central city or the most isolated rural hamlet will have access to the same universe of knowledge, at the same time, as a child in the wealthiest suburb. -

Fifth, I believe our nation must commit to rebuilding rundown schools -- many of which are located in our central cities. Today, 40% of school buildings need major repair or outright replacement. We will keep working to get Congress to pass a School Construction Initiative to help local communities renovate and repair schools that need it, and to build new schools if necessary. Congress balked at including this in the budget agreement, but we will continue to fight for it. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded.

And finally, our children have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of their daily routine. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

Preparing all our children to meet high standards. Getting and keeping good teachers in our urban and poor rural schools. Creating performance based charter schools. Putting technology at the fingertips of every student. Rebuilding dilapidated schools. And creating safe and drug free schools. If we commit ourselves to taking these actions, we will enter the new century stronger and better prepared than ever before. While education is largely a state and local responsibility, I believe it must be a national priority. That is why I am calling on everyone in this room and everyone across America to step up to this challenge.

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by armed troops on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, let us honor the spirit of Daisy Bates and so many others who gave their lives in the cause of freedom and equality by joining hands and walking with our children into a new era of excellence in education that leaves no one behind.

Thank you and God bless you all.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams; Kweisi Mfume; Mayor Murphy; Sec. Herman; Sec. Slater; I also want to congratulate all the NAACP award winners of this convention -- especially two outstanding government servants: General Ronald R. Fogelman, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard -- winners of this year's NAACP Meritorious Service Awards which were presented last night.

I am honored to be here to add my voice to your discussion of what we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference. For 88 years now, this great American treasure has been a leading voice for equality of opportunity in America. And you have always emphasized education as the key to helping all our people make the most of their God-given abilities. That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its "elementary duty in preparing [African-Americans] through education for the best exercise of citizenship." It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in our schools. And is true today, when we know that, more than ever, knowledge is power.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP. Through sit-ins and marches, lobbying and legal action, the NAACP has been in the forefront of the greatest non-violent social revolution the world has ever seen. You have constantly held up a mirror to the soul of America and challenged us to reflect the highest ideals of our great democracy. Your leadership has helped us tear down the legal barriers to equality. But, as we all know, barriers still remain in the hearts and minds of too many people. I ask you to stand with us now as we embark on this year-long journey to speak the truth, change attitudes and make our dream of One America a living reality.

We also need you by our side as we work to expand educational opportunity for all Americans, and especially those who have been locked out and left behind. Each generation must fight its own battles in the ongoing struggle for equal rights. A generation ago, it was the fight simply to open the schoolhouse door that united Americans from every race and background. Today, the struggle for educational excellence must be our great mission. We must demand high standards of every student -- demand that our schools and teachers meet world-class standards -- demand that every child be given the opportunity to succeed in the new economy. **We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations.** Today, that is the mission that must unite all Americans of every race and every background.

*Today,
the doors
are
open
but too*

I want to talk with you today about our national obligation to provide a quality education to every American child, regardless of race or economic status. This is a challenge that cannot be met by government alone. We need to work in partnership, across all lines of race and party and ideology to prepare all our children for the tremendous opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. More than anything else we do, that is how we will reach our goal of building One America for the 21st century.

It is no accident that, just as you have done here this week, at its first meeting this past Monday, our advisory board on racial reconciliation targeted education and economic opportunity as its top agenda items. We all know that they are the keys to lifting everyone up and giving everyone a fair shot at the American Dream. Let me say that under the leadership of our chairman, John Hope Franklin, the board is off to a great start. I am also pleased that Judith Winston, general counsel at the Department of Education, has agreed to serve as the board's executive director. She too has stood on the front lines for many years as a soldier for justice. The goal of the advisory board, my goal and your goal is the same -- to help us find a way to make our vibrant and growing diversity, not the great problem, but the great promise of the 21st century.

In that new century, America will be more diverse than ever before. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? Can we muster the wisdom and strength of spirit to treat each other with respect and not just abide each other's differences? Can we actually relish our differences and rejoice in our great diversity? If we can do that and be united as One America by shared values, then we will be the world's most successful multiracial democracy in the 21st century.

While the divisions between black and white are still the most striking in our society, it is no longer just a question of black and white. The NAACP has always known this. While you have fought valiantly for the rights and dignity of African Americans, you have inspired all Americans to come together in unity and you have welcomed people of every race, gender and age, to stand shoulder to shoulder in the struggle for real equality in America.

As we work to address new challenges, we must draw upon the great moral lessons that this organization has taught America. The battle against forced segregation was one of the noblest chapters in American history. But, today, 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. We must make sure that all schools in our society meet the highest standards. But we must also recognize the essential truth of what the NAACP fought for in 1954 and fights for today. Separate but equal can never be truly equal. America must never retreat from our goal of a fully integrated society. We may disagree about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces,

and especially in our schools. As the great Thurgood Marshall once said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together." That is the dream that unites us.

That is also the dream of the person I will nominate to become the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. A child of Chinese immigrants, Bill Lee has seen injustice first hand and has devoted his life to the pursuit of equality for his people and for all Americans. He is a member of the NAACP family, having spent most of his career as a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. I want to thank Chairwoman Evers-Williams and President Mfume for your strong support of his nomination. We all know he will do an outstanding job.

We say we want every child to have access to the best education in the world, but the great disparities in burdens, achievement, and resources between poor urban and rural schools which tend to be mostly black and brown and white suburban schools, tells a different story. It is time to face up to this challenge. We will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

Today, more than ever, we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills. We also must make it possible for more of our young people to go to college and for all of us to have access to life-long learning.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. And it means we must give all our students the tools to meet these standards and master the basics. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve. We have already taken the first major step by overhauling the Title I program to raise expectations and end the watered down curriculum that was routinely offered up to low income children.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by giving every community and state the opportunity to test every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. Yes, demanding high standards can be painful, but not worse than the pain and betrayal of meaningless diplomas: students graduating without the knowledge and

skills demanded in today's global economy. **As I said earlier, we must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations.**

So, I challenge you work with us. The NAACP did not get where it is today by setting low standards. You have always aimed high and demanded that the rest of America do the same. Now, we must ask our children and our schools to aim high and we must measure how well they are doing. That is our duty we owe them. That is the duty we owe America.

While more money and resources are acutely needed in our urban schools, the real problem is the tyranny of low expectations. We know that African American, Latino and other minority students can achieve at the highest levels if they are taught at the highest levels. Despite the dire conditions of many urban schools, some urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

We know that there is a disturbing gap in achievement and attainment between low income students and the more advantaged, between black and white.

This is due in large part to the wide disparity of burdens between urban and suburban schools. Too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. For these and other reasons, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

As we hold all our students to high standards, we must give all our students the tools they need to meet those high standards. We must frankly recognize that today, too many schools are not serving our children well; that too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they will need to get good jobs. That is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents to high standards too.

It is clear: we need a bold, national effort to improve schools that serve minority inner city and rural children. This is not an either/or proposition. While we continue to pursue our long-term goal of a truly integrated society, we must lift up our failing schools -- and we must do it now.

Here is what I believe we must do as a nation to make sure that all our schools meet the highest standards.

The first thing we must do, very simply, is to commit as a society that all our children will have the help they need to meet these standards. This is a cause that must enlist every parent, every businessperson, every community leader. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

Second, we must make sure that all our schools in every community have high-quality teachers. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Fifteen percent, or 345,000 of those teachers will be needed in central city schools with large concentrations of low-income students. An additional 207,000 teachers will be needed in isolated, and often poor, rural areas.

Today, I am announcing a new initiative to help recruit and prepare teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. Next month, as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, I will forward to the Congress my proposal for a new national effort to attract quality teachers to central city schools. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. While a third of America's students are minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. Our nation's schools need a diverse and excellent teaching force. And our plan moves us in that direction.

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools. We know that students in distressed areas who need the best teachers, often have teachers who are the least qualified. Right now, 71 percent of students taking courses in chemistry and physics and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who lack even a college minor in their field. Our proposal will not only focus on training future teachers well; it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now through partnerships between the schools and teacher training institutions.

Third, I believe our nation must commit to rebuilding rundown schools -- many of which are located in our central cities. Today, 40% of school buildings need major repair or outright replacement. My tax plan includes tax credits to finance the rehabilitation and construction of schools in distressed neighborhoods. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded.

Fourth, we must make the advantages of technology available to all students wherever they live. I have challenged the nation to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the Year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-

trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning. If we do this, for the very first time, a child in the poorest central city or the most isolated rural hamlet will have access to the same universe of knowledge, at the same time, as a child in the wealthiest suburb.

Fifth, I believe that charter schools can be an important tool for improving education, especially for children who are not making it in traditional public schools. We must give parents and local communities the flexibility to create performance based charter schools that are open to everyone. We also continue to support increased resources for magnet schools. Our balanced budget plan will include funds for 3000 more charter schools. Charter schools, open to all, offer an example of excellence and accountability that can spread to all other public schools. Charter schools offer parents and community residents a chance to take matters into their own hands and work to build high quality. I am pleased to know that Rosa Parks, who taught us so much about dignity and equality, is working to open a charter school in Detroit.

And finally, our children have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of their daily routine. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

Preparing all our children to meet high standards. Getting and keeping good teachers in our urban and poor rural schools. Putting technology at the fingertips of every student. Rebuilding dilapidated schools. Creating safe and drug free schools. If we commit ourselves to taking these actions, we will enter the new century stronger and better prepared than ever before. While education is largely a state and local responsibility, I believe it must be a national priority. That is why I am calling on everyone in this room and everyone across America to step up to this challenge.

But there is more to do. In addition to working with you in the coming months to expanding educational opportunity, I want us to help us on a number of other important issues. We need to work together on the nomination of Bill Lee. We must work together to pass the right kind of balanced budget, with tax cuts that help those who need them most. We must work together on the urban agenda I outlined last month before the U.S. Conference of Mayors in San Francisco. We are moving from a patronizing social service approach to an economic growth and private development approach in our efforts to create jobs and opportunity in our central cities -- and we need your help to make this work. And most of all, we need you help as we recommit to our national ideal of One America that unites us across all racial and ethnic lines and that is focused on giving every child a chance to flourish and every citizen a chance to serve. I have called for honest dialogue and serious attention to long-neglected issues like the deplorable condition of too many of our central city and rural schools.

Let's be honest. The crisis in education faced by millions of black and brown students is about more than numbers, statistics and a plan of action. Underlying the problems of urban and minority schools is the problem of race. We know we have to do more to improve the schools and quality of education available to millions of black and brown children in America, but color keeps getting in the way. It is time to get beyond the color line. It is time to roll up our sleeves and go to work to provide quality schools and quality education to all our children.

That is why our initiative on race is so important. It is only by talking with one another, and learning from one another that we can begin to reveal the truth, move beyond our divisions and find common ground.

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by armed troops on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, let us honor the spirit of Daisy Bates and so many others who gave their lives in the cause of freedom and equality by joining hands and walking with our children into a new era of excellence in education that leaves no one behind.

Thank you and God bless you all.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams; Kweisi Mfume; Sec. Herman; Sec. Slater; I also want to congratulate all the NAACP award winners of this convention -- especially two outstanding government servants: General Ronald R. Fogelman, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard -- winners of this year's NAACP Meritorious Service Awards which were presented last night.

I am honored to be here to add my voice to your discussion of what we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. ~~[But, before I begin Flight 800 anniversary moment of silence?]~~

It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference. For 88 years now, this great American treasure has been a leading voice for equality of opportunity in America. And you have always emphasized education as the key to helping all our people make the most of their God-given abilities. That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its "elementary duty in preparing [African-Americans] through education for the best exercise of citizenship." It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in our schools. And is true today, when we know that, more than ever, knowledge is power.

→ *NAACP has led way. I want you to help lead.*

Each generation must fight its own battles in the ongoing struggle for equal rights. A generation ago, it was the fight simply to open the schoolhouse door that united Americans from every race and background. Today, the struggle for educational excellence must be our great mission. We must demand high standards of every student -- demand that our schools and teachers meet world-class standards -- demand that every child be given the opportunity to succeed in the new economy. And that mission, too, is one that must unite all Americans of every race and every background.

MORE URGENT
I want to talk with you today about our national obligation to provide a quality education to every American child, regardless of race or economic status. More than anything else we do, that is how we will reach our goal of building One America for the 21st century.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP. ~~The echoes of the NAACP's original call for racial justice are still ringing in the hearts of many Americans.~~ Just a few days ago in Washington, the great scholar, John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of our Advisory Board on racial reconciliation. I am pleased that Judith Winston, general counsel at the Department of Education, has agreed to serve as the board's executive director. She too

has stood on the front lines for many years as a soldier for justice. The goal of the advisory board, my goal and your goal is the same -- to help us find a way to make our vibrant and growing diversity, not the great problem, but the great promise of the 21st century.

In that new century, America will be more diverse than ever before. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? We know that we are a stronger, more secure and healthier nation when we unite around our shared values and work together to solve our common problems.

As we work to address new challenges, we must draw upon the great moral lesson that this organization has taught America. The battle against forced segregation was one of the noblest chapters in American history. But, today, 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. We must make sure that all schools in our society meet the highest standards. But we must also recognize the essential truth of what the NAACP fought for in 1954 and fights for today. Separate but equal can never be truly equal. America must never retreat from our goal of a fully integrated society. We may disagree about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and especially in our schools. As the great Thurgood Marshall once said, "Unless our children begin to learn together, there is little hope that our people will ever learn to live together." That is the dream that unites us.

~~During the past four and-a-half years, I have worked hard to expand opportunity and strengthen those values that bind all Americans together.~~

~~We have worked to strengthen the civil rights protections that are essential to moving this nation forward: From our commitment to mend, not end affirmative action ... to our determination to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws ... to our insistence that Congress give us the resources to deal with the current backlog of discrimination claims. We know that a strong commitment to civil rights is not about protecting one group of Americans at the expense of another. Civil rights guarantees are America's great promise of inclusion and fairness and they lift up all our citizens.~~

~~That is the vision that drives the person I have nominated to become the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. A child of Chinese immigrants, he has devoted his life to social justice for his people and for all Americans. He is a member of the NAACP family, having spent most of his career as a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. I want to thank Chairwoman Evers-Williams and President Mfume for your strong support of his nomination. We all know he will do an outstanding job.~~

We have also worked to expand economic opportunity and ensure that prosperity touches every community.

In 1993, I put in place a new economic strategy that I call "invest and grow." With the strong support of [members of Congress in attendance], we cut the deficit, expanded investment in our people, and expanded exports abroad. Our strategy has worked. Our economy is once again the strongest in the world. Unemployment is the lowest it has been since 1973; 12.5 million new jobs; the largest decline in income inequality since the 1960s; typical family income for African Americans has increased by \$3,000 since 1992; home mortgage lending to African Americans has increased 70 percent since 1993; a more than 75% cut in the deficit.

We are also building a more cohesive society. Last year, we had the largest decline in crime in 36 years. Murders dropped an astounding 11 percent. And we have seen a stunning drop in our welfare rolls. There are millions more families earning paychecks and living lives of dignity and respect -- 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took office and 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law. This is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, giving us the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. We have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate our values of work, family and responsibility. But, we still have more to do.

I am determined that we must do more to make sure that all our people are able to reap the rewards of prosperity. We have moved from a social service model to an economic growth and private development model in our approach to creating jobs and opportunity in our central cities. The balanced budget agreement that I reached with the Congress will double the number of Empowerment Zones that have helped cities like Detroit cut the unemployment rate in half.

We must take other steps to help welfare recipients get to the new jobs, which are often outside their neighborhoods. That is why we included \$3 billion in our balanced budget to create jobs and move people from welfare to work. Transportation Secretary Slater and I also recently proposed legislation providing \$600 million to help states and local communities devise transportation strategies to move people from welfare to work. And we have enlisted the business community in our Welfare-to-Work partnership to ensure they do their part in hiring welfare recipients and recruiting others to do the same.

nework { Equal opportunity, equal access to good jobs, racial reconciliation and a renewed commitment to personal responsibility are important to our efforts to prepare our people and our nation for the 21st century. But we will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American, of every background, access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

Today, more than ever, we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the

globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills. We also must make it possible for more of our young people to go to college and for all of us to have access to life-long learning.

This means, above all, demanding high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability -- of our students, our schools, and our teachers. And it means we must give all our students the tools to meet these standards and master the basics. If we do this, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve. We have already taken the first major step by overhauling the Title I program to raise expectations and end the watered down curriculum that was routinely offered up to low income children.

In my State-of-the-Union Address I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st Century. I believe we should begin by testing every 4th grader in reading, and every 8th grader in math, by 1999, to make sure these standards are met. I believe this must be our nation's central educational priority.

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. When we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less of them -- and we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. Yes, demanding high standards can be painful, but not worse than the pain and betrayal of meaningless diplomas: students graduating without the knowledge and skills demanded in today's global economy. **We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations.**

Need up?

While more money and resources are acutely needed in our urban schools, the real problem is the tyranny of low expectations. We know that African American, Latino and other minority students can achieve at the highest levels if they are taught at the highest levels. Despite the dire conditions of many urban schools, some urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

We know that there is a disturbing gap in achievement and attainment between low income students and the more advantaged, between black and white.

This is due in large part to the wide disparity of burdens between urban and suburban schools. Too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment

→ I challenge you to x, y, z.

problems. For these and other reasons, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

As we hold all our students to high standards, we must give all our students the tools they need to meet those high standards. We must frankly recognize that today, too many schools are not serving our children well; that too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they will need to get good jobs. That is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents to high standards too.

It is clear: we need a bold, national effort to improve schools that serve minority inner city and rural children. This is not an either/or proposition. While we continue to pursue our long-term goal of a truly integrated society, we must lift up our failing schools -- and we must do it now.

Here is what I believe we must do as a nation to make sure that all our schools meet the highest standards.

The first thing we must do, very simply, is to commit as a society that all our children will have the help they need to meet these standards. This is a cause that must enlist every parent, every businessperson, every community leader. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

Second, we must make sure that all our schools in every community have high-quality teachers. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Fifteen percent, or 345,000 of those teachers will be needed in central city schools with large concentrations of low-income students. An additional 207,000 teachers will be needed in isolated, and often poor, rural areas.

Today, I am announcing a new initiative to help recruit and prepare teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. Next month, as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, I will forward to the Congress my proposal for a new national effort to attract quality teachers to central city schools. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. While a third of America's students are minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. Our nation's schools need a diverse and excellent teaching force. And our plan moves us in that direction.

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so

that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools. We know that students in distressed areas who need the best teachers, often have teachers who are the least qualified. Right now, 71 percent of students taking courses in chemistry and physics and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who lack even a college minor in their field. Our proposal will not only focus on training future teachers well; it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now through partnerships between the schools and teacher training institutions.

Third, I believe our nation must commit to rebuilding rundown schools -- many of which are located in our central cities. Today, 40% of school buildings need major repair or outright replacement. My tax plan includes tax credits to finance the rehabilitation and construction of schools in distressed neighborhoods. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded.

Fourth, we must make the advantages of technology available to all students wherever they live. I have challenged the nation to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the Year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning. If we do this, for the very first time, a child in the poorest central city or the most isolated rural hamlet will have access to the same universe of knowledge, at the same time, as a child in the wealthiest suburb.

CA And finally, our children have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of their daily routine. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

Preparing all our children to meet high standards. Getting and keeping good teachers in our urban and poor rural schools. Putting technology at the fingertips of every student. Rebuilding dilapidated schools. Creating safe and drug free schools. If we commit ourselves to taking these actions, we will enter the new century stronger and better prepared than ever before. While education is largely a state and local responsibility, I believe it must be a national priority. That is why I am calling on everyone in this room and everyone across America to step up to this challenge.

— more to do —
But there is more to this than numbers, statistics and a plan of action. Let's be honest: underlying the problems of urban and minority schools is the problem of racial division. We know we have to do more to improve the schools and quality of education available to millions of black and brown children in America, but color keeps getting in the way. It is time to get beyond the color line. It is time to roll up our sleeves and go to work to provide quality

SOMEWHERE 6

schools and quality education to all our children.

That is why our initiative on race is so important. It is only by talking with one another, and learning from one another that we can begin to reveal the truth, move beyond our divisions and find common ground.

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by armed troops on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, let us honor the spirit of Daisy Bates and so many others who gave their lives in the cause of freedom and equality by joining hands and walking with our children into a new era of excellence in education that leaves no one behind.

Thank you and God bless you all.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS FOR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JULY 17, 1997

[Acknowledgments: Arthur Fennell (fen- NELL), NABJ president; Joanne Lyons Wootten, NABJ Executive Director; Alexis Hermann, Dick Riley, Rodney Slater, Christopher Edley, Judy Winston]

During my first campaign for president, the National Association of Black Journalists took the time to hear me out on my vision for America. At your 1992 Convention in Detroit, I said I would come back and speak to you if I became President. Well, I'm sorry that this return-engagement ended up such a long time coming. But I'm glad to be back after all these years. And I am grateful for this opportunity to join all of you tonight.

Five years ago, I shared with you my ideas on how we could best prepare our country and our people for the 21st century. I spoke of the importance of forging an America where every single person who is willing to work hard and take responsibility would have opportunities to build better lives and better futures for themselves and for their children.

I believe we have already made important strides toward reaching this goal. In 1993, I put in place a new economic strategy to cut the deficit, expand investment in our people, and expand exports abroad. The strategy worked. Our economy is once again the strongest in the world. Unemployment is the lowest it has been since 1973. Over the past four and a half years, 12.5 million new jobs have been created. We have witnessed the largest decline in income inequality since the 1960s. Typical family income for African Americans, for instance, has increased by \$3,000.

Our social problems are finally bending to our efforts. Last year, we had the largest decline in crime in 36 years. Murders dropped an astounding 11 percent. With welfare reform, we have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate the values of work, family and responsibility.

But I know and you know that there is still so much more we need to do to make sure America remains the world's strongest and most prosperous country in the 21st century. Five years ago, I also spoke of my hopes for leading our people toward a society that was coming together, not coming apart. I spoke of my hopes for helping every citizen of this country understand that his or her destiny was bound to the destiny of every other American.

But as we continue to read in our newspapers, see on our TVS, hear on our radios, or experience firsthand in schools, restaurants, grocery stores, perhaps even in newsrooms across our country, we are still a long way from this goal.

As many of you already know -- maybe some of you were there to report on it -- last month in San Diego I called upon America to begin addressing what I believe is the greatest challenge facing us in the 21st century. I called upon all Americans to embark on a serious examination of the lingering problems and limitless possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity.

Today the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will be true of California. Already, five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. And just fifty years from now, there will be no majority race in America.

In San Diego, I asked every American to become a part of a national dialogue, to share with each other their thoughts on how we could respect -- even celebrate -- our differences while embracing the many things we have in common. I challenged all Americans to speak frankly about the misunderstandings, disagreements and just plain bigotry that continue to haunt our communities and divide our society by race and ethnicity. Most importantly, I called upon all Americans to listen carefully to each other, to find in this frank dialogue a way to make our growing diversity not the great problem but the great promise of the 21st century.

This week in Washington, the great scholar John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of the Advisory Board on racial reconciliation. And I am pleased that Judith Winston, general counsel at the Department of Education, has agreed to serve as the board's executive director. The first meeting was full of lively debate and disagreement. Already, we are discovering that even among people who are firmly committed to advancing this dialogue, the process is not going to be easy.

But it is crucial. I've come to Chicago today to call upon each of you to recognize the vital role you, as journalists and as African-Americans, can play in leading your newsrooms, your communities and all of America in this dialogue.

Many of you chose to become journalists because you believed it was the best way you could use your God-given talents -- your gift with words, your knack for getting answers to tough questions, your instinct with the camera or the microphone -- not just to make living, but to make a difference in your communities.

As journalists, you strive to bring the light of truth and knowledge into the lives of your fellow citizens. The information, insight and analysis that you share with readers and viewers from all walks of life, from all corners of our communities, have the power both to highlight the serious differences and disparities in our society and to promote a greater appreciation of our common humanity.

As African-Americans, you have experienced firsthand the progress and the continuing challenge of race relations in our country. Many of you in this audience are pioneers in your

fields, perhaps the first people of color ever to claim a desk, a phone, a typewriter in the newsrooms of our big-city papers and stations. When you were beginning your careers a generation ago, it was hard enough to find one editor who would consider your work, let alone the hundreds of newspaper and broadcasting executives who this week have descended on the NABJ job fair -- which I believe is the largest of its kind in the nation. They've come here not just because they recognize the value of a diverse and racially representative staff, but also because they know from experience that they'll find some of the best talent in American journalism at this Convention.

But we all know that while our newsrooms have come a long way, they also have a long way to go. Just like other workplaces in America, minority representation on many staffs are not what they should be. Studies have also shown that wide gaps continue to exist between white and minority journalists in the way they perceive our newsrooms and the way they perceive each other.

We must bridge this gap everywhere in America, especially in the newsrooms charged with the important task of giving us the information we all need to build richer and more nuanced understandings of each other. I encourage you to continue reaching out to your colleagues, to listen to each other and try to understand where we are all coming from, to lead your organizations in the task of writing, editing or broadcasting fair, accurate and thought-provoking stories about the world we live in.

During the past four-and-a-half years, I have worked hard to expand opportunity and strengthen the values that bind all Americans together. My administration has worked to support the civil rights protections that are essential to moving this nation forward. From our commitment to mend, not end affirmative action ... to our determination to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws ... to our insistence that Congress give us the resources to deal the current backlog of discrimination claims. We know that a strong commitment to civil rights is not about protecting one group of Americans at the expense of another. Instead, our civil rights laws help all of us live closer to America's founding principles, of forming a more perfect union.

I believe one of the best ways to forming a more perfect union and building One America in the 21st century is through education. We will never make real our ideal of One America unless we give every American access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, and the world's best education.

Earlier today, at the NAACP Convention in Pittsburgh, I spoke about the importance of improving and expanding investment in our poor inner-city schools so that all our children, regardless of race or economic status will have the best education in the world. I announced a new initiative to help recruit and prepare a diverse group of teachers to teach in our urban and rural communities. Our plan will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high-poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities and teaching. We will also strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by poor urban and rural schools.

If we are going to build the One America we must have to be ready for the 21st century, then the tasks before us will be great. And they won't be easy. But in my heart, I know that America is up to the challenge.

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PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 17, 1997

Acknowledgments: Myrlie Evers-Williams, Kweisi Mfume...

Today, I want to talk about the work that we must do together to prepare our people for the vast opportunities and challenges of the 21st century, including the need to make sure all our children have access to the best schools and best education in the world. But before I begin, I ask that we remember that it was one year ago today that 230 people -- many of them school children -- lost their lives in the crash of TWA Flight 800. We are continuing the hard work of finding out the cause of this tragedy. But we know that the families and friends of those who lost their lives continue to struggle with their grief and healing. I ask that we pause in a moment of silence to remember the victims, to pray for the survivors and to ask for God's help as we continue our search for answers...

I always look forward to attending this convention. For 88 years now, the NAACP has been running a courageous marathon for equality and social justice. Americans of goodwill who are determined that we achieve our common goal of building a more perfect union, continue to look to you for inspiration.

One of those whom you have inspired is Bill Lann Lee, my nominee to become the first Chinese-American Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. Bill Lee has devoted his life to social justice -- spending most of his career as a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. I want to thank President Mfume and the NAACP for your strong support of his candidacy. We all know he will do an outstanding job.

Last month, in San Diego, when I called our nation to begin a serious examination of the lingering problems and looming possibilities of our growing racial and ethnic diversity, I was inspired in large measure by the example of the NAACP and one of your founders, Dr. W.E.B. DuBois. In 1903, Dr. DuBois predicted that the problem of the 20th century in America would be the problem of the color line. But he dedicated his life to working against that ominous prediction. And in 1909, in a tiny apartment room in New York City, he and a small group of black and white citizens looked racial injustice squarely in the eye and determined to organize a "large and powerful body of citizens" to combat it.

The NAACP has become that large and powerful body -- the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. You began by posing a serious question -- a question that still confronts us: "How far... [has our nation] gone in assuring to each and every citizen, irrespective of color, the equality of opportunity and equality before the law, which underlie our American institutions and are guaranteed by the Constitution?" To answer that question, the founders of this great American institution issued a mighty call to "all the believers in democracy." You were the first to call this nation "to join in a national conference for the discussion of present evils, the voicing of protests, and the renewal of the struggle for civil and political liberty."

The echoes of the NAACP's original call are still ringing in the hearts of many Americans. Just a few days ago in Washington, the great scholar, John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of our Advisory Board on racial reconciliation. I am pleased that Judith Winston has agreed to leave her post as general counsel at the Department of Education, to serve as the board's executive director. She too has stood on the front lines for many years as a soldier for justice. The goal of the advisory board, my goal and your goal is the same -- to help us find a way to make our vibrant and growing diversity, not the great problem, but the great promise of the 21st century. With you at our side, I know we will make great strides in this renewed national effort to build One America. Nothing is more vital to our future and nothing else we do will matter unless we are successful in coming together across all our differences.

With the NAACP's constant leadership, we have come a long way. Through sit-ins and marches, lobbying and legal action, the NAACP has been in the forefront of the greatest non-violent social revolution the world has ever seen. And during the past four-and-a-half years, I have worked hard to strengthen the civil rights protections we all agree are essential to moving this nation forward: From our commitment to mend, not end affirmative action to our determination to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws to our insistence that Congress give us the resources to deal with the current backlog of discrimination claims. We know that a strong commitment to civil rights is not about protecting one group of Americans at the expense of another. Civil rights guarantees are the promise of inclusion and fairness and they lift up all Americans.

In the 21st century, America will face an explosion of diversity. Today, the state of Hawaii has no majority racial or ethnic group. Within the next three years, the same will true of California. Already five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. We know what we are going to look like in the next century. The great question facing us is what are we going to be like? We know that we are a stronger, more secure and healthier nation when we unite around our shared values and work together to solve our common problems. Just look at what we have accomplished together during the past four-and-a-half years.

Our economy is once again the strongest in the world. Unemployment is the lowest it has been since 1973; 12.5 million new jobs; the largest decline in income inequality since the 1960s; typical family income for African Americans has increased by \$3,000 since 1992; home mortgage lending to African Americans has increased 70 percent since 1993; a 77 percent cut in the deficit. We have cut the deficit and invested in our people and more Americans than ever are reaping the benefits. We are also building a more cohesive society. Last year, we had the largest decline in crime in 36 years. Murders dropped an astounding 11 percent. And we have seen a stunning drop in our welfare rolls.

I know many of you did not support my signing of the welfare reform bill. But, remember we fought hard to make sure there was a guarantee of nutrition and health care and child care for our children. And we made sure states would have the maximum amount of money to assist the truly needy. So far, it's working. There are 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took

office -- and 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law. This is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, giving us the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. We have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate our values of work, family and responsibility. But, we still have more to do.

We must continue to work together to help welfare recipients get to the new jobs, which are often outside their neighborhoods. That is why Transportation Secretary Slater and I recently proposed legislation providing \$600 million to help states and local communities devise transportation strategies to move people from welfare to work. And that is why I have enlisted the business community in our Welfare-to-Work partnership that will ensure they do their part in hiring welfare recipients and recruiting others to do the same.

Equal opportunity, equal access to good jobs, racial reconciliation and a renewed commitment to personal responsibility are important to our efforts to prepare our people and our nation for the 21st century. But, today I want to talk about perhaps the greatest challenge we face as we enter the new millennium. The challenge of making sure all our children have access to the best schools and the best education in the world. If we set high standards, expect our children to reach them, and give them the tools and support they need to do so, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

Every child in America has the right to a quality education. Today, more than ever we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills and make a renewed commitment to life-long learning. But we all know that too many of our schools, especially in our urban areas are failing. There is a disturbing gap in achievement and attainment between low income students and the more advantaged, between black and white.

There is a wide disparity of burdens between urban and suburban schools. Unlike the suburban experience, too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. And due to size, complexity, extreme infrastructure problems and the great need for professional development and other priorities, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

But, while more money is acutely needed in our urban schools, the real problem is a tyranny of low expectations. We know that African American, Latino and other minority students can achieve at the highest levels if they are taught at the highest levels. But too often in America, students from minority and low income families are likely to attend schools with low expectations for student performance, meager cash resources, under prepared teachers and watered down curriculum. And 43 years after Brown v. Board of Education, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. Let us be clear about this: The NAACP has never wavered from its commitment to a fully integrated society, and neither should America. We

may argue about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and in our schools.

Despite the dire conditions of many urban schools, some urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

That is why Secretary Riley and I have worked so hard to raise academic standards; to give every student the benefit of high expectations and a challenging curriculum. We fought to pass Goals 2000 and overhaul Title 1 so that every child from the poorest inner city school to the most isolated rural school to the richest suburban school would be taught to the same expectation.

That is why we are fighting right now for national standards in reading and math and tests to measure progress. But make no mistake, standards and tests are essential, but alone they are insufficient. As a nation, we must give students and schools the tools they need to reach high standards. And we must do this for all our children. We must leave no one behind. Education is largely a state and local responsibility, but it must be a national priority. That means all of us must do our part -- parents, community groups, state and local government and the federal government to give our children the world-class education they need and deserve.

Students in distressed urban and rural schools need special help, and my Administration has been working to give it to them. We will keep working to get Congress to pass a School Construction Initiative to help local communities renovate and repair schools that need it, and to build new schools if necessary. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded. Congress balked at including this in the budget agreement, but we will continue to fight for it.

Our children also have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of the daily routine of our children. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

We are also committed to making sure students in poor and urban and isolated rural schools have access to the same information that students in the wealthiest communities have. That is why we are working so hard to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning.

But we know that no child will be able to make use of this technology if he or she has not mastered the basics. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year

one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

But we must do more, especially for urban and poor rural communities where the barriers to achievement are the greatest. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. A large percentage of these teachers will be needed in our central cities where the challenge of attracting and retaining qualified teachers is the greatest.

As a first step to meeting this challenge, I am announcing today a new initiative to help recruit and prepare a diverse group of teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. We will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools.

This is a downpayment on what must be greater efforts by all of us to improve the quality of education available to students in our urban and poor rural schools. We can draw strength from the lesson of the NAACP's constant push for educational excellence.

This September marks the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock's Central High. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by national guardsmen on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, we must again join hands and walk with our children into a new era of excellence in education. This is a job for every American. And I know we can count on the NAACP to lead the way.

Thank you and God bless you all.

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88TH ANNUAL NATIONAL NAACP CONVENTION
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With the NAACP's constant leadership, we have come a long way. Through sit-ins and marches, lobbying and legal action, the NAACP has been in the forefront of the greatest non-violent social revolution the world has ever seen. And during the past four-and-a-half years, I have worked hard to strengthen the civil rights protections we all agree are essential to moving this nation forward: From our commitment to mend, not end affirmative action to our determination to vigorously enforce our civil rights laws to our insistence that Congress give us the resources to deal with the current backlog of discrimination claims. We know that a strong commitment to civil rights is not about protecting one group of Americans at the expense of another. Civil rights guarantees are the promise of inclusion and fairness and they lift up all Americans.

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I know many of you did not support my signing of the welfare reform bill. But, remember we fought hard to make sure there was a guarantee of nutrition and health care and child care for our children. And we made sure states would have the maximum amount of money to assist the truly needy. So far, it's working. There are 3 million fewer people on welfare than the day I took

office -- and 1.2 million fewer since I signed welfare reform into law. This is the largest decrease in the welfare rolls in history, giving us the lowest percentage of our population on welfare since 1970. We have begun to break the cycle of dependency and elevate our values of work, family and responsibility. But, we still have more to do.

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Equal opportunity, equal access to good jobs, racial reconciliation and a renewed commitment to personal responsibility are important to our efforts to prepare our people and our nation for the 21st century. But, today I want to talk about perhaps the greatest challenge we face as we enter the new millennium. The challenge of making sure all our children have access to the best schools and the best education in the world. If we set high standards, expect our children to reach them, and give them the tools and support they need to do so, I know that all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

Every child in America has the right to a quality education. Today, more than ever we know that knowledge is power. New technologies and the globalization of communications and our economy require that we acquire new skills and make a renewed commitment to life-long learning. But we all know that too many of our schools, especially in our urban areas are failing. There is a disturbing gap in achievement and attainment between low income students and the more advantaged, between black and white.

There is a wide disparity of burdens between urban and suburban schools. Unlike the suburban experience, too many children in our urban schools carry more than their books to school. They carry poverty and the effects of growing up in single parent homes. They carry unmet medical needs. They carry the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods. Many more immigrants attend our urban schools, bringing with them language and cultural adjustment problems. And due to size, complexity, extreme infrastructure problems and the great need for professional development and other priorities, it costs more to run an urban school than a suburban school.

But, while more money is acutely needed in our urban schools, the real problem is a tyranny of low expectations. We know that African American, Latino and other minority students can achieve at the highest levels if they are taught at the highest levels. But too often in America, students from minority and low income families are likely to attend schools with low expectations for student performance, meager cash resources, under prepared teachers and watered down curriculum. And 43 years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, most African American and Latino students attend predominantly minority schools. Let us be clear about this: The NAACP has never wavered from its commitment to a fully integrated society, and neither should America. We

may argue about how to get there, but we should continue to stand together in our determination to end segregation -- in our housing, in our workplaces, and in our schools.

Despite the dire conditions of many urban schools, some urban schools are succeeding. Every city can point to schools where committed teachers and staff manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve at the highest levels. These schools show us that given proper support, all children can learn despite the extra hardships they may carry with them to school. We must spread these successes and challenge more of our children to reach for the stars.

That is why Secretary Riley and I have worked so hard to raise academic standards; to give every student the benefit of high expectations and a challenging curriculum. We fought to pass Goals 2000 and overhaul Title I so that every child from the poorest inner city school to the most isolated rural school to the richest suburban school would be taught to the same expectation.

That is why we are fighting right now for national standards in reading and math and tests to measure progress. But make no mistake, standards and tests are essential, but alone they are insufficient. As a nation, we must give students and schools the tools they need to reach high standards. And we must do this for all our children. We must leave no one behind. Education is largely a state and local responsibility, but it must be a national priority. That means all of us must do our part -- parents, community groups, state and local government and the federal government to give our children the world-class education they need and deserve.

Students in distressed urban and rural schools need special help, and my Administration has been working to give it to them. We will keep working to get Congress to pass a School Construction Initiative to help local communities renovate and repair schools that need it, and to build new schools if necessary. Students can't learn in buildings that are falling down, in disrepair or seriously overcrowded. Congress balked at including this in the budget agreement, but we will continue to fight for it.

Our children also have a right to go to schools that are safe and drug free. Fear must not be a part of the daily routine of our children. No child should be afraid to walk to school or walk the halls. And it is simply unacceptable that we have children falling behind in learning because of disruption in the classroom. That is why we have fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our schools. And it is why we have supported parents and communities who want to make school uniform and truancy programs a part of their efforts to improve school safety.

We are also committed to making sure students in poor and urban and isolated rural schools have access to the same information that students in the wealthiest communities have. That is why we are working so hard to connect every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway by the year 2000; to make it affordable, and to provide well-trained teachers who can help our students navigate this exciting new world of learning.

But we know that no child will be able to make use of this technology if he or she has not mastered the basics. That is why we are mobilizing one million tutors to make sure that by year

one of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language is, can read independently by the 3rd grade.

But we must do more, especially for urban and poor rural communities where the barriers to achievement are the greatest. Our nation faces a significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever before into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. A large percentage of these teachers will be needed in our central cities where the challenge of attracting and retaining qualified teachers is the greatest.

As a first step to meeting this challenge, I am announcing today a new initiative to help recruit and prepare a diverse group of teachers to teach in urban and rural communities. We will offer scholarship incentives for people who will commit to teach for at least three years in high poverty communities, with special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching. Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs, so that those who go into teaching will be better prepared to teach students served by urban and poor rural schools.

This is a downpayment on what must be greater efforts by all of us to improve the quality of education available to students in our urban and poor rural schools. We can draw strength from the lesson of the NAACP's constant push for educational excellence. We can also learn much from the NAACP's role in the integration of Little Rock's Central High 40 years ago this September. I was only 11 years old when the nation's attention was riveted by the scene of 9 black children being escorted by national guardsmen on their first day of school. I also remember that when others refused to stand up for those black children, the NAACP, led by a woman named Daisy Bates, stood with them and walked with them every step of the way. Today, we must again join hands and walk with our children into a new era of excellence in education. This is a job for every American. But I know we can count on the NAACP to lead the way.

Thank you and God bless you all.



Michael Cohen
07/09/97 05:03:57 PM

Record Type: Record

To: James T. Edmonds/WHO/EOP

CC:

Subject: Re: NAACP 

By way of explanation, the attachment I sent in the previous e-mail basically assumes the following:

1. POTUS needs to talk about higher standards and his testing initiative (I know that Leslie and others think he ought to talk about standards but not tests; I think that's a mistake).
2. He has to convince the group that he is as serious about giving all kids the opportunity to learn as he is about testing them.
3. I've tried to highlight those things POTUS can appropriately take credit for by way of demonstrating that he is serious about providing opportunities, though some the "accomplishment" are actually proposals we are trying to enact. I think that is legitimate to do, and while it may speak to the President's intentions, it may not be completely reassuring to the audience.
4. I've tried to cast the new policy piece--a \$65 million initiative to improve the quality of teacher preparation for people who will teach in urban and poor rural areas, and provide incentives for people to teach in those areas -- as the first step in a larger education initiative to be focused on kids in urban and poor rural areas. The biggest difficulty here is that we don't know what the other steps will be.

4805 Mt. Hope Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215

NAACP facsimile transmittal

To: Terry Edmonds

Fax: 202/456-5709

From: Tammy Hawley

Date: July 8, 1997

Re: Education Information

Pages: 11

CC:

☐ Urgent

☐ For Review

☐ Please Comment

☐ Please Reply

☐ Please Recycle

Notes:

While a thousand dollar increase may not sound like much to some, it means a great deal for working families struggling to get by.

-- Raising the minimum wage was not a cure-all, but is critical to make work pay for millions of low-income Americans trying to reach the first rungs of our economic ladder.

-- In September, America's minimum wage workers will receive the second step of the two-step increase. Combined with the first increase, the second 40-cent raise will provide a pay hike to more than 10 million working people. Boosting the minimum wage was an essential victory for the dignity of work and family.

EPI received partial funding for this report from the U.S. Department of Labor. Additional support was provided by grants from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

U.S. Labor Department news releases are accessible on the Internet at: <http://www.dol.gov>.

The information in this news release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. TDD Message Referral Phone: 800-326-2577; Voice phone: 202-219-7316.

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/U.S. Newswire 202-347-2770/
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Date: 07/11/97 Time: 11:23

bStatement by Labor Secretary on EPI Study on Minimum Wage Increase

To: National Desk, Labor Writer

Contact: Meg Schryver of the U.S. Department Labor,
202-219-8211

WASHINGTON, July 11 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman hailed today's release of Economic Policy Institute (EPI) study examining the impact of the October 1996 minimum wage increase:

``Last fall, as the minimum wage approached its lowest value in 40 years, President Clinton gave minimum wage workers a well-deserved pay raise. Critics argued -- as they have countless times before -- that the increase would cost hundreds of thousands of jobs. Once again, we have empirical evidence showing that is simply not true. EPI's early analysis confirms that we can give the lowest paid Americans a long-merited pay raise without sacrificing jobs.

-- Before the increase, full-time year-round workers earned a minimum wage of approximately \$8,500 a year. Because we raised the minimum wage, they are now earning approximately \$9,500 a year.

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- o Financial Health Of Cities Shows Continued To Improvement. The National League of Cities (NLC) today released its annual survey on the fiscal condition of American cities, showing that for a fifth consecutive year, "a growing percentage of cities (68 percent) said they are better able to meet their financial needs than they were a year ago." In addition, the survey shows that 56 percent of American cities are increasing capital expenditures and 55 percent said they are increasing the growth rate of their operating budgets, according to documents supplied by the NLC. The two largest factors for the increase in financial health were "changes in the value of the local tax base," and "health of the local economy." Fourteen percent of the nation's cities reduced property tax rates, while 32 percent reported an increase in fees or taxes in order to maintain a balanced budget. Nevertheless, "the extent of actions to increase local revenues was the lowest in the past decade," according to the NLC.

On the other side of the ledger, one-third of the surveyed cities reported their fiscal conditions are "worse than a year ago, and nearly one-third reported that general fund expenditures exceeded revenues." The most often reported "pressure points" on municipal budgets were infrastructure needs, public safety, Federal environmental mandates, and "state restrictions on local government *finances.*"

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o Rubin, Gore Emphasize Urban Tax Agenda; Tax Bill Conference Scheduled To Begin At End Of This Week. Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin today chose to emphasize the urban agenda contained in the President's tax-cut proposal, saying at a morning press conference, "The key component of the President's proposal is a series of tax proposals and tax incentives to help foster growth in inner cities. The President and the Vice President have, throughout the first term and now in the second term, spoken about the importance of the inner cities to the long-term economic health of our entire economy." Rubin added, "And the point of that is that the inner cities are of concern not only to the residents of the inner cities, but to the economic and social well-being of all of us. Just think of the enormous difference it will make in terms of social costs, productivity gains, and economic growth if the residents of the inner cities all become members of the economic mainstream."

At a press conference featuring a number of US mayors, Rubin laid out the highlights of the Administration's urban agenda, saying, "The President's tax proposals include four main components to help inner cities. First, a tax incentive to help develop contaminated, abandoned sites in economically distressed areas, and that is our brown fields tax credit. Second, a new round of empowerment zones and enterprise communities to foster growth in

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economically distressed areas. Third, a welfare-to-work tax credit to give employers incentives to hire welfare recipients. And finally, a new Community Development Financial Institutions tax credit to promote the CDFI program. And I might add that separately, we are seeking full and rigorous funding for the CDFI program in order to better provide capital access and financial services in vastly under-served areas."

Appearing at the same press conference, Vice President Gore supported Rubin, saying, "I want to acknowledge Secretary Rubin as a very forceful and tireless advocate for America's cities. And even though he is best known for his duties as Treasury Secretary dealing with fiscal and monetary policy and all the various things around the world, I can tell you that he is always a forceful advocate for the distressed urban areas of our nation. It is always close to his heart, and I appreciate the chance to stand with him here today." Gore added, "The health of our nation really does depend upon the health of our cities. And the area surrounding the cities are linked integrally to those cities. And there's a dawning awareness in America about how the fate of our suburbs, and the fate of our cities are inextricably linked. Indeed, the fate of the farming areas on the other side of the suburbs is linked to the fate of the inner cities. Because if we continue to subsidize the

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replication of infrastructure that already exists in our urban core, we drive property -- in cornfields -- we drive the property tax rates up for the farmers. And we continue the removal of investment from the inner city areas. The key to the health of our cities and our country is, in part, to refocus investment on the urban core. That's good for the suburbs that surround the cities. It's good for the whole area marked by the location of a great city." Gore explained today's press conference was necessary because the House and Senate passed tax bills did not include the President's urban-oriented proposals. Gore said that the budget agreement says "that Congress would seek inclusion of our tax-cut proposals to revitalize distressed urban areas throughout the country."

Meanwhile, a House GOP leadership source reported this morning that the conference on tax cuts is scheduled to formally begin this Friday, while the conference on spending will begin Thursday. Despite a warning from Rubin over the weekend, participants in the tax debate continue to express confidence that deals can be done on both bills relatively quickly. Appearing on CBS television over the weekend, House Speaker Newt Gingrich said he believes a tax bill will be completed after "about a week to 10 days of very hard negotiations." An Administration official said this morning, "It's fair to say that everyone is aiming to get a final reconciliation

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bill done before the August recess." The official repeated the Administration position that White House officials have carefully avoided the use of the word "veto" because "we believe that we're going to be able to resolve the issues of concern and, in particular, that a final agreement, at the very least, is going to reflect the bipartisan budget agreement."

The negotiations leading to an agreement were arguably complicated by a ten-page letter sent by Rubin to the conferees on July 3, listing in detail the Administration's opposition to specific details of the House and Senate passed tax bills. The apparent thrust of Rubin's comments, however, was contained in the section of his letter titled, "Explosion of Costs in Out Years." In that section, Rubin said, "The tax items causing out-year costs to increase sharply are those that disproportionately benefit high-income taxpayers. In contrast, provisions that benefit middle-income families, such as the President's education proposals and the child credit, over time become much less significant in the overall revenue loss under the House and Senate bills." Rubin specifically mentioned "capital gains, AMT, savings and estate tax provisions" in the congressional tax bills as the items that will lead to the explosion of costs in the out years -- all of which are priorities for the GOP.

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Rubin's letter was received by congressional Republicans as being at least partially devoted to political posturing. According to a House GOP leadership source, "They're pulling this crap again with the long-weekend, ten-page letter that was sent to [House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill] Archer Thursday afternoon -- then spend a weekend talking about what's in it." Another House GOP leadership source said, "Robert Rubin is the official designate within the Administration to throw a bone to the left whenever possible." The leadership source added, "July 3 is not known as a day when you actually make news. It's when you say things that need to be said so that you can point to them later."

o DNC Witnesses Expected To Offer Contradicting Testimony During Thompson Hearings. Democratic insiders are predicting this morning that the Thompson fundraising hearings will begin this week, with former top Democratic National Committee officials pointing fingers at one another during the early testimony. One Democratic source predicted a four-way circular shootout between former DNC Chairman Don Fowler, former Finance Chairman Marvin Rosen, former Finance Director Richard Sullivan and current General Counsel Joe Sandler. One area where the Democrats' accounts could differ is on who handled the vetting of questionable contributors who would later

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Lansing, Michigan)

For Immediate Release

March 6, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE JOINT SESSION OF THE
MICHIGAN LEGISLATURE

The State Capitol
Lansing, Michigan

11:36 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Governor. Thank you all for that wonderful welcome in this magnificent Capitol. I'm delighted to be here today with so many of your state officials -- Lieutenant Governor Binsfeld; your State Board of Education president, Kathleen Strauss. I don't know if Frank Kelley met Theodore Roosevelt, but he did meet me when I became Attorney General. (Laughter and applause.) And some days I feel about that old. (Laughter.)

I want to thank the Mayor of Lansing, Mayor Hollister, for meeting me at the airport, and all the other state officials and dignitaries who are here -- Representative Sikkema, thank you, sir; and Senator Cherry and Senator Posthumus.

I want to thank the members of Congress and others who flew down here with me today -- your former Governor, Jim Blanchard and his wife; Congressman Dingell; your Congresswoman from here, Congresswoman Debbie Stabenow; Representative Levin; Representative Kilpatrick; Representative Conyers; Representative Stupak; Representative Camp; and Representative Hoekstra and Representative Barcia. Did I get them all? (Laughter.) Nine, yes, we only had nine here.

I could only muster nine, but that's a quorum -- (laughter) -- even in the state legislature of the Michigan delegation. I thank them for coming down. Thank you, Wendell Anthony, for your invocation, and thank you for making me feel so welcome.

When I came in, the Speaker and I were looking up at this magnificent ceiling, and I noticed that the seal of the State of Michigan was right next to the seal of my home state of Arkansas. And maybe one reason for that is that the Congress approved us coming into the Union at the same time.

I was reading also the account of Theodore Roosevelt coming here 90 years ago. I know you have partisan differences today. You might be interested to know that 90 years ago there were 32 Republicans and no Democrats in the Senate. (Laughter and applause.) If you clap too much, I've got a great closing line -- Governor, you'll get mad at it. (Laughter.) There 95 Republicans and five Democrats in the House. And it was the aftermath of the Civil War.

I say this because our two states have been entwined in an interesting way over the course of time. We were allowed together into the Union because Michigan was a free state and Arkansas was a southern slave state, and Michigan became the party -- adhering to the party of Abraham Lincoln, of freedom, and the party of Theodore Roosevelt, which the Governor explained. And most of us Democrats are pretty proud of those folks, too. They represent the best in America.

Then, after the Great Depression, Michigan basically became the home of tens of thousands of people from my state who simply could not make a living anymore on the farm, and the factories of Michigan gave people from Arkansas, black and white together, the chance to come up here and build a decent middle class life and educate their children and be a part of what was then America's future. So anybody from my roots must be exceedingly grateful to the people of Michigan and the history and the heritage of Michigan.

When Theodore Roosevelt was here, he was going to Michigan State to address the graduates there, just as I did a couple of years ago. And I might say the President of Michigan State is here, and I told him today that he gave me a picture of Theodore Roosevelt's address to the graduates at Michigan State, and it now hangs on my office wall at the White House -- at the entrance to my little private office off the Oval Office and I look up there and see Teddy Roosevelt speaking every day that I go to work.

Before that, he came here and when he spoke here I suppose the place looked about like it does now, thanks to your magnificent renovation, and I applaud you for doing this. People all over America should remember it's worth investing a little money to protect your roots and your heritage, and the beauty and meaning of what we were, as well as what we hope to be.

In 1907 when Teddy Roosevelt came here we were at the dawn of the Industrial Era. This building had been wired for electricity only two years before he showed up. And when President Roosevelt left here to go to the college campus, he got in a newfangled contraption called a Reo automobile. I read the newspaper article from your local paper from 1907 this morning, and it said that it was something of a risk for him to get into the car, but it was probably the wave of the future, who knew what would turn out. (Laughter.)

Then, like a good politician, I read that when he was at Michigan State, at the campus, he learned that there were, in fact, two different car manufacturers competing with one another in Lansing, so he took the other one back. (Laughter.) He took a Reo out and an Olds back.

That was a rare moment. Just think what happened from that moment to this one. Think about the century that that moment and this one spans -- all but ten years of this century -- and why it became the American Century, what a big part of it Michigan was. Building the great middle class, offering a haven to people from all over America, and to immigrants who would come here from other lands to work, to make their way. Building an industrial power that could prevail in two world wars and overcome a great Depression. Building an ethical power that could live up to the meaning of its Constitution in the civil rights revolution, and expanding opportunities to young people to vote and to women to fully participate in the life of America. Just think what has happened in the 20th century.

When Roosevelt was here in 1970, it was a rare moment. We were moving on to the stage as a world power. Everyone recognized it. We had, by then, been a nation for more than 100 years, and everybody knew there was something unique about America -- a free democracy, where people could vote and decide and make their judgments. And it was growing and being nourished. We were exceedingly prosperous by the standards of the time.

And Roosevelt knew that you had to make the most of peace and prosperity and leadership, and he did. And so did his successor, Woodrow Wilson. And because of them together and the work they did with like-minded members of both parties, we built an era that set the framework for America's leadership, growth and prosperity, and the explosion of people into the middle class, which became the hallmark of Michigan's greatness.

When I was a kid in Arkansas our per capita income was barely half the national average. We all knew if you could find your way up here and got a job, you could still make a good living. That all began at the beginning of this century. It is a very rare thing for a country to have peace and prosperity and the possibility of shaping its own future. Abraham Lincoln said in the Civil War, my policy is to have no policy; I'm controlled by events. If I said that, I would be ridiculed, rightly so. But he was controlled by events. He did have a policy -- it was to keep the union together, and then to liberate us from the scourge of slavery. But he was controlled by events.

When the Depression came on and President Roosevelt called for an era of bold experimentation, he was controlled by events to some extent. He couldn't say, the major issue in America is the climate, or even education or anything else. He was controlled by events, and the war did that. And to some extent, the Cold War did that for us. When Sputnik went up and we got into the space race and wound up winning it, we were almost forced into it. Now we have peace and prosperity on the edge of an era of unimaginable possibility.

We just finished four years where our country, for the first time during one administration has produced 11.5 million jobs. Michigan, the unemployment rate has dropped, and the Governor said your welfare rolls are down 30 percent. You see this kind of progress, this energy, this movement, this possibility in America -- dramatic, new advances in science and technology occurring. This is a rare time.

What happens to people, usually, when they are prosperous and unthreatened? Well, they usually get complacent, and then they normally find some reason to fall out with one another, usually over something incredibly petty, just in the nature of human events. And I come here to say to you today, we here in America, and you here especially in Michigan who have done so much for so long, we cannot afford to do that. We owe something better to our children. We have been given this unique opportunity -- the same sort of opportunity we had when your predecessors were listening to Theodore Roosevelt here 90 years ago, except one on an even grander scale. And we have to make the most of it. We have to build America in the new century. And we also have to know that we have to do it as one America.

I am gratified that Governor Engler said what he did about the education program today. I am gratified that this bipartisan state legislature has given me such a warm welcome --for, we have to forge a new partnership for a new time.

While the era of big government is truly over -- the federal government now has 285,000 fewer people working for it than it did on the day I took the Oath of Office -- the era of big challenges for our nation is not over. And now, we know that national leadership can and must point the way, but the real responsibility is one we all share.

Especially, there are two areas I want to discuss today -- educational excellence, high standards for all students; and welfare reform, breaking the cycle of dependency for everyone capable of independence in America -- for these issues are at the core of what it means to prepare America for the 21st century, giving all Americans not only the opportunity, but the tools they need to make the most of their own lives in this new global knowledge economy.

The Governor referred to this in his remarks. When I gave The State of the Union address, I said that during the Cold War, because our national security was threatened by communism, politics stopped at the water's edge. Today, our national security depends upon our ability to develop the capacities of all of our people, so politics should stop at the schoolhouse door.

Between 1992 and 2000 -- think of this -- 89 percent of the new jobs created in this economy will require more than high school levels of literacy and math skills. But only half the people entering the work force are prepared for these high-paying jobs, even though about 80 percent of them are high school graduates. Our schools are still turning out millions of young people who simply are not equipped for the new world of work. That is why our number one priority must be to make our system of public education the best in the world, and you must

believe we can do this. (Applause.)

A few years ago, almost eight years ago now I had the honor of joining the other governors then serving with President Bush at the University of Virginia to write the national education goals. I still think they're pretty good goals. If you ask me what the consequences would be if they were implemented, we could say bluntly that it would mean that every 8-year-old would be able to read independently, every 12-year-old could now log on to the Internet, every 18-year-old could go to college, and every adult American could keep on learning for a lifetime. That is what I want to be the reality in this country.

In the State of the Union address, I laid out a 10-point plan, a Call to Action for American Education that describes the steps I believe we must all take -- beginning with the youngest children, expanding and improving early childhood learning. The First Lady and I will be having a conference on early childhood learning and the brain to try to deal with these enormously significant new findings over the last couple of years, what we know about not only when children learn, but how they learn, and what happens if we don't do for them what they should do.

An enormous percentage of the capacity of the brain to absorb information to operate is developed in the first four years. I'll just give you one statistic: The average child that grows up in a family with two parents caring for that child, even if they both work, that have reasonably good educations and deal with the basic developmental tasks, will give that child 700,000 positive interactions in the first four years. The average child being raised by a single parent with low self-esteem and low self-confidence and no training in parenting will get 150,000 positive interactions and spend roughly seven times as much time before a television doing nothing, in the first four years. This has enormous consequences for the way we become. So we're going to talk about that.

We have to open the doors of college wider than ever. If 90 percent of the jobs require more than a high school education, and the 1990 census shows that the only group of younger workers whose incomes went up instead of down after you adjust for inflation were those that had at least two years of some kind of training after high school, we ought to make the 13th and 14th years of education just as universal by the year 2000 as a high school education is today. (Applause.)

I know that for years Michigan has been in the forefront of that, helping people to save for college. I have a proposal to provide tax credits for the cost of a typical community college for two years, and tax deductions up to \$10,000 a year for the tuition cost in any post-high school education, and an expanded IRA that can be used for the same purpose. We have to do this.

We also have to give more of our workers the ability to keep on learning for a lifetime. For four years, through a Democrat Congress and a Republican Congress, I have been given

equal opportunity to fail to pass the G.I. Bill for American Workers. But it seems to me to be a simple idea. I just want to take the 70-odd programs that were developed with the best of intentions over the years, for this training program, that training program and the other one, put them in a big fund, and when a worker becomes eligible for help through unemployment or underemployment, send them a skills grant and let them take it to the local community college or the nearest education institution. They can find out for themselves what they need to do to improve their education. We don't need all that stuff in the middle of them, between them and the money. Send them the money, let them get the education. I hope you will help me pass that in the Congress. I think it is a good thing. (Applause.)

I want to help for the very first time through an innovative program to use federal funds to lower the interest rates on local bond issues to help schools with enormous building problems to repair their broken infrastructure, or build new facilities when they are doing their part. This is a very important thing.

We have the largest number of schoolchildren -- as Secretary Riley never lets me forget -- we have the largest number of schoolchildren in history in our schools this year, the first time we've ever had a bigger group than the Baby Boom generation. I have been to schools where the buildings were falling down. My wife was in a school this week where some of the floors were closed, and the kids were going to school on some floors and couldn't go into other floors or other rooms because they didn't comply with the building codes. I have been into other schools with beautiful old school buildings surrounded by temporary facilities to hold the children.

So I think it's an appropriate thing for us to do -- not to try to take over this function, and not to try to substitute for people assuming responsibility, but when there's a terrible problem and people are doing their own work, if we can, by a prudent and limited investment, lower the cost of that so that more people can afford to do more construction and repair, I think we should. (Applause.)

I'm also strongly committed -- the Vice President and I have been working on this very hard -- to getting every classroom and every library in the country hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000. And I want to thank your Congresswoman, Debbie Stabenow, for the work that she's done in supporting that. (Applause.)

Secretary Riley has awarded Michigan a grant of \$8.6 million for the technology literacy challenge to help your classrooms move into the 21st century, and I ask all of you to support that. There is enormous willingness in the private sector to help us get this done, and it can revolutionize -- just think of it -- if we can hook up every classroom and every library to the Internet by the year 2000, for the first time in the history of the country ever -- ever -- children in the poorest district, the richest districts, the middle-class districts -- all of them will have access to the same learning in the same way in the same time.

And those of you who have children or know children who are already proficient in

using the Internet, it's a stunning thing. The other day, my daughter picked a topic to do a research paper on and she said, Dad, can you get me a couple of books on this out of the library? I came home with four books, and she had eight citations she had gotten off the Internet -- eight articles on things. So my labors were one-third of her research project.

This is an incredible thing. If we make this available to all children, it will change in a breathtaking way what people can become, what our children can imagine themselves becoming. And I ask you to help us do that.

I thank you, Governor, for what you said about our support for greater discipline and safety and character education in the schools. I have proposed funding 1,000 new community school programs across the country to help our schools stay open after school, on the weekends in the summertime, to try to give those children who need some positive place to go, some support, some help to stay out of trouble, a place to do that.

I have studied very carefully this problem of rising juvenile crime when overall crime has been going down dramatically in America. And the communities that are reversing that trend, that had juvenile crime going down are the places that make sure that all those kids have something positive to say yes to, even as they're being told to say no to the wrong things. So I want the schools to be able to do that in every community where it's needed in the United States. (Applause.)

We have to make sure that we do everything we can to help our classroom teachers be the best they can be. For years, educators worked to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teaching through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which is headquartered here in Detroit, Michigan.

Now, Michigan has the third highest number of board-certified master teachers in the country, and that's a good thing. But there are still only a few hundred who have been board-certified. My new budget will enable 100,000 teachers all across America to seek certification as master teachers. And our goal should be to have one certified master teacher in every single school in America. That will make more master teachers we need for those schools, and I hope we can do it. (Applause.)

As has already been said today, I do believe that we need a strong system of public education that gives parents and communities more freedom and flexibility. I think we should work together to give parents more choices for what public schools their children attend all across America. I think we should help teachers, parents, museums and others to create new public charter schools.

I have proposed to double the budget of the program so that we can increase by tenfold the number of charter schools we have by the year 2000, to create -- (applause) -- and I think it's important to emphasize what we want. We want high standards, schools that are open to all

children regardless of their backgrounds. We want an example of accountability which will then spread to all other public schools. But we want to say to them, you can stay open only as long as you do a good job. That's what the charter means; that's what a charter is.

Ultimately, what we want to do is to prove that we have a model here that can be used everywhere else. It is simply not true that if you have a few public schools that all the rest of them can't be good; if some of them are good that they all can't be good. That is not true. It is not true that because it's a public institution we can't achieve excellence everywhere. If that were true, we'd have some good Army units and some bad Army units. And we'd be afraid to go to war and you wouldn't sleep well at night. Isn't that right?

So you do not have to accept the feeling that you know this wonderful principal, and if only everybody else could be that way. That is simply not true. Leadership can be taught, leadership can be trained, and 90 percent of the children in this country plus -- 99 percent of them -- can learn what they need to know to succeed and triumph in the modern world. They can do it and we have to do it. (Applause.)

Now that you've clapped, I will say they are capable of it, but they don't know it today. Let's face the fact. The truth is that 40 percent of the 4th graders in this country still cannot read a book on their own. In Germany or Singapore, students learn 15 to 20 math subjects in depth every year. Typically in the United States, we learn over 30 or 35 every year in a superficial way. Then we have this comparative tests, they normally win -- especially since they stay in school longer than we do, day-in and day-out, year-in and year-out.

But without these skills, children will not be able to develop the capacity to think and to reason and to analyze complex problems. All these skills will be essential to succeeding in the world of the 21st century in jobs that have not been invented or even imagined yet.

Now, what do we have to have? We have got to have high standards, high expectations, and high levels of accountability. That is why I have challenged our nation to meet these national standards in the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards, representing what every child, wherever he or she lives, however poor, rich, or middle class he or she is, must know to do well in the world of the 21st century. And I think we should begin by having every state test every 4th-grader in reading and every 8th-grader in math by 1999 to make sure these basic standards are met.

We already have widely accepted rigorous standards in both reading and math, and widely used tests that are based on these standards. They're just not given to everyone or designed to be given to everyone. Michigan and more than 40 other states have participated in a test called the National Assessment of Education Progress. The Education Committee members in the audience call it the NAEP test. It measures a state's overall performance against a high national standard of excellence.

Just last week we released the annual assessment of math performance and it shows, across the country, that 4th-, 8th-, and 12th graders are doing better. And as the Governor said, the Michigan score is among the most improved in the nation.

Tens of thousands of students across the country have also taken the Third International Math and Science Survey, a test that reflects world-class standards our children must meet in math and science. The headquarters for that test is just down the road at Michigan State. And I want to thank Dr. William Schmidt at Michigan State for his leadership of this important study. I think he's here with us today. Where are you, Dr. Schmidt? (Applause.) He's here somewhere. Thank you very much, sir.

If you saw the State of the Union address, you know there are a group of children in northern Illinois that took this test in 20 school districts north of Chicago, and they finished tied for first in science and tied for second in math, I think. Very impressive.

Unfortunately, these test also don't provide scores for individuals, they simply measure how an entire area or group of people are doing. What we need are exams that will literally measure the performance of each and every student in each and every school. That way, parents and teachers will know how every child is doing compared to other students in other schools, other states, and other countries. And most important of all, they will know how the child is doing compared to what you need to know to go forward.

And I want to make it clear what the difference is. It doesn't matter if your child makes the highest grade in the class if nobody gets over the standards bar. Conversely, in this test it doesn't matter if your child makes the lowest grade in the class if everybody gets over the standards bar. That's the difference. We have a lot of these standardized test. We need tests that test to the standards, that say whether you crossed the threshold of what you must know to do well in the world of tomorrow.

That's why I'm presenting a plan to help the states meet and measure these standards. Over the next two years, the Department of Education will support the development of new test for the 4th grade reading and the 8th grade math, to show how every student measures up to high and widely accepted standards. They'll be developed by independent experts in consultation with leading math and reading teachers. The federal government will not require them, but these tests will be made available to every state that chooses to administer them. That is the significance of the announcement that the Governor made. I want to create a climate in which no one can say no; in which it's voluntary but you are ashamed if you don't give your kids the chance to do this. (Applause.)

Together, we are saying this. This is not a partisan issue. There is no Democratic or Republican way to use. There is no Maryland or Michigan way to learn. Reading is reading, math is math. No school board or state legislature can rewrite the rules of algebra in Alaska to make them different than they are in Arkansas. It cannot be done. Every state must put politics

aside, work in a bipartisan fashion, test our children in the same rigorous way. Politics should stop at the schoolhouse door.

This will not be easy. Some of our children won't do very well at first. We don't need to make them feel like failures, we need to make them understand we're doing this so we can know how to measure their success. If they don't do very well at first, it's probably more our fault than theirs. And a lot of it, I will say again, is because when we see people in difficult circumstances, sometimes out of the goodness of our heart, we exercise our compassion by expecting less type of them. And we are selling their future right down the drain every time we do it. (Applause.)

I can tell you, over the last several years -- you know, I was a governor a long time -- I served with Governor Engler, I served with Governor Blanchard, I served with Governor Milliken. I have been all over this country to schools. I have seen schools in areas with high murder rates, where it was unsafe to get in the school, where there were no guns, no knives, no dope, no dropout, and test scores were above the state average. I could go through example after example after example. And every time I see one, I get more hopeful and more angry. Because if you can have one good school where the kids are learning against all the odds and all the obstacles, then you know when you leave that school there is no excuse for that not happening everywhere. This will help that happen everywhere. This will help that happen everywhere. (Applause.)

Let me make a comment now about one other part of this education program that I think is very important, and that's our America Reads program. We announced it here in Michigan last August in Wyandotte, when I was there on my train trip. And I did it with the help of two elementary school students, Justin Whitney and Elizabeth Schweyn. We announced the America Reads challenge, we set a goal mobilizing a million volunteer tutors to help every 8-year-old learn to read independently. We're going to use 11,000 of our AmeriCorps volunteers to mobilize and train the Army, we're going to get at least 100,000 college students to help, and I might say in the last budget we added 200,000 more work-study slots, and there's another 100,000 in this budget, so we'll go to a million kids on work-study, and I want 100,000 of that extra 300,000 to help teach our children to read. And I'm pleased that 16 Michigan college presidents have already pledged to provide their fair share of those students. (Applause.)

I don't know if you remember what we did that hot August day, but Elizabeth and Justin read "The Little Engine That Could" to me, and I said I want every child to be able to do this and say, here's this book and I can read this all by myself.

Today, Elizabeth and Justin are here with us and I would like to ask them to stand up. Where are they? They're out there -- there they are. (Applause.) Thank you. I will do what I can to help your young people be ready to be tested. I am asking the Department of Education and the National Science Foundation to identify and coordinate resources throughout the federal government and through the nonprofit sector that can be used to help students to meet the math

7/7/97

To: Sylvia Mathews
Elena Kagan
Michael Waldman

From: Christopher Edley, Jr.

Re: POTUS Speeches, Week of July 14th

Just back from vacation, I have very limited information about the planned content for these speeches. I'd like to offer a few thoughts, for whatever they are worth. I apologize in advance if these comments seem hyper-critical or harsh. I'm writing quickly, on the plane back from the Caribbean. I want to be constructive, clear and concise. Not off-putting. Don't know if what follows meets that test. But I'd like to help.

As I communicated before I left, these speeches must advance the ball rather than restate the U.C. San Diego themes. I mean this on two distinct levels: understanding of the race issue, and policy ideas. I also think that at least one of the speeches must be perceived as a "race" speech. He can't give general domestic policy speeches that don't directly deal with color, because then he won't be advancing the ball. He'll be hiding it.

I also think it is imperative to give one or all of these presidential statements some moral lift, keeping them above the customary plane of political rhetoric. We must obsessively avoid resorting to the familiar devices of rehearsing achievements and restating campaign-style themes. I just can't think of any way to persuade you "insiders" that, to someone even slightly outside, every time you fall back to those themes you drag down an otherwise lofty speech.. San Diego was an excellent speech that could have been even better by skipping the political rituals. (And I realize that a lot of this is POTUS himself inserting lines that have been politically effective for him.) Everyone must remember that these are speeches for history. For legacy. When a poet writes for the ages, she doesn't pen jingles and limericks, however valuable those might be as communication tools or entertainment. Think *gravitas*. But of course, it doesn't have to be tendentious to be momentous.

Back to content. On policy, I don't know the details of the teachers program that will be unveiled, but I assume it is some hybrid of the old National Health Service Corps and the Teacher Corps. I also assume it is cheap, funded with discretionary dollars, and has no prominent GOP supporters who are likely to guarantee appropriation support. As such, it will be a hollow authorization.

The more serious problem, which I hope will not materialize but am fairly confident in predicting, is that almost everyone in the civil rights community will dismiss this as a symbolic gesture. My guess is that that serious education policy analysts will do the same – with dismissive assessments such as, "Probably won't hurt." Am I being too cynical? How do you know? The reason I feel so strongly about this is that I were not part of the team, I myself

would be one of the vocal critics.

I think the education challenges related to the opportunity gap are far more serious and daunting than a teacher incentive program suggests. And this little piece of it invites criticism that we don't understand the true dimensions of the problem, or don't have the will to address it.

Alternative Education Themes: Instead, if we want to raise hard questions about race and opportunity in the education context, the President should talk about the problem honestly – as he challenged all Americans in his San Diego speech. Here's a list of serious education-related issues that could command serious attention and demonstrate a more compelling (and inspiring) engagement with the underlying issues:

- *Must we do something about the increasing concentrations of minority kids in failing high-poverty public schools?* The declines in racially isolated schools that were one hallmark of the civil rights struggle have turned around, and racially identifiable schools for minorities are quite often associated with concentrated poverty. These schools struggle to provide a decent education, but far too many fail. Are we committed to racial and economic integration? Should we be? What if it conflicts with traditions of local control and local finance?
- *Have minority communities been well-served by the school reform efforts of the past generation? Why not?* Something isn't working to produce the needed changes as quickly as needed to save children and their communities. Why? If local political action hasn't worked well enough, and market-oriented schemes are snake oil, and expert-driven bureaucratic reforms seem spotty and sluggish – how do we explain all of that failure, why is it fair to be so patient, and what is to be done?
- *Standards-based school reform, with tests and tough love, is intended to foment change. But if tests create high expectations and accountability for students, what will create high expectations and accountability for schools and educators?* The conventional response is that parents will get the test results and rise up and use their political power to effect change. But that hasn't worked with countless other problems facing poor and minority communities, in part because state and local politics simply don't work well for these groups. Look at the facts and stop pretending otherwise, if you are serious about helping. The "political incentive" solution, like the "market incentive" solution, will only work *some* of the time.

What's a more constructive issue to wrestle with? Secretary Riley is implementing the national voluntary test initiative, which along with other developments, moves toward national standards for student achievement. But why can't we also have an effort to develop "*opportunity to learn*" standards, so parents and voters will know when schools and politicians fail to provide the environment, resources and skill that will give all students a fair chance? Congress rejected the Administration's earlier proposal along these lines, but Congress hasn't authorized the national voluntary test program, either.

- *Diversity in higher education – how important is it for educational excellence, and for*

the nation? This is an incredibly important problem for selective higher education. POTUS cares about it, and many are shocked by the catastrophic numbers that seem to be developing in California and Texas. But the nation needs a serious discussion of why diversity is important. About the relationship between this and "merit." About the wrong, mechanical, set-aside way of doing affirmative action in admissions. About the broader mission of universities in preparing leaders for all of America's communities, and citizens who will understand all of America's communities.

There are also tough questions. Like explaining why in one breath we say diversity is important for excellence, but in the next say that black and women's colleges are okay. Or, explaining why experts are correct in saying that the SAT shouldn't be used as the sole basis for measuring merit and deciding admissions. (And being ready to explain why a test should be used as a basis for deciding that a K-12 student should be retained in grade, or denied a diploma – a view the President reportedly holds (!) despite the strong expert consensus that such high-stakes decisions should be based on multiple factors, not a single standardized test.) Again, the purpose of this initiative is to wrestle with tough issues. Let's do it.

Alternatives to Education: – Discrimination? If you are willing to think about something outside of education, then consider *Discrimination*. What is it? How much is there? To what extent is it the full measure of our problems – social, economic, moral? What's the relationship to intolerance? Or the relationship to our simple human tendency to prefer people who are like us? Can we do a better job of combating it, not just in our courts, but in our hearts? Why are there such different perceptions of whether this is still a major problem, and what can we do about those different perceptions? How hopeful should we be? How patient should we be? What is the role of government? Here are some specifics that the Federal Government can do: (1) strengthen the safety net of law enforcement, building on the down payment in the President's budget (ask Deich at OMB); (2) commit to comprehensive, regular national report card measuring discrimination, like we measure other important social and economic indicators; (3) ask National Academy of Sciences to recommend a design for this national report card, shaping expert consensus on appropriate methodologies; (4) strengthen the U.S. Civil Rights Commission in various ways (ask chairman Mary Frances Berry for proposals); (5) provide more support to strengthen the network of activities by state human rights commissions.

For the NAACP speech, I have a specific recommendation. As a grass roots membership organization with 1700 chapters (allegedly), this is the perfect audience in which to make a strong pitch for something like the following theme: *We must recruit, train and deploy Soldiers for Justice*. Soldiers for Justice are men and women in communities and organizations all across the nation who are committed to building bridges to connect communities across lines of color and class, who have the skills to do that bridge-building, and who understand that our best hope for the future we want is to take that circle of people and families and neighbors we care about, and make a bigger circle. There are examples from our history of Soldiers for Justice, such as ...; and there are examples today, such as The NAACP and similar organizations, such as ... , can help us identify today's Soldiers for Justice, and help swell their ranks with new recruits.

What I'm looking for here is a theme that combines an evangelical tone with a Battle Hymn of the Republic fervor and a civil-rights-movement passion. But the substantive dimension of this is to discuss: the elements of effective leadership on racial justice, the fact that leadership must be directed towards concrete community problem solving around issues such as education, and the need for this kind of grass roots commitment and focus from organizations like the NAACP, La Raza, American Jewish Committee, National Council of Churches, Urban League. This would be a great subject for a town meeting. *Ask the Advisory Board to figure it out.*

Good luck.

Tax Credit for Third- and Fourth-Year Students and Lifelong Learning: Undergraduates beyond their first two years, graduate students, and working people going to school part-time to improve or acquire job skills would benefit from a 20 percent tax credit on the first \$5,000 of tuition and required fees through the year 2000, and after 2000, a 20 percent tax credit on the first \$10,000 of tuition and required fees.

HOPE Scholarship: A maximum \$1,500 credit for the first two years of postsecondary education. Students attending at least on a half-time basis would receive a 100 percent credit for the first \$1,000 of tuition and required fees and a 50 percent credit for up to the next \$1,000.

Education and Retirement Savings Accounts: Allows penalty-free IRA withdrawals for undergraduate, post-secondary vocational, and graduate education expenses. Additionally, taxpayers are given the opportunity to deposit their child tax credit plus an additional \$500 in a Kidsave Account for the child's education, first-time home purchase or the taxpayer's retirement. Earnings would accumulate tax-free in the Kidsave Account and no taxes would be due upon withdrawal for an approved purpose.

Employer-Provided Education Benefits: Extends permanently Section 127 of the tax code, which allows people to exclude \$5,250

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Employer-Provided Education Benefits: Extends permanently Section 127 of the tax code, which allows people to exclude \$5,250 of employer provided education benefits from their taxable income. Both undergraduate and graduate education would be eligible.

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A second arose from the benchmark poll Morris had conducted in 1981 in which the intensity of disillusionment with Clinton was measured to see whether a comeback was possible. The survey had found a widespread perception among voters that Clinton had probably done some good things in his first term but they could not remember any specific accomplishments. All they could recite were actions he had taken which they disliked. Morris, Clinton, Hillary, and Betsey Wright, the quartet that comprised the inner circle, decided that they would never again rely on the "free media"—newspaper, radio, and television reporters—to define Clinton and his programs. Interweaving means and ends, they would use paid media, commercials and grass-roots mailings, whenever they wanted to get their message to the public, even during a midterm legislative session. Individual journalists might be courted, especially the peskiest ones, such as *Arkansas Democrat* managing editor John Robert Starr, who would nip at the governor in his daily column unless he was made to feel like an insider. (Starr remembered Clinton calling him the day he got back to the governor's office and saying, "Okay, what do you want?") But for the most part, the press was not part of the plan. "His entire strategy in governing the state," Morris recalled, "was based on flanking the press through the paid media."

The third aspect of Clinton's permanent campaign involved the use of voter surveys in similarly perpetual fashion, taking poll results to shape the substance and rhetoric of policy debates. The goal was to discover more than whether voters supported or opposed an initiative. Word by word, line by line, phrase by phrase, paragraph by paragraph, rhetorical options would be tested to see which ones were most effective in moving the public a certain direction. It was polling as a form of copy writing, as a way for Clinton to organize his thoughts. Although Morris conducted the polls, each of the four played a role in the process. Hillary Clinton was usually the one to articulate the larger problem. Wright was there to lay out the facts. Clinton and Morris would play endlessly with the words and arguments. Clinton became so hooked on the process that his rhythms could be charted by it. When polls were out in the field, he seemed passive and noncommittal. Wright and Morris discovered that Clinton was never happier than when he got the results.

Morris would read an answer, and Clinton would shout, "You know, I feel it! I feel it! I'm out there and that's just what I feel! That's absolutely right!" Then he would practice the rhetorical argument again, elaborating, rehearsing, seemingly overcome by joy as things that had been unclear became clear to him and he sang from a political score that he and the voters had jointly composed.

All of these elements of his permanent campaign were put to the test during Clinton's first year back on the job. It was a difficult stretch that

started slowly and ended in controversy, yet it was also the year of Clinton's greatest legislative triumph. On the surface it seemed at first that he had no better grasp of how to operate than he had displayed during his first term. His means and ends were snarled. The state press corps found his agenda unenterprising. The only apparent resolve he exhibited was on utility issues, which were going nowhere. One February day, Clinton spent ninety minutes beseeching the House Insurance and Commerce Committee to endorse his bill that would require the election of Public Service Commissioners. He brought in an expert witness from North Dakota to testify with him. When their presentations ended, not a single member of the committee made a motion to endorse the bill. A local columnist described it as "one of the most embarrassing defeats any governor has suffered."

It was being said that Clinton was indecisive, reluctant to move on issues ranging from school consolidation to taxes. His maneuverings in the renewed battle between the highway lobby and the trucking-poultry lobby did nothing to enhance that image. First Clinton endorsed the highway commission's bill to impose a weight-distance tax to cover additional damage incurred by trucks weighing up to 80,000 pounds that were soon to roll down state highways. When that bill got through the Senate, leaders of the lobby, organized as the Forward Arkansas Committee, expressed outrage, saying they thought Clinton had told them that he opposed the measure because it raised more money than was needed. A few days later, the trucking forces pushed their less costly alternative through the House, this time with Clinton's endorsement and the help of his legislative aides. The state highway director was now shocked, calling the governor a "double-crosser." Clinton eventually took a third position, saying that he supported both bills and that whichever one passed was fine with him. In an end-of-session interview with the *Arkansas Gazette*, published under the front-page headline, "Wasn't Weak, Vacillating, Clinton Says of His Stands," he argued, without irony, that it was unfair to say that he tried to please everybody because "in reality the effect probably was that I ended up displeasing both sides."

Although these apparent blunders might not have been deliberate ploys, they did fall into a larger strategy. Clinton and his inner circle had already chosen education reform, not utility reform or highway improvements, as the central issue of his governorship, the one for which they planned to put to full use the tactics of the permanent campaign. Clinton was eager to become known as the education governor. For all his romance about the regular folks of Arkansas, he was frustrated by the state's inferiority complex, a sense that "God meant for us to be last, that God meant for us to be poor." Basic education was the "key to our economic revival and our

perennial quest for prosperity." But the Supreme Court had not yet ruled on the school-funding case. Morris had just begun testing the tax possibilities and the rhetoric that would shape the public debate. Hillary Clinton was preparing to serve her husband as chairman of the Education Standards Committee that would design the substance of reform. The serious work awaited a special legislative session.

Before that, during the regular legislative session, Clinton's essential objective had been to buy time. His goal with truck weights was to try to avoid being viewed as the central force responsible for a new tax, whichever way the tax went. He managed to do that, at the calculated expense of angering both sides and appearing equivocal. On utility reform, his aim had been to push hard in public so that he would not appear to be backing away from a campaign promise, while essentially conceding the issue in private. "He knew he couldn't succeed, but he had to show that he had tried and failed," Morris recalled. "He had to keep up the rhetoric." This strategy also had mixed results. While it enhanced Clinton's pro-consumer image, it infuriated some utility reform advocates who concluded that he had been grandstanding. One of his longtime energy advisers, Scott Trotter, finally turned on him, issuing a seven-page critique in which he said, "Clinton's actions on utilities during the current term have been phony and inconsequential. What is worse, this is not a mistake but a politically calculated policy." Trotter bitterly cited a meeting in early summer at which he said Clinton told him that he no longer needed the utility issue because he was now focused on education reform.

Few people in Arkansas were surprised when the state Supreme Court ruling came out in the final week in May declaring public education financing unconstitutionally inequitable. Here was a state with 367 school districts, more than twice as many districts as neighboring states, some so remote and poor and with such meager property tax bases that they could barely pay teachers a living wage or supply basic educational services. In some schools in southwest Arkansas, not far from Clinton's birthplace in Hope, teachers were making less than \$10,000 a year and qualified for food stamps, with their own children in federally subsidized free lunch programs. The need for more money to spread around to those districts was obvious. But it was also Clinton's great practical dilemma. Even though Arkansas ranked next to last in the nation in the tax burden imposed on state residents, above only Alabama, there was a prevalent notion among Arkansans that they were poor and overburdened already. As the car tag revolt of 1980 had made clear to Clinton, any tax hike could be rejected as an unwarranted imposition, especially during economic hard times.

How to raise taxes? How to solve this practical dilemma? Rule number

one of the permanent campaign: Turn to idealism. The first decision of Clinton and the inner circle was to move the focus away from the tax by making it an idealistic crusade. Rather than merely raising enough money to satisfy the court mandate, they would seek twice as much, and build an entire program around it. There was a national context to this approach: the National Commission on Excellence in Education had just issued a landmark report citing a "rising tide of mediocrity" in the nation's schools and detailing a long list of needed reforms. Some southern states had already launched education reform efforts, most notably Mississippi, whose threadbare schools usually ranked fiftieth, below Arkansas' forty-ninth, in comparative studies of the states. The traditional sarcastic cry in Arkansas, "Thank God for Mississippi!", might no longer apply.

Hillary Rodham, now going by Hillary Clinton or Mrs. Clinton, took a leave of absence from Rose Law Firm to spend the summer and early fall chairing the Education Standards Committee. It was not the first time she had worked for her husband (in the first term she had chaired a committee on rural health care), but it was her widest public exposure, reflecting her idealistic and pragmatic sides: her profound interest in children and education issues and, even more, the extraordinary commitment she had begun making to advance Clinton's cause since the 1980 defeat. In selecting her for the committee, Clinton had said, "This guarantees that I will have a person who is closer to me than anyone else overseeing a project that is more important to me than anything else." From then on, increasingly, he would turn to her for critical tasks that he needed done or was not good at himself.

The Education Standards Committee held seventy-five meetings, in which it took public testimony at the same time that it prepared the public for a largely predesigned set of reforms, from mandatory kindergarten to smaller class sizes in elementary school to competence tests for students in third, sixth, and eighth grades to minimum standards and scorecards for every school. The inadequacies the committee members found in many Arkansas school districts were stunning: no physics classes in 148 high schools, no advanced math in 135, no foreign languages in 180, and no music in 204 schools. At every session, parents would hover around Hillary Clinton after the meetings and tell stories about their troubled schools. Gradually, over the course of the hearing process, it seemed that Hillary, after living in Arkansas for nearly a decade, was finally being accepted as a member of the family, viewed less as a professional outsider and more as an intelligent public servant. When she appeared before an interim committee of the legislature to outline the reforms that her panel was considering, Representative Lloyd George said into his microphone, "I think we've elected the wrong Clinton!"

While Hillary concentrated on substance, Clinton and Morris experi-

mented with tax strategies, testing a variety of options in polls which they wrote and rewrote together. Clinton finally decided to try to raise most of the money by increasing the sales tax 1 percent. It was the least progressive form of taxation, unpopular with organized labor and advocates for the poor, but it was also the surest way to get the money. It required only majority approval in the legislature, whereas most other tax hikes would require three-quarters approval. Some of Clinton's allies thought it was time to reform the sales tax by eliminating food from items that could be taxed or expanding it to include a variety of exempted services. But Morris, strongly supported by Hillary, argued that it would be counterproductive to make the tax that interesting because it would then become the issue, "rather than the good things it would achieve."

As the final education package was prepared for the special session which was to begin in early October, an idea that had not been part of the committee's recommendations took on a central role: competence tests for public school teachers. It was a concept that Hillary had considered privately, especially after coming home from hearings where she heard horror stories about some teachers. In their strategy sessions, the Clintons would recall the teacher who taught his class about "World War Eleven"—apparently mistaking the Roman numerals of World War II. But the overriding reasons for adding the teacher tests to the program were political. Frank White, the former governor, who represented the conservative business establishment, announced in a speech a few weeks before the special session that he would support the tax increase and pay raises for teachers only if they were accompanied by teacher tests.

Morris offered two other reasons to include teacher tests in the package in tandem with teacher salary increases. In surveys he had conducted going back to 1978, one of Clinton's highest negatives was that people thought he was the tool of special interests, which to many Arkansas voters meant not powerful business forces but liberal groups such as the Teachers Association, labor unions, and blacks. Public employee unionism was unpopular in the state. When Morris polled on the teacher tests, he found that the support for it was overwhelming, exceeding 75 percent. "It distills the quality of helping children from the soup of helping children and helping the teachers' union," Morris told Clinton. "It boils off what people didn't like, which was caving in to the teachers who want more money, and shows the purity of your motivation of helping children, because you are offending the special interest that would be most gratified by what you are doing." It was also, Morris noted, a decisive break from the Democratic left.

On the day before Clinton appeared on statewide television to unveil his proposal, Betsey Wright invited Kai Erickson, executive director of the

Arkansas Education Association (AEA), to her office in the Capitol and told him what was in the package, including the teacher tests. Erickson was stunned. He told her that the teachers had worked with Clinton and Hillary throughout the hearing process and had never been informed that the competence tests were on the table. He asked whether it was something that could be discussed and negotiated. Wright said no.

RULE number two of the permanent campaign: Never rely on the press, the free media, to get your message across. The education campaign started before the special session began, and it was almost indistinguishable from an election campaign. Clinton formed a finance committee, Arkansas Partners in Education, that raised and spent \$130,000 for radio and television commercials promoting the reform package. Another support group, the Blue Ribbon Education Committee, distributed satin blue ribbons and 250,000 brochures explaining the program along with postcards that could be mailed to legislators by citizens supporting the reform effort. Most of the money was raised from financial institutions and corporations in a four-day solicitation blitz orchestrated by Clinton and his executive secretary, W. Maurice Smith, the rural financier and farmer, who also began making personal loans to Clinton from his own bank to sustain the permanent campaign.

On Tuesday, October 4, in an address opening the special session, ten months into his term, Clinton declared that the legislature was presented with a "magic moment" to change Arkansas history. It was an emotional speech, infusing his personal struggles with his hopes for his state. "In the life of our state, as in the life of a person, there are times of growth and decline, times of joy and sadness, times of triumph and tragedy, and times of ordinary getting along," Clinton said. "Much of what life brings is a matter of circumstance beyond our control. Yet always our will makes some difference, and sometimes our will can make all the difference. We are here tonight in such a time." He cited one of his favorite quotes from Oliver Wendell Holmes: "I think that, as life is action and passion, it is required of a man that he should share the passion and action of his time at peril of being judged not to have lived." He read from Robert Frost: "'Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—I took the one less traveled by/ And that has made all the difference.'" And, mindful of Morris's polls indicating that the public was overwhelmingly behind teacher tests, he called mandatory tests a "small price to pay for the biggest tax increase for education in the history of the state and to restore the teaching profession to the position of public esteem that I think it deserves."

What had been a last-minute, throw-in idea now became the symbolic

center of the reform package. The Teachers Association accused the Clintons of labeling their entire profession incompetent. One of the major fears of the AEA leadership was that a standardized teacher test, like many standardized tests, would prove to be culturally biased against some black teachers, but they were reluctant to make that case in public, fearing a backlash among redneck legislators. Carol Willis and other black aides on Clinton's staff also thought that the tests would have racial implications: they drafted their own satiric version of a test with a cultural bias toward the inner city, with such items as "Q. When is Mother's Day? A. The day the welfare checks arrive." Clinton expressed chagrin at the AEA's charges that he and Hillary were smearing the teaching profession. But in private, according to Morris, he appreciated the political benefits of picking a fight.

With the poll numbers behind him, Clinton struck an unyielding position. If the legislature killed the testing plan, he said, he would drop the entire package. Angry teachers roamed the halls of the Capitol and packed the Senate gallery for the crucial vote, which was close enough to go either way. Clinton did much of the last-minute lobbying himself, calling senators out of the chamber and displaying the full range of his abilities to plead, cajole, and persuade. He cornered Vada Sheid, the former treasurer of Baxter County who had been his friend and ally since the day in the spring of 1974 when he had stopped at her furniture store in Mountain Home to ask for her support in the congressional race against John Paul Hammerschmidt and she had sewed a loose button on his shirt. Sheid wanted to vote with Clinton, but the teachers in her district were putting pressure on her to go against the tests. "Bill Clinton comes to the Senate and he calls me out and he says, 'Vada, you're not thinkin' clear, you've forgotten your grandchildren have always had priority with you,'" Sheid recalled. "He said, 'You're afraid, Vada. But I have to have one more vote to pass this thing.'"

Clinton "had tears in his eyes," according to Sheid. "He had to have that one vote. He was dead meat. He was emotional about it." She told him that she was nervous about reelection. "This will defeat me," she said.

"No it won't," Clinton promised. "It will help you."

Sheid voted for the tests. The teachers campaigned door to door in her district against her. She lost the next election, but did not hold it against Clinton, who rewarded her act of loyalty by appointing her to the state police commission.

In the legislative endgame, Clinton also had a problem with the tax aspects of the package, and he resorted to a different sort of gamesmanship to prevail. Among the issues still in dispute were his insistence that the sales tax hike include an emergency clause making its effect immediate, and an amendment pushed by labor and public action groups giving an

annual rebate to low-income families for the sales tax on food. At a meeting in the governor's office, Clinton struck a deal with J. Bill Becker of the AFL-CIO and citizen activist Brownie Ledbetter, two vocal advocates of the food tax rebate. If they would lobby for his emergency clause in the House, he would support their amendment. The deal was witnessed by two legislators, one of whom interrupted Clinton and repeated the terms to make sure the governor understood what he was saying. Clinton said yes.

The House then passed the tax measure with the rebate amendment, but the emergency clause failed by a narrow margin. The rebate lobbyists, satisfied that Clinton was upholding his end of the deal, joined forces again with the governor's aides the next day and pushed through the emergency clause. The following day, however, when leaders of the Senate said they had troubles with the rebate amendment, Clinton started backing away from it. By the time the Senate had passed the bill without the rebate and sent it back to the House for final action, the governor and his lobbyists were actively working against it. Clinton said that the deal was only temporary, and that he had to turn away from it in the interest of getting the reform package enacted. Whatever savings low-income residents might gain from the food tax rebate, he said, were of transitory and minimal value compared with the permanent benefits of better educational opportunities.

Becker was enraged. He complained that Clinton had turned away from the rebate amendment too hastily. The vote in the Senate would have been close, he agreed, but with a full-scale lobbying effort by the governor it might have passed. When he was lobbying the House for the emergency clause as part of the deal, Becker said, several representatives had warned him, "Clinton's lying to you! He's lying to you! He's not going to do it!" Becker had not believed them then, but now he decided that they had been right. He had been a presence in Arkansas politics since the days of Orval Faubus, Becker said, but never before had he felt so deceived by a governor. He called Clinton's maneuver "inexcusable" and one that he would not soon forget.

Becker held his grudge, and so, for a long time, did the teachers. The AEA spent most of the next three years and two elections trying to defeat Clinton and repeal the competence tests. But as influential as it could be in isolated legislative races, such as Vada Sheid's, it was rendered powerless against Clinton. The more it took him on, the more his popularity grew statewide. The substantive results of the education reform package were uneven. Over four years, all of the school districts eventually complied with the new standards on class size and course offerings. Advanced math, science, and foreign languages eventually became available in every district. The number of graduating seniors who moved on to college increased from 38 percent to 50 percent. Teacher salaries went up, but still

remained near the bottom nationally, as did student test scores. Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education indicated that scores for Arkansas high school seniors taking the American College Test declined in the four years after the reforms were enacted.

Still, Bill Clinton now had a cause, a story, a political identity. From the passage of the reform package in November 1983, in every poll, the people of Arkansas could cite something they liked about him as governor: he was the one who had improved the schools and forced the teachers to prove their competence. He was the education governor.

JOGGING was the craze in Little Rock during that era, and Clinton took up jogging. One day he ran in a four-mile race on a course that weaved its way past the Victorian homes in the historic Quapaw District, around the Arkansas Governor's Mansion, and back down to the Capitol. Jim Blair, his lawyer friend from Fayetteville, was in town and ran the race at the governor's side. As they jogged by the mansion, Clinton decided to take a break. He walked for a few minutes, catching his breath and playing with his dog Zeke. Then he started up again, lumbering down the street to catch Blair. "Let's finish strong!" Clinton huffed as they crossed the highway and neared the Capitol, and suddenly he sprinted past his friend to reach the finish line first. It was a fitting performance for Clinton's second act as governor. Now he was the long-distance runner, plodding along mile after mile for his state. To stifle the inevitable talk that he was looking for a faster track, he said that he hoped and intended to serve as governor for another six to eight years. He was in it for the long haul, the marathon man.

Clinton's Arkansas experience became a testing ground for strategies and policies that might be applied on the national level. Since the morning after he and Jimmy Carter had been defeated in 1980, Clinton had focused on what it "would take to re-create a new majority for change in America," which is to say what it would take for an activist Democrat to make it to the White House. He felt that his party had become stuck in "no-win situations" and become known as "the party of blame." It got in trouble, he said, when "the need for change conflicted with people's most deeply ingrained habits or most cherished values. If you want to be for change, you have to render that change in ways that people can understand and relate to."

That did not mean, he said, resorting to the familiar nostrums of the New Deal coalition. Clinton had long since turned away from what he viewed as the politics of nostalgia. Going back even a decade before his defeat to Frank White, back to the Duffey Senate campaign in Connecticut in 1970, he had been searching for new formulas for Democratic success.

By the time his party gathered in August in San Francisco for the 1984 Democratic National Convention, he believed that the great divide that needed to be narrowed was not so much between liberals and conservatives as romantics and realists. Although he had remained neutral in the presidential primary battle that year between former Vice President Walter Mondale and Senator Gary Hart of Colorado, and although he eventually cast his convention vote for Mondale, his intellectual sympathies rested with Hart, his onetime boss in the McGovern campaign, who was basing his challenge on generational change. During an informal gathering at the convention, Clinton asked one of his colleagues, Governor Richard Lamm of Colorado, what he thought of the keynote address by Governor Mario Cuomo of New York, a rhetorical masterpiece that had stirred the crowd with its rich evocation of the core Democratic principles of empathy and equality. Lamm said he was impressed and moved, to which Clinton responded, "Come on, what did it really say about the issues we're trying to raise?"

In Clinton's own speech to the convention that week, he cited Harry Truman to talk about the future of the party. "Harry Truman would tell us to forget about 1948 and stand for what America needs in 1984," Clinton said. "That's the way to attract the millions of Americans who feel locked out and won't vote because they think we're irrelevant. That's the way to attract millions more, mostly young and well-educated, who intend to vote against us because they think we have no program for the future. Harry Truman would say: America has a productivity problem. What are we going to do about it? America is getting its brains beaten out in international economic competition. What are we going to do about it? America has millions of people who want to work but whose jobs have been lost because of competition from low wages abroad or the necessity to automate at home. What are we going to do about it? America is mortgaging its future with high deficits, driving interest rates too high, making our dollar too expensive and our trade deficit enormous. What are we going to do about it? . . . America is pricing itself out of affordable health care. What are we going to do about it? America needs an invigorated education system based on high standards and real accountability, as well as more money. What are we going to do about it?"

In the aftermath of Mondale's defeat, Clinton began to place his programs into a broader philosophy of opportunity and responsibility, which he saw as a theme that could lead to change without alienating the middle class. His education reforms in Arkansas set the model: the opportunity was for teachers to get more pay and more flexibility, the opportunity was for students to get more course offerings and smaller class sizes, and the responsibility was for both teachers and students to document their skills

That summer and fall of 1988 marked the first even-numbered year since 1974 that Clinton was not engaged in his own political race. Including primaries, runoffs, and general elections, he had been involved in fifteen elections in fourteen years—more elections, he stated with probable justification, than any other politician in America during that stretch. But state election laws had been changed before the 1986 elections to make the gubernatorial term four years instead of two. Now Clinton was without a race, and he was restless, bored, and increasingly distraught about the Dukakis campaign. Gloria Cabe said there were times when she thought he wanted to enlist as Dukakis's campaign manager. George Bush's campaign team, led by Lee Atwater, was beating Dukakis over the head with a hammer, making him appear soft on crime by exploiting a case where a Massachusetts felon named Willie Horton had killed again after being released on parole. Clinton knew what he would do in that situation. To continue the metaphor which had been his creed since Frank White had pounded him with negative ads in 1980, he would get out a meat cleaver and cut off Bush's hands. Dukakis did not respond adequately. Once during that fall, as he was driving from the airport in Fayetteville to give a speech at the University of Arkansas campus, Clinton raged about Dukakis to Woody Bassett. "He was upset that Dukakis had not fought back on Willie Horton," Bassett later recalled. "He said that he had written a response ad for them, but they had never used it."

Not long after Dukakis lost, Bob Reich, in his annual letter in the *American Oxonian*, put into Rhodes classmate Strobe Talbott's mouth the words that both he and Talbott were thinking. "America," he wrote, "will survive the next four years the same way it survived the last 20 since we set sail for England: waiting for Clinton to become president."

Clinton was already making plans. Two days after Christmas, nearly a month before Bush would be inaugurated, Clinton met with John Pouland, a Dallas lawyer who had been the southern coordinator for Gary Hart's presidential campaign. Pouland had flown up to Little Rock with Randy White, who now worked as an assistant to Pouland's law partner, Congressman John Bryant. They arrived at the Governor's Mansion just as Clinton was returning from a jog and adjourned to the study, where they sipped coffee and talked presidential politics for two hours. Clinton was full of questions. Should he run for governor again in 1990 if he wanted to run for president two years later, when he would be in the middle of his term? How much money did he have to raise in Arkansas? Could he be the regional candidate? What about another young southern moderate—Tennessee Senator Al Gore? White left the meeting thinking that Clinton could hardly wait for 1992.

GETTING from here to there would not be easy. Throughout his political career, Clinton often demonstrated a keen ability to foresee obstacles that he might encounter, though he could not always find the surest way around them. Now he seemed anxious about how he would get through the next few years. As his permanent campaign took on a national focus, it lost energy in Arkansas. And he still had to survive in Arkansas. When he went before the General Assembly on January 9, 1989, for his state of the state address, he spoke as the first Arkansas governor in more than a century to open a regular legislative session without just having been inaugurated. More than two years had passed since his last election, and that gap, he told his aides, could prove troublesome. His last major effort to raise the sales tax to fund education programs, in 1987, had been defeated after a heavy lobbying effort against it by the state's business interests, who opposed the expansion of the tax to cover professional services that had been exempted. This time he had worked with the corporate powers to devise an education agenda and a tax plan that they could support, but the public mood seemed determinedly antitax. George Bush had just won the presidential election lip-reading his promise of no new taxes. Without a fresh mandate from the voters, Clinton feared, it would be hard for him to move a recalcitrant legislature.

During the six years of his second act as governor, state aid to education in Arkansas had increased by a greater percentage than in all but six other states. Yet local support of the schools through property taxes had trailed the national average, meaning that Arkansas still lingered in its traditional spot near the bottom in overall education spending. Clinton had built his career on the education issue. He felt there was more to be done. Before the session, during the time when in earlier years he would have been campaigning for reelection, he spent seven months with his staff and a statewide task force preparing a new agenda for expanded preschool, vocational, and higher education programs. But he realized that getting the taxes to pay for it would be harder than ever. "The Great Communicator in Washington, who's told us that all taxes are evil, has made it hard for us to do what we need to do here," Clinton said in his state of the state address. "I have two answers to that: First of all, President Reagan said in 1983 that education was the business of the states and if funding had to be increased, the states should raise the taxes to do it. . . . And secondly, unlike our friends in Washington, we cannot write a check on an account that is not funded. We either raise and spend or we don't spend."

That final phrase, taken out of context, would be used against Clinton later, but at the time it was accurate. The 1989 legislature declined to raise taxes; Clinton had no new money to spend on education. His early premonition of trouble had been fulfilled—and more trouble was on the way.

The Comeback Kid

7 by Charles F. Allen & Jonathan Bates
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The Education Revolution

IN HIS INAUGURAL ADDRESS TO BEGIN HIS SECOND TERM AS governor, delivered in January 1983, Bill Clinton centered on the hardship of a national recession and high unemployment. He stated that his first priority was "to put the people back to work," but went on to say, "Over the long run, education is the key to our economic revival and our perennial request for prosperity." He continued:

We must dedicate more of our limited resources to paying our teachers better; expanding educational opportunities in poor and small school districts; improving and diversifying vocational and high technology programs; and, perhaps most important, strengthening basic education. Without competence in basic skills, our people cannot move on to more advanced achievement.

The regular legislative session began that January with the introduction of several bills to reorganize school districts. At the same time, a suit stood before the Arkansas Supreme Court that would call for all children to have equal access to educational opportunities, regardless of the economic condition of their community.

Clinton decided to wait until the court made its decision before

developing any education proposal of his own. That summer, the court decided that the state's school funding formula was unconstitutional, and the governor began working with Education Department director Dr. Don Roberts to decide what steps to take to correct the problem. The legislature passed, on its own initiative, a bill to allow teachers to retire with full benefits after thirty years of service. Clinton signed the bill.

The seeds of Clinton's major reform package began to sprout. The governor came out in support of one of the school consolidation bills, but the bill tied consolidation to a requirement that the state Board of Education establish a fifteen-member commission to develop a new set of minimum standards for schools. The standards would not take effect until 1984, and all districts would be required to meet them by 1987 or be forced to consolidate with districts that could meet the standards.

"I think you might see the entire educational community from the state in support of this," Clinton said. The legislature approved the bill and Clinton signed it.

The other education laws to come out of the regular session of 1983 were:

- Act 375: required all districts to offer kindergarten.
- Act 14: allowed students to take up to 50 percent of their courses in another district if the home district does not offer them.
- Teacher Fair Dismissal Act: granted new provisions to teachers on probation (without three years' tenure) for hearings before dismissal and allowed those teachers to transfer to another district and not lose tenure.

Fifteen members were named to the standards committee by the State Board of Education. Most of the members were teachers or school administrators. Some were school board members. Practically all were from smaller communities in the state.

Possibly the most significant member of the committee was the chair: Hillary Rodham Clinton, then thirty-five. The appointment would be Hillary Clinton's political debut in Arkansas. Hillary Clinton had always played a behind-the-scenes role in her hus-

band's career, and a public role in helping him campaign. Now she was clearly at center stage, the leader of Clinton's most ambitious political undertaking.

"This guarantees that I will have a person who is closer to me than anyone else overseeing a project that is more important to me than anything else," Bill Clinton said. "I don't know if it's a politically wise move, but it's the right thing to do."

Hillary Clinton defended her qualifications for the job: "I've gone to school a large part of my life. I've been involved in classroom activities and visiting with teachers as a volunteer." She admitted that the expertise would come from the members of the committee.

* * *

A national report, "Nation at Risk," was released at the same time the committee began its work. The report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education warned of a "rising tide of mediocrity" in the nation's schools. Hillary Clinton said her committee would assess Arkansas's schools in light of the report.

She was critical of President Reagan for not putting "the same kind of leadership in the area of education as he has in defense," and called the report a "blueprint for how we get ourselves out of the serious state of deterioration we're currently in."

At the time of the report, Arkansas students were far below the national average in reading and math scores on the Science Research Associates standardized tests. Although 162 high schools, which educated 76 percent of the state's students, offered the courses that the National Commission recommended, none of the state's 371 districts required students to take all the subjects that the commission said should be required of students.

The report also recommended a longer school day and a longer school year. Few schools in Arkansas were offering more than the state-required 175 days; the commission recommended 220 days per year.

Bill Clinton continually emphasized the importance of the committee's work. It became officially known as the Education Standards Committee. He told its members at their first meeting that their job was "as important as any to be done in public life in the next few years." He said he would not call a special session of

the legislature to ask for money for education until the committee members had completed their work. Their target was to finish a draft of the new standards by the 1983-84 school year so that comments could be solicited from the public and incorporated into the final draft.

Committee members started out with the intention of making changes in Arkansas education. "I would be happy if what we came out with caused absolute panic—even in my own house," Hillary Clinton said.

While the committee worked, the governor addressed issues raised by the Arkansas Supreme Court ruling on the state's distribution of funds for public education. The court held that all students in Arkansas have a right to equal opportunity in education, and found inequity in the way tax money was used to fund schools—most problematically, that big communities with a large industrial tax base could offer a better education than small towns with little or no local industry to tax.

Clinton made plans for a special session of the legislature to consider a sales tax increase and a new funding formula for the schools to replace the one invalidated by the court. The disparities in funding had developed over the years because of the varying size of Arkansas school districts. For instance, a high school student in one small community could select from among twenty-three course units; a student at a large high school could choose from as many as 182.

The *Arkansas Gazette* commented: "Mr. Clinton appears to be preparing now to give the state the kind of leadership that will reestablish the public confidence he held when he came to office the first time, in 1979. It is reassuring to think of Mr. Clinton completing the full circle, rekindling those earlier hopes and aspirations."

Clinton himself agreed with the court's ruling, saying that spending unequal amounts of money on students in different districts should be illegal. "We have today an historic obligation to equalize funding and to improve education," he told students and educators at the opening of the fourth Governor's School for the Gifted and Talented.

He asked the state Board of Education to take a public stand supporting the court's ruling and higher standards for public

schools. The governor felt the two issues should be tied together. The board did endorse dealing with the two issues together, but asked the governor and legislature to "move as slowly as necessary" because no one knew where the state would get the money for two major operations.

* * *

The Education Standards Committee was proceeding with its work and holding public meetings in all seventy-five counties. Comments were heard from students, teachers, parents, administrators and others on how the schools could be improved. Hillary Clinton told the committee that the state needed to become as "fanatic" about mathematics as it was about high school athletics and extracurricular activities. "High school activities don't last forever, and life goes on after age seventeen," she said.

Governor Clinton traveled the state making public appearances to ask the people for support of educational reform. He was attempting to prepare them for a tax increase. In Hot Springs that summer, he asked state labor union leaders, traditionally opposed to higher sales taxes, to "search your hearts and go home and look at your children" before taking a stand on a possible tax increase to support education. The governor told the AFL-CIO members, who had been among his strongest supporters, that he was convinced that better public schools and better adult education were crucial to the state's economic development.

In July, the governor came on even stronger, speaking to about 450 public school administrators. He told them that he was prepared to lead the state in a dramatic and once-in-a-lifetime effort for major progress.

"We are in the midst of what I believe to be the most dramatic improvement in our system of education in our lifetimes," he said. "At times like these, when you have opportunities like this, you have to seize them, because they come along only rarely."

Bill Clinton had taken up the torch for the single most dramatic cause of his political career in Arkansas.

School administrators in the audience did not appear as enthusiastic as the governor. Many were worried about how the changes that were developing in funding and standards would affect their districts. Clinton asked the administrators for "unity" on the issue.

Clinton also made plans for a special session of the Arkansas

General Assembly to address the school funding formula problem and the need for money to finance the new standards. The governor had to work closely with the Department of Education and two legislative committees—the Joint Interim Committee on Education and the Joint Interim Committee on Revenue and Taxation.

Because the Arkansas legislature meets only every two years in regular session, several joint interim committees must carry on its business when it is not in session. Such major legislation as Clinton was proposing would need the imprimatur of the interim committees before Clinton could take it to the legislature.

When the proposal to revise the funding formula came before the Joint Interim Education Committee in July, it was only two votes short of gaining on-the-spot adoption. Under the new formula, about 150 districts would lose money unless \$100 million could be added to the total aid package. Plans were to seek a sales tax increase of 1 percent to fund the needed \$100 million. The revision of the formula placed minimum levels for tax rates that local school districts assess on real, personal and utility property. The new formula also called for a phaseout of special funding given in the past to districts with fewer than 360 students.

The Standards Committee set a September 1 deadline for the completion of its preliminary proposals for the new standards. This deadline would allow for public review of the proposals and give the state Board of Education time to follow new procedures for adopting new policies. The public hearings were still going on. Some lasted as long as nine hours. Recommendations ranged from requiring a longer school year to requiring a foreign-language offering in each district.

Among the few people asking the committee not to impose standards that were too strict were superintendents of small districts. Most of the public participants asked for such standards as stronger requirements in math, science and social studies, tighter restrictions on the hiring of noncertified teachers, more instruction time and lower student-to-teacher ratios.

* * *

One of the big issues the Standards Committee addressed was the requirement of a minimum competence test for eighth-graders to pass to be promoted to the ninth grade. Students also would be

tested at the third grade for competence in reading and mathematics. They would be tested in the sixth grade in reading, language arts, math, social studies and science. At any of the three levels, those who could not pass the tests could be kept from being promoted to the next grade. Teachers, counselors and principals would be required to develop individualized remediation plans for those students.

The eighth-grade competence test also was formulated as a key to measure the performance of schools. Those schools that could not achieve an 85 percent pass rate on the test would be required to change teaching practices to improve students' performance. If, after two years, the school could not achieve the 85 percent pass rate, it could lose accreditation, putting it in danger of being consolidated with another district.

The Standards Committee completed its preliminary report and released it to the public on September 6, 1983.

"Our schools are not doing as good a job as they must," Hillary Clinton said at a press conference. "While there may be many causes for our dilemma, there is only one solution. We Arkansans have to quit making excuses and accept instead the challenge of excellence once and for all."

A school that "passes illiterate or semiliterate students commits educational fraud," she said. "There is a feeling of urgency and a need for changes in education. If we do not seize the opportunity we have now, we will go backward."

Public opinion of the new standards was overwhelmingly favorable. *Arkansas Gazette* columnist Ernest Dumas praised the committee for "not limiting its vision and not being oppressed by the practicalities of Arkansas's low station." He did warn, however, that "legislative interference" could prevent the standards from being implemented. Dumas wrote:

Not that the standards are radical. The requirements on curriculum, graduation, faculty staffing and length of school terms are in line with what are generally required across the country.... But most Arkansas school districts don't meet those requirements now, and the standards may be beyond the reach of fifty or more tiny districts....

What is innovative and refreshing about the recommendations of Mrs. Clinton's committee is that the state for the first time will not only measure paper staffing and classrooms but how well every school actually performs in educating children.... The criticism will be that schools often will resort to devoting exorbitant attention to teaching the tests. But the result will be that everyone in the educational system, from the teachers to the state Education Department, will have a stake in every child's development. It will not be bad if the schools must redouble their attention to the needs of each child.

The state Board of Education enthusiastically endorsed in principle the recommendations made by the Education Standards Committee. Board member L. D. Harris of Blytheville said Hillary Clinton was "the best thing to come along for education in Arkansas in the last fifty years." The board was supportive in spite of estimates by the Department of Education that the cost of implementing the standards would be about \$100 million more than what was then being spent on education, plus an undetermined additional amount for capital improvements.

The legislative Joint Interim Committee on Education unanimously endorsed "in principle" the new standards. Hillary Clinton went before the committee to say that the legislature and education agencies should begin work on several standards that needed immediate attention. This would allow enough time for the standards to be implemented by the 1987 school year.

* * *

It was time for the recommendations to be considered by the full legislature. It would be an uphill battle for Bill Clinton.

The special session was called in October 1983. In a televised address to the legislature, Clinton opened the session by trying to sway public opinion in favor of his education and tax program. He called the session "a magic moment" that could "change the face" of the state's history. Yet, as he looked over his audience, only about a dozen legislators were wearing the blue satin ribbons that were symbols of support for the governor's education and tax program. Legislators told the press that the task of writing a new funding

formula to satisfy enough school districts would be the governor's toughest challenge, even tougher than trying to raise the sales tax from 3 percent to 4 percent.

The measure that Clinton supported contained some compromises, but remained essentially the same as the earlier version of the funding formula.

The governor's legislative package for the session would have required \$179.4 million to fund. He proposed these ways to get funds that would amount to \$180.2 million:

- Raise the state sales tax from 3 to 4 percent (producing \$91 million the first fiscal year and \$161.7 million per year thereafter).
- Raise the "severance" tax on natural gas. (Natural gas companies use the word "severance" for gas that has been pumped from the ground. A severance tax is one that taxes gas according to a fixed formula as it is pumped from the deep gas reservoirs that are plentiful in Arkansas.) Under Clinton's plan this severance tax increase would produce about \$6 million the first year and \$9.3 million thereafter.
- Raise the corporate income tax for corporations with \$100,000 or more annual income from 6 to 7 percent (producing about \$3.7 million the first year and \$10.8 million thereafter).
- Tax membership in country clubs and other private clubs (producing \$200,000 the first year and \$300,000 thereafter).
- Eliminate all but \$200 a month of the 2 percent of total sales tax collections that retailers keep for administrative costs (producing about \$1.6 million the first year and \$2.7 million thereafter).
- Tax services now excluded from the sales tax.
- Place the sales tax on cable television bills (producing \$600,000 the first year and about \$1 million thereafter).

A coalition of consumer, labor and community organizations announced its opposition to the sales tax increase because it wanted exemptions for food and utility bills. Clinton's reluctance to support such exemptions was then and has continued to be a

political thorn for him, recurring in nearly every legislative session and, years later, in his presidential campaign.

Clinton told the press at the end of the first week of the special session that his proposed \$180 million tax increase for education was "the most important thing I've ever tried to do. It's more important to me personally than whatever political consequences will come of it....It's something that's worth putting myself and whatever career I might have on the line for."

Most of the governor's tax proposal did not make it through the legislature. The increase in the severance tax on natural gas was blocked by gas lobbyists and defeated in both houses.

All that was left was the one-cent sales tax increase.

In a quirk of Arkansas law, it only takes a one-third majority of both houses to approve a sales tax increase, but it takes a two-thirds or a three-fourths vote to approve other kinds of tax increases. It is almost impossible to get a two-thirds vote of the Arkansas legislature on any tax increase.

So, the lowly sales tax became the whipping boy—the easiest way to raise revenue. Food and groceries were not exempt from the sales tax in Arkansas. Critics called it a "regressive tax," because it had its greatest effect on lower-income people, the people who could least afford it.

But if Bill Clinton's reforms were going to be realized, they would have to be paid for with a sales tax. The corporate interests of Arkansas had declined to pay for school reform.

For all his talk of risking his career for the program, Bill Clinton was not ready to risk it in a major fight with the business community. This was a watershed. Bill Clinton's "idealism" had vanished, to be replaced with an expedient pragmatism.

* * *

The part of the Clinton education package that turned out to be the most difficult to pass and that brought him the most controversy was the requirement that all teachers take a competence test.

This proposal first called for all teachers to take the National Teacher Examination. Clinton said he felt "it is a small price to pay for the biggest tax increase in the history of the state and to restore the teaching profession to the position of public esteem that I think it deserves."

Immediate opposition came from the AEA. "We teachers are being laid on the altar of sacrifice for political expedience," said AEA President Peggy Nabors after the governor outlined his program in his address to the General Assembly. The Arkansas Black Caucus also came out in opposition to the test, saying such standardized tests were skewed by cultural bias.

Clinton's original proposal was for teachers to go through a one-time evaluation by taking two tests. The first would evaluate basic skills—reading, writing, mathematics. The second would be a subject test in the area of certification. It had not been decided at that point whether the subject test would be the National Teacher Examination or a test developed in Arkansas by Arkansas teachers.

The test proposal was not totally lacking in support from teachers. A group of teachers at Little Rock's Central High School presented a letter to the governor saying that they would not object to having to take the NTE. The letter was signed by sixty-six of eighty-five faculty members. A group of teachers in the Monticello School District also endorsed the testing requirement. All but two of the Monticello district's 137 certified staff members signed petitions supporting the test.

Hillary Clinton appeared before a legislative subcommittee to defend teacher competence testing, although, oddly enough, her original Standards Committee had never suggested teacher testing, but had only addressed the issue in vague terms, such as recommending that all teachers be certified and that teachers acquire additional educational experience in their subjects.

But Hillary Clinton was firmly behind her husband's decision on teacher testing.

"The problem of teacher accountability begins in higher education, and we think teacher education is inadequate in many respects," she told the subcommittee. "The governor is quite properly looking at teacher accountability in the context of his overall recommendations."

On October 27, after weeks of debate, the legislature broke a deadlock over teacher testing and passed the proposal, and the Senate approved the one-cent sales tax increase. Bill Clinton called it "a great day." He said he expected the House also to approve the bill.

The Arkansas Education Association was outraged and worked to block passage of the Senate bill through the House. Clinton was even more outraged and publicly announced that if the AEA defeated the teacher testing bill, he would kill his own proposed one-cent sales tax increase and thereby leave teachers without raises and schools without funds to implement the new standards.

"There will be no tax increase without a testing bill," Clinton told the press.

Arkansas Education Association Executive Director Dr. Kai Erickson called the governor "irresponsible" and said he was "hot and overreacting." The AEA had stopped a vote on the House version of the teacher testing bill by supporting a filibuster in the Senate. The AEA also had distributed letters to the Senate quoting the Educational Testing Service (ETS) as advising Clinton that his proposed use of teacher tests was improper and perhaps illegal.

The governor pushed ahead: "The AEA leadership apparently cares nothing about teacher raises, more money for standards or more money for higher education." He accused Erickson of being hired "solely to protect a few teachers who might be incompetent." He expressed resentment that the AEA had failed to support any of his tax bills and had only supported one of the proposed new standards. The Arkansas Education Association held firmly to its position that the teacher testing proposal was a "witch hunt."

On the last day of October, the governor won his battle with the AEA and got his teacher testing bill through both houses of the legislature. (Although it is commonly called the "teacher testing law," the regulation required all public school educators, including principals and superintendents, to take the test.)

The tax bill, however, was delayed. Clinton had wanted the tax to take effect November 1, but he ran into trouble. The tax bill also had passed both houses, but the emergency clause to make it take effect immediately was not approved. Without the clause, the sales tax would not take effect for ninety days, allowing time for opponents to circulate petitions to refer the tax to a vote of the people.

Yet Clinton was smiling as he met with reporters after the legislature recessed for the evening. One reporter suggested that

Clinton had been "more politically assertive" during the last few days than ever before. But some of the legislators did not feel that the governor should be so overjoyed. Senator Nick Wilson, a major power broker in Arkansas politics, said he hated to see the teacher testing bill ruin the political career of "a fine young man in the governor's office."

After much wrangling, final passage of the sales tax bill came on Friday, November 4, and an emergency clause was enacted. Although both houses had approved their own versions of the tax increase, final passage had been stalled because the two chambers could not agree on a "grocery amendment"—an effort to give a rebate to low-and moderate-income families for the sales tax on food. The amendment was dropped. The state would begin collecting the tax on Monday.

And so, in the end, the sales tax paid for the new education reforms, with no exemptions for food. Still, the sales tax increase would leave Arkansas in fiftieth place as the state with the lightest state and local tax burden.

Clinton's education package was law. The money was there.

The funding formula bill that became law also ordered school districts to spend 70 percent of their total revenue on salaries. After a district hired new teachers and administrators to meet the requirements, 80 percent of the salary money was required to be divided equally among teachers and administrators, unless the school board and a majority of the teachers agreed on a different distribution. This was a built-in guarantee that teacher salaries would not stagnate.

The special session of the Arkansas General Assembly adjourned November 10, 1983. "You've done a lot to assure a better future for the young people of this state—and for the rest of us, too," Clinton told legislators on the thirty-eighth and final day of the session. The governor expressed regret that his only major tax proposal to pass was the sales tax, but expressed gratitude that the legislature had given him much of what he had asked.

Still, he pointed out: "This is a beginning, not an end, to the work we must do." Clinton pledged not to give up his fight for a more equitable tax system, citing the state's low severance tax as "an example of what is wrong with the system."

Although the teacher test was now law and the legislature had gone home, Bill Clinton's fight with the teachers had only begun.

John Brummett of the *Arkansas Gazette* observed at the time that the relationship between Clinton and the 17,000-member AEA had developed into one of "harsh public bitterness and nasty private name-calling, totally the result of Mr. Clinton's insistence on requiring teachers to take a basic skills test in exchange for the nice raises most of them will likely get from his tax program."

Clinton told Brummett: "I was exceedingly disappointed when they testified against some of the standards, disregarding the fact that I'd appointed three people to the Standards Committee [whom] they wanted. And I was equally disappointed when they made no concerted effort in support of any of the revenue bills."

AEA President Peggy Nabors said Clinton was looking to give the appearance of toughness in seeking accountability and competence in exchange for higher taxes and that he "picked on" teachers and used them as a "scapegoat." She said that many good teachers would quit rather than take the test.

At an AEA convention in Little Rock in November 1983, Ermalee Boice, assistant executive secretary of the AEA, told that teachers they and Bill Clinton were "at war." Clinton, speaking before another group the same day, predicted that the tests "will show that the overwhelming majority of our teachers are well-prepared to do the job they have been hired on to do, and that will bolster public support."

Partially in response to the Clinton-AEA controversy, the Arkansas Association of Professional Educators, a rival organization with about four hundred members, asked its members to "actively promote" their willingness to take competence and subject-area tests. The letter to members said, "The too-much-publicized campaign of the AEA against teacher testing is doing irreparable harm to our profession."

Clinton, famous for his diplomacy and warmth, was ready to give the rebellious teachers an unforgettable taste of the cold shoulder.

On November 19, Clinton got his chance. He was to speak to a group of about eight hundred AEA delegates at its convention in Little Rock. Virginia Kelley had received warning that her son

would receive the silent treatment—that there'd be no welcome and no applause and that the teachers would instead studiously ignore the governor. Kelley warned him what to expect. She then seated herself among the teachers.

As Kelley recalls it:

He came in the back door, walked directly to the stage, made his speech, did not go up and down the aisle to visit with people, did not open it [the speech] to questions and answers and totally ignored Peggy Nabors. And he just made his speech and left by the same way....I'll never forget it as long as I live....I was with a group of people, and we were walking out of this meeting. And I usually keep my mouth out of Bill's affairs....But there was a professor walking right behind me, or a teacher...so help me, his words were, "I ain't gonna take no damn test!" I couldn't help it. I turned around, and I said, "Sir, that's a double negative, and that means that you will take the damn test."

Clinton had, indeed, received the silent treatment. He'd walked onto the stage, delivered his remarks and left. But in that short span, he'd listed areas of accord between himself and the AEA, defended teacher testing and pleaded with members not to put the issue ahead of working with him for a better future for Arkansas's children, teachers and schools.

The National Education Association soon followed suit in condemning the testing law. The NEA said it would work for repeal or amendment of the law and would consider a legal challenge to it. The law, being the only one of its kind in the nation, was criticized as "an educationally unsound testing statute that will not contribute to educational excellence in the Arkansas public schools" and as a measure that "demeans the education profession, deceives the public and is detrimental to the teaching and learning process."

The Educational Testing Service announced in November 1983 that it would no longer permit the use of its National Teacher Examination (NTE) to evaluate teachers who were already on the job. The exam was designed only to test new teachers, fresh out of college, not experienced teachers, the group maintained. ETS President Gregory Anrig said, "It is morally and educationally wrong to tell someone who has been judged a satisfactory teacher

for many years that passing a certain test on a certain day is necessary to keep his or her job."

New York Times writer Edward Fiske said the announcement was directed at the state of Arkansas and the Houston (Texas) Independent School District, both of which had used sections of the NTE as part of new efforts to improve the quality of their teaching staffs.

The ETS's position did not seem to bother Clinton. "We don't need their tests," he responded. "We can get them from some other state or school district."

. . .

Hillary Clinton's Education Standards Committee officially completed its nearly nine months of work and approved a final version of its proposed new standards for accreditation of Arkansas public schools on December 10, 1983. There were no major changes from the preliminary report it had released in September. The report was ready to present to the state Board of Education and the legislative Joint Interim Committee on Education for action by March 1.

"I think we have a really good set of standards—a blueprint that Arkansas can follow over the next few years," Hillary Clinton said. "This is a move toward competency-based education and the requirement of more accountability and responsibility from students, teachers, the school systems and parents."

Some of the major components of the standards were:

- A maximum class size of twenty students in kindergarten; an average of twenty-three and maximum of twenty-five in grades one through three; and an average of twenty-five and maximum of twenty-eight in grades seven through twelve, with an exception for classes such as band or choir.
- A specified 13½ units that must be taken for graduation: four of English, five of mathematics and sciences, two of social studies, one of practical arts or a third unit of social studies, a half-unit each of physical education, health education and fine arts.
- Lengthening of the school year from 175 days to 180 by 1989–90.

- Provision of one counselor for every 450 high school students and every 600 elementary students.

Looking back, Bill Clinton said it had been "a very good year" for the state of Arkansas. He said his biggest disappointment had been the failure of the legislature to pass his entire tax program during the special session. Still, the legislation and the sales tax increase would, he said, constitute "a great first step in a continuing effort to reform and improve our educational system."

The income tax question would come back to haunt Clinton throughout his career. Clinton put the blame on the legislature; his critics said he was not willing to push the lawmakers to force them to drop their own self-interests long enough to vote a tax on business and industry.

In assessing his success in getting his 1983 reform package through the legislature, Clinton credited a \$130,000 public relations campaign with gaining the support necessary for his victory. The campaign had been financed by private donations from hundreds of individuals who had been solicited by Clinton's staff and supporters. He told a conference on education at the Kentucky General Assembly in January 1984 that the campaign of television, radio and newspaper advertisements and printed brochures helped explain his proposals for educational reform and higher taxes. A total of 26,000 brochures were mailed, and others were handed out at county fairs and distributed at meetings.

"I cannot overemphasize how important I believe this component of the program was," Clinton told the legislators. He said the money for the campaign was raised in four days by telephone calls to financial institutions and others in the business community. "The business community was phenomenally interested in being supportive of the program.... People really appreciated being told what was happening to them and why, before it happened."

Betsey Wright, who was Clinton's chief of staff at the time, remembers the public relations campaign and its contribution to the success of the 1983 legislative session:

Before the session really convened at the legislature...we did a public campaign for the governor's standards and program and for the tax with a blue-ribbon campaign. We

bought radio ads, newspaper ads, TV ads; we did a lot of direct mail across the state. We had people doing postcards and letters to their legislators. We had them wearing the blue ribbons... and rallied meetings across the state—all meant to snowball into the beginning of the legislative session so that by the time those legislators convened, each of them had a constituency in their district begging them to raise their taxes for education. Never has a legislature convened with it being so easy to raise taxes. Their district wanted them to do it for education. Even at that it was a struggle. We had to vote several times on the sales tax to get the majority and make it happen. But it happened because the people brought it to the legislature.... We did phone banks at night in the districts of recalcitrant legislators and had them just snowed the next day. To get it done was a very well-planned campaign.

* * *

The year 1984 dawned. It was an election year and Clinton was running again. Clinton's opponents were sure to capitalize on his unpopularity with teachers and school administrators.

They got an early start. On January 18, school superintendents and the AEA appeared before the legislative Joint Interim Committee on Education to chip away at the standards. Hillary Clinton rose to defend her work.

State Representative Jodie Mahony contended that the interim committee should not be the body to accept or reject anyone's objections to the standards and that the job should be left to the state Board of Education. The committee decided to send the state board a synopsis of five major objections raised by school superintendents and to let the board consider them.

The interim committee had sent letters to school superintendents asking for written comments, and received fifty-two responses. The five most recurring complaints were:

1. Extending teacher contracts from the current 180 days to 190 would be too costly.
2. The proposed class-size restrictions would be too costly because new facilities and more teachers would be needed.
3. The proposed high school graduation requirements needed to be changed, because no clear provision had been made

for students without aptitude for complex mathematics courses and for those specializing in vocational training.

4. The proposed requirement for counselors in elementary schools would be too costly, and the requirement was impractical.
5. The proposed new state regulations for remedial instruction jeopardized federal funds for remedial instruction that specified the type of instruction.

Hillary Clinton quickly defended the proposed standards, especially those limiting kindergarten class size to a maximum of twenty students and the high school graduation requirements. She said those two would be her top priorities if she could save only certain standards based on available money.

Opposition also was voiced at the committee meeting by the AEA, which took the stand that some of the standards were too rigid and beyond the state's financial means.

Public meetings were held throughout the state by the Board of Education to hear comments on the new accreditation standards. Many people, parents among them, praised them and said they looked forward to their implementation. Others expressed fear of monetary problems for the schools in meeting some of the standards.

On February 22, 1984, the Board of Education approved the proposals, giving Arkansas schools their first comprehensive new standards since 1969. They were to take effect on June 1, 1987.

"It's a great, great day for Arkansas," Clinton told the assembled when the meeting drew to an end. "I'm very pleased. The board was under enormous pressure to water the standards down. In my heart of hearts, I could have gone a little further, but the committee and the board did a good job."

More trouble came as the National Education Association began its investigation in Arkansas of the teacher testing law. Clinton met with members of the NEA executive committee in Little Rock, sparred politely with them and left after a round of "friendly but firm disagreement," in the words of *Gazette* reporter Brummett. The education officials had accused Clinton of having purely political motives.

Clinton countered by saying that when people disagree with a public official's action they allege "political motivation," but when they agree they laud "statesmanship." He held strongly to his position, saying: "This law is nothing but right. I believe in it very strongly." He went on to say that the controversy "has caused me a great deal of pain."

The NEA asked Clinton why he had insisted on the law when his own Department of Education director, Dr. Don Roberts, had been opposed to it. The governor said he had weighed Roberts's arguments but "decided I simply disagreed with them."

The NEA team decided that the law should be repealed or amended and that Clinton should either call a special legislative session for that purpose or delay the testing until after the 1985 regular session (possibly counting on Clinton being defeated in 1984 and a more sympathetic governor occupying the chair in 1985). Clinton responded that he would back teacher tests in spite of the NEA's position.

A poll conducted in June 1984 showed that the public favored the tests two to one. A total of 369 registered voters around the state were polled by telephone. Of those, 65.5 percent said they favored the concept. When asked if they would favor national standards for teacher testing, 61.5 percent said yes. Those who opposed teacher testing frequently cited as reasons the belief that a suitable test could not be designed and the conviction that teachers who had taught several years should not be tested.

The issue drew national attention. A three-hour ABC television documentary in September 1984, "To Save Our Schools, To Save Our Children," featured a segment on teacher testing. The show attempted to explore both sides of the question. Phil Donahue devoted an entire episode of his show on NBC to the controversy. ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley" invited Clinton to answer questions about the testing law. The presidents of the NEA and the American Federation of Teachers also were allowed to speak on the show.

Meanwhile, the state's educational television network was airing programs to help teachers prepare for the test. The year was 1984 and teachers would be given several opportunities to pass the test by June 1, 1987.

The idea of taking a test was unacceptable to many teachers, especially those with careers of thirty or forty years. Many vowed they would never take the exam. Others quit their jobs rather than take it. Teachers were highly vocal about it in their communities, but found little sympathy among taxpayers, who saw the test as a tangible evaluation of how well their tax money was being spent.

It was the single most emotional issue in public education in Arkansas since the civil rights era.

8

Preserving the Standards

IN 1984, AT AGE THIRTY-SEVEN, BILL CLINTON FOUND HIMSELF IN HIS fourth race for governor, making his bid for a third term.

After his defeat in 1980, Clinton had come back with a vengeance in 1982. His main objective had been to install a program that would revolutionize education, and he had. Now he had to preserve that program.

Clinton had plenty of trouble on his hands, primarily from two powerful teacher unions—the AEA and the NEA.

He also had some serious trouble of a personal kind: His younger brother, Roger Clinton Jr., had become deeply involved in illegal drugs.

The State Police and other investigators had been watching Roger Clinton for several months. When it became clear that he was participating in serious cocaine trafficking, the State Police decided to inform Bill Clinton.

The governor was distraught. He told the State Police to continue their investigation in order to acquire evidence on all the suspects, as well as his brother. The probe lasted for another month. "I couldn't tell my mother, or her husband, or my brother. It was a nightmare," Clinton told writer Joe Klein. "But it was the right thing to do. He had a four-gram-a-day habit. They said if he hadn't been in incredible physical shape, he would have died."