

## REGIONAL LITERACY SUMMIT

LENGTH: RECORDED ON: 9/3 FOR USE ON: 9/8

I WANT TO APPLAUD THE EFFORT OF THE SOUTHWEST LITERACY NETWORK AND THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY LITERACY FOR HOSTING THIS REGIONAL LITERACY SUMMIT. AND I SHARE YOUR DESIRE TO EMPOWER PEOPLE WITH A "DECENT EDUCATION AND A DECENT, NATIONALLY COMPETITIVE SET OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES"

IN 1986, WHEN I WAS GOVERNOR OF ARKANSAS, I CHAIRED THE SOUTHERN GROWTH POLICIES BOARD. WE PUBLISHED A REPORT CALLED THE 1986 COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE SOUTH: HALFWAY HOME AND A LONG WAY TO GO. THE REPORT LISTED TEN OBJECTIVES: NUMBER TWO ON THE LIST WAS A CALL TO MOBILIZE RESOURCES TO ELIMINATE ADULT FUNCTIONAL ILLITERACY.

AND, IN 1991, THE LOWER MISSISSIPPI DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION SET AN AMBITIOUS TEN-YEAR GOAL: FUNCTIONAL LITERACY FOR EVERY ADULT IN THE DELTA BY 2001.

UNFORTUNATELY, AS THE NATIONAL ADULT LITERACY SURVEY BEING RELEASED TODAY INDICATES, THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM HAS BEEN SEVERELY UNDERESTIMATED FOR TWENTY YEARS.

AND THAT MEANS WE HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO TOGETHER. BECAUSE WE WILL NEVER BY THE NATION THAT WE WANT TO BE IF WE DON'T ENSURE THAT EVERY AMERICAN HAS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE LITERATE, TO POSSESS THE SKILLS NECESSARY TO BE COMPETITIVE IN THE WORKFORCE OF THE 1990'S AND THE 21ST CENTURY.

THE NALS REPORT IS A CALL TO ARMS. THE CHALLENGE OF FUNCTIONAL ILLITERACY IS A CHALLENGE THAT WE CAN OVERCOME IF WE MAKE IT A PRIORITY AND IF WE ADDRESS IT TOGETHER. AND THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT YOU ARE ALL DOING TODAY. THIS IS A CHALLENGE THAT HAS A BEGINNING, MIDDLE -- AND CAN HAVE AN END. LET'S MAKE SURE THAT WE GET THERE.

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK. PLEASE KEEP IT UP.

**AEA 50TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**RECORDED ON: 9/3 FOR USE ON: 9/11**

GOOD EVENING. I WANT TO OFFER MY PERSONAL CONGRATULATIONS ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN ELECTRONICS ASSOCIATION.

IN 1943, A HANDFUL OF ELECTRONICS COMPANY EXECUTIVES BANDED TOGETHER IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TO FORM WHAT IS NOW THE AMERICAN ELECTRONICS ASSOCIATION. IN THE HALF-CENTURY SINCE, YOUR INDUSTRY HAS BROUGHT THE COUNTRY COUNTLESS MIRACLES OF TECHNOLOGY AND CREATED MILLIONS OF GOOD JOBS FOR AMERICANS.

THE ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY TODAY IS THE LARGEST MANUFACTURING SEGMENT OF OUR ECONOMY, EMPLOYING MORE THAN 2 MILLION AMERICANS. IT IS A WORLD LEADER IN TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION AND TURNS IDEAS INTO PRODUCTS THAT IMPROVE PEOPLE'S LIVES. YOUR INDUSTRY HELPS AMERICANS WORK SMARTER, LIVE SAFELY AND COMFORTABLY, AND COMMUNICATE ANYWHERE, ANYTIME.

YOUR INDUSTRY IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT TO THE LONG-TERM HEALTH AND VITALITY OF THE NATION. AMERICA'S LONG-TERM PROSPERITY DEPENDS ON OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING TECHNOLOGICAL PROGRESS AND OUR WILLINGNESS TO INVEST IN OUR FUTURE.

THIS ADMINISTRATION SHARES AEA'S COMMITMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE U.S. ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY. AEA PLAYS A VERY IMPORTANT ROLE HERE IN WASHINGTON. MY ADMINISTRATION HAS WORKED CLOSELY WITH DICK IVERSON AND AEA'S WASHINGTON STAFF AS WELL AS WITH HUNDREDS OF AEA MEMBER COMPANY EXECUTIVES. WE DON'T AGREE ON EVERY ISSUE BUT I THINK WE HAVE A STRONG RELATIONSHIP BASED ON MUTUAL RESPECT THAT WE CAN BUILD UPON IN THE COMING YEARS.

WHETHER YOU ARE A WINNER OF AN AEA 50TH ANNIVERSARY AWARD, A PAST MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT WINNER, A PAST OR CURRENT MEMBER OF THE BOARD, OR ONE OF THE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WHO WORK IN THE U.S. ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY -- I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I APPRECIATE YOUR DEDICATION TO MAINTAINING AMERICA'S TECHNOLOGICAL EDGE.

I WANT TO EXTEND MY SPECIAL WISHES TO THIS YEAR'S WINNERS OF AEA'S MEDAL OF ACHIEVEMENT, ANDY GROVE AND GORDON MOORE. YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED THE DETERMINATION TO TURN DREAMS INTO INNOVATIONS AND IDEAS INTO PRODUCTS. IN THE PROCESS YOU HAVE HELPED CREATE AN INDUSTRY. CONGRATULATIONS.

TONIGHT, I URGE EACH OF YOU TO LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT FIFTY YEARS. COUNTLESS MIRACLES -- MIRACLES THAT WE CANNOT EVEN IMAGINE -- AWAIT US IN THE FUTURE IF WE HAVE THE COURAGE TO SEEK THEM OUT. TOGETHER, WE CAN "INVENT AMERICA'S FUTURE."

AND YOU CAN SEE THE DIFFERENCE YOUR CONTRIBUTION MAKES, EVERYTIME SOMEONE IN YOUR COMMUNITY LEARNS TO READ OR WALK FOR THE FIRST TIME, OR CASHES A PAYCHECK THANKS TO A JOB TRAINING PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY UNITED WAY.

YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED WAY CAMPAIGN HELPS TO KEEP AMERICA STRONG, ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME.

BUT IT DOESN'T HAPPEN ON ITS OWN; IT HAPPENS BECAUSE PEOPLE LIKE YOU DECIDE TO MAKE A COMMITMENT. SO GIVE OF YOUR TIME...GIVE WHAT YOU CAN...AND WATCH YOUR CONTRIBUTION GO RIGHT TO WORK, RIGHT IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY.

IT'S NOT JUST THE UNITED WAY...IT'S THE AMERICAN WAY.

THANK YOU...AND GOD BLESS YOU.

**President William Jefferson Clinton**  
**Remarks to Conference of**  
**International City/County Management Association**  
**September 3, 1993 (videotaped)**

Hello... and thank you, Roy Pederson, for that introduction and for inviting me to join you today. I'm honored to have this chance to speak to the members of the International City-County Management Association.

I am a great fan of your organization for many reasons... but perhaps most of all because you fight the good fight to improve government... and you've been doing it for almost eighty years. From your positions as administrators, managers and appointed officials in the cities, counties and other local governments, you have been striving to do what our federal government is now trying to get done right.

While you have taken on issues as complex and as varied as the environment, transportation, housing and crime... you have made it your job to see how the job can be done in ways that best serve the people.

That, in brief, is what we are trying to do with our plan to reinvent government: We want our government to better serve our people... to end the waste, mismanagement and inefficiency... to be responsible and get our house in order.

I'll bet each one of you has a story... maybe a few stories... on how red tape, bad attitudes or just plain unenlightened bureaucracy can tie up programs and delay progress.

It's not pretty what mismanagement in government can do... and not do.

For months, Vice President Gore has been digging... and he's found a lot of dinosaurs... out-moded ways of doing business and sometimes just plain silly regulations that have been tying our people in knots... frustrating our citizens... wasting taxpayer money... and preventing even the best-meaning government workers from doing their best.

It's time we did better. Now, with the recommendations we have from the Vice President, we can. We know this: Government is a business... and it's the people's business. Our people have the right to know that their hard-earned tax dollars are being used in the best way... in their best interest... and that no one who is being paid with those dollars is asleep at the wheel.

In the coming days, weeks and months, we have more great tasks ahead of us. We will be moving forward with our plan to

reform the nation's health care system, so that every American can have access to good, affordable health care. At the same time, we are pressing for passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, which will be America's ticket to the second-fastest growing export market in the world... Latin America. And with that will come high-wage jobs for Americans here at home.

And, of course, we will be working hard to get the word out to the people on how we plan to improve our government.

None of this will be easy. It will mean pulling together America in a way that we haven't seen in a while. But we're already on our way... and it's clear that the American people want to continue moving forward together.

I'm grateful for the encouragement and the support the International City-County Management Association has given me and our efforts... and for your inspiring leadership in finding ways to make America better. For that, and for including me in your annual conference, I thank you... and wish you all the best. God bless.

**UNITED WAY MESSAGE**  
**RECORDED ON: 9/3    FOR USE IN: LATE SEPTEMBER**

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:** THIS IS A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT SOMETHING THAT TRULY REACHES ACROSS ALL OF AMERICA'S NEIGHBORHOODS.

IT WASN'T THAT LONG AGO THAT PARTS OF AMERICA'S MIDWEST WERE LITERALLY UNDERWATER, UNDER SIEGE FROM FLOODING. VIRTUALLY EVERY CORNER OF THE COUNTRY HAS AT SOME TIME BEEN PARALYZED BY NATURAL DISASTER, BUT, EVERY TIME, THE RESILIENCY OF AMERICANS TO REPAIR, RESTORE AND REBUILD THEIR LIVES HAS BEEN REMARKABLE AND ENDURING.

AND, EVERY TIME, AMERICA'S NETWORK OF LOCAL UNITED WAYS HAS BEEN NEARBY TO LEND A HELPING HAND. LOCAL UNITED WAYS FORM A LINK INTO COMMUNITIES TO ENSURE THAT CONTRIBUTIONS REACH THE PEOPLE WHO NEED HELP THE MOST.

LOCAL UNITED WAYS ARE NOW CONDUCTING THEIR ANNUAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS, AND BECAUSE OF THE EXTRAORDINARY DEMAND FOR SOCIAL SERVICES, THIS CAMPAIGN IS OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE. TO HELP EXPLAIN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE UNITED WAY OF AMERICA, ELAINE CHAO.

**ELAINE CHAO:** THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT. IT IS A PLEASURE TO SHARE THIS MOMENT WITH YOU AS MILLIONS OF AMERICANS ACROSS THE COUNTRY BECOME INVOLVED WITH THEIR LOCAL UNITED WAY CAMPAIGNS.

UNITED WAYS AND THEIR FUNDED AGENCIES DO MORE THAN RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES -- THEY ARE THE LIFELINE IN THE DAILY, SILENT STRUGGLE OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS WHO DEPEND ON CARE GIVERS FOR THEIR MEALS, SHELTER, JOB ASSISTANCE, DAY CARE, AND THE COUNSELING THEY NEED TO BETTER COPE WITH THEIR STRUGGLE.

AT THE HEART OF THE UNITED WAY SYSTEM ARE THE VOLUNTEERS AND PROFESSIONALS WHO DEVELOP LOCAL, COMMUNITY-BY-COMMUNITY RESPONSES. WHEN YOU WATCH THEM AT WORK YOU FIND THAT THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED WAYS REPRESENT THE ESSENCE OF THIS COUNTRY'S GENEROUS CHARACTER. AND BECAUSE OF YOUR GENEROSITY, LOCAL UNITED WAYS ARE ABLE TO CONTINUE THEIR WORK IN ORDER TO PROVIDE HELP FOR PEOPLE WHO MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE HAVE ANY HOPE.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:** THANK YOU, ELAINE. IN MY HOME STATE, I'VE SEEN HOW UNITED WAY-FUNDED AGENCIES HAVE CHANGED LIVES FOR THE BETTER, AND I KNOW THAT THE SYSTEM OF LOCAL UNITED WAYS WORKS EFFICIENTLY ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY. BUT THE WORK IS NEVER DONE.

AND AS ELAINE SUGGESTED, UNITED WAYS DON'T FUND THEMSELVES -- THEY DEPEND ON PEOPLE LIKE YOU TO HELP KEEP THE LINKS TOGETHER.

WHEN YOU GIVE TO THE UNITED WAY, YOUR CONTRIBUTION GOES DIRECTLY INTO AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS THAT YOUR LOCAL UNITED WAYS HAVE EVALUATED TO ENSURE THEY ARE EFFECTIVE AND THEY DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY.

**WALT DISNEY WORLD'S HALL OF PRESIDENTS**  
**LENGTH: 1:15 RECORDED ON: 9/3**  
**FOR PERMANENT USE IN WALT DISNEY WORLD'S HALL OF PRESIDENTS**

MY FELLOW CITIZENS:

WE ARE THE HEIRS OF THE GREAT AMERICAN REVOLUTION. AS THE MILLENNIUM DRAWS TO A CLOSE AND THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY APPROACHES, LET US PAUSE TO HONOR THE VERY IDEA OF AMERICA.

AMERICA MIRRORS THE WORLD'S DIVERSITY, YET IT REMAINS UNITED IN ITS STRUGGLE TO UPHOLD FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS. WE BELIEVE OUR NATION'S HAPPINESS STILL EVOLVES FROM LIBERTY, FROM OPPORTUNITY, AND FROM THE VISION OF EQUALITY SET FORTH BY OUR COUNTRY'S DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. AND TODAY, OUR NATION STANDS AS A SYMBOL OF FREEDOM AND AN INSPIRATION TO PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD.

THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH AMERICA THAT CANNOT BE CURED BY WHAT IS RIGHT WITH AMERICA. THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH THE WORLD THAT CANNOT BE CURED BY THE IDEALS THAT AMERICA REPRESENTS. THOSE PRINCIPLES HAVE NO BORDERS...

AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO A DAY WHEN THOSE PRINCIPLES, EXTENDED BEYOND OUR BORDERS, WILL HAVE CIRCLED THE GLOBE. THE QUEST FOR DEMOCRACY MUST CONTINUE, UNTIL ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD ENJOY THE FREEDOM WE MUST ALWAYS FIGHT TO PRESERVE.

THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA IS AS BRIGHT AND HOPEFUL TODAY AS IT WAS IN JULY OF 1776, AND WE ARE READY TO CARRY OUR GREAT NATIONAL EXPERIMENT FORWARD, INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM!

**THE REUTER TRANSCRIPT REPORT  
ABC "GOOD MORNING AMERICA" INTERVIEW WITH:  
VICE PRESIDENT AL GORE JR.  
AL GORE SR.**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1993**

**JOAN LUNDEN:** Not every father receives an award from the vice president of the United States, and not every son has an opportunity to pay this kind of honor to his dad. Well, tonight Vice President Al Gore will present a lifetime achievement award to his father, the former Senator Al Gore Sr., and the award is issued by Democrats 2000, a coalition of Democrats serving in Congress, as well as state and local offices.

And the proud father and son join us this morning from the vice president's office in the White House. Nice to have you both with us.

**VICE PRES. GORE:** Good morning.

**MR. GORE:** Good morning.

**MS. LUNDEN:** Senator Gore, first of all, congratulations -- a lifetime achievement award. It's a specially nice honor, because it's a value that others place on all the hard work and dedication that you have done throughout your life. Were you surprised when you got the notice?

**MR. GORE:** Yes, I was.

**MS. LUNDEN:** And I just wonder, Mr. Vice President, were you a part of the nomination procedure?

**VICE PRES. GORE:** No, I had nothing to do with it, Joan, but I'm grateful to the organization for asking me to come and present the award that they are giving to my father. I think it's a nice thing for them to do, and very appropriate.

**MS. LUNDEN:** Of all the things that you father has done -- I mean, he rose from humble beginnings to do so many things -- of what are you most proud? What stands out in your mind?

**VICE PRES. GORE:** Well, you know, I'm tempted to tell you about his authorship of the interstate highway --

**MS. LUNDEN:** Yeah, sure.

**VICE PRES. GORE:** -- program and his battle for free and fair trade and fair taxation policies and so forth, but what really stands out in my memory and what I'm proudest of is the courage that he showed throughout his career on issues like civil rights and opposition to the Vietnam War policy early on at a time when I thought he realized and knew full well the political costs that he was incurring by standing up for what he believed in, and I really admired that, and I'm mighty proud of him.

**MS. LUNDEN:** Senator Gore, when you receive an award like this, it does tend to make you look back over your career. When you look back, of what are you most proud? What stands out to you?

**MR. GORE:** My son.

**MS. LUNDEN:** Ah. I was going to say, having a son become vice president's kind of a lifetime achievement award in and of itself.

**MR. GORE:** Yes, indeed.

**VICE PRES. GORE:** (Laughs) Well, I learned a lot from him, Joan, and it was pretty interesting growing up in the Gore household. My mother was a full partner in his career and still is and both of them lawyers, and we had pretty interesting dinner table conversations, I'll say that. My sister and I really got a full education on the things that were in the newspaper every morning.

**MS. LUNDEN:** Interesting, though, that when you ran the first time for your dad's congressional seat, you didn't want him to make any speeches out there. Was it because you wanted to do it yourself, or was it a little bit of living in dad's shadow? What prompted that.

**VICE PRES. GORE:** Well, I think you've got it about right. It felt to me as if it wasn't the right thing to do to go out and ask people to vote for you because of your family name, and I never did that, and I always said I don't want anybody to base a decision for or against on that. Even though he didn't make speeches in that first campaign, though, he was one of the real key factors, because he was behind the scenes, on the telephones, organizing counties, and so forth. It was a full family efforts.

**MS. LUNDEN:** I'll give you a few moments here if you'd like to say anything to all the folks out in California. I know you'd like to

**VICE PRES. GORE:** Yeah, we're -- the president and I have been working with the FEMA people and the forest service people and all of those who are on the federal side working with the state and local folks and helping to organize the battle against those fires, Joan. It's awful to contemplate the idea that an arsonist would do what apparently some are suspected of doing here, but it's wonderful that there are men and women of courage and dedication willing to fight these fires so terrifically well, and our hearts are with those who have experienced loss, and we're going to do everything we can to make sure that the battle goes well.

**MS. LUNDEN:** All right. Thank you very much. Enjoy that awards ceremony. What a lovely thing to be able to do for your dad.

**VICE PRES. GORE:** Thanks, Joan.

**MS. LUNDEN:** And, Senator Gore, thank you. Enjoy.

**MR. GORE:** Thank you very much.

**THE REUTER TRANSCRIPT REPORT  
NBC "TODAY" INTERVIEW WITH:  
JAMES LEE WITT, DIRECTOR, FEDERAL EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
AGENCY**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1993**

**BRYANT GUMBEL:** On Close-up this morning, the relief effort. Spearheading that here in the fire areas are the director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, James Lee Witt, and Richard Andrews, director of emergency services here in California.

**Gentlemen, good morning.**

**MR. WITT:** Good morning.

**MR. ANDREWS:** Good morning.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Mr. Andrews, let me start with you, if I might. Give us a status report.

**MR. ANDREWS:** Well, the best news is the weather. You know, the weather has improved dramatically. The winds are down. We've got an onshore flow, which means the humidity's up. The fire here in the Topanga area is about 40 percent contained. We think we'll get a good handle on it this morning. We'll have the air attack first thing.

About 30,000 acres have been burned, at least 300 homes destroyed. We've got 9000 firefighters altogether here that are dealing with the blazes in southern California, 6000 on this fire alone.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Forty percent. What percentage are you hoping to attain by the end of the day, assuming the weather continues to cooperate?

**MR. ANDREWS:** Well, we think we could get up to 60 or 70 percent contained by the end of the day. The fire is still going to go on for several days, so this is not by any means over.

**MR. FOX:** The Midwest floods happened during your watch as head of FEMA. Can you compare the two disasters, or are they totally different?

**MR. WITT:** Well, of course, the Midwest floods went for six months, you know. People had filled up sand in sand bags for the river for 38 to 40 days, you know, so it was a longer, drawn-out disaster and still people haven't cleaned their homes out and rebuilt yet.

So it's a little different. The disaster here, it was fast and quick and I think you could help control this one with the fighting of the fire, you know, they did, but there you couldn't. The river just spread.

**MR. FOX:** As night fell, Witt and the official entourage returned to the command center for a joint press conference. Then he called President Clinton in the White House with a progress report.

**MR. WITT:** Hello, Mr. President.

**MR. FOX:** As you probably know, after the hurricane down in Florida last year, FEMA got a lot of criticism. People said they were too slow, too bureaucratic, didn't respond.

What, if anything, are you doing different to make sure that doesn't happen here?

**MR. WITT:** Early on, when I was nominated and confirmed by the Senate to be director of FEMA, the White House staff came over to FEMA to work with us establishing the information flow from FEMA to the White House to make sure that they were -- the president and vice president was up to date on exactly what was taking place during the disaster when we had one, and the system is different. We're being more pro-active, we're working with the state.

**MR. FOX:** Are you confident that FEMA will move more quickly here?

**MR. WITT:** Well, we already have.

**MR. FOX:** Yeah?

**MR. WITT:** We set up the disaster application centers here, the four of them, with the state in record time — 36 hours. We actually had disaster application checks mailed out Tuesday. So, you know, we're hoping we can get the checks out to those who qualify within seven to 10 days.

**MR. FOX:** At this point, our brief interview was interrupted when the fire engines we'd been standing in front of left to go out and fight the flames.

I'm wondering if you get a sense that, in some way, people expect too much from the government. They expect a disaster happens and the feds will come in and save them.

**MR. WITT:** I don't think so. I think it's important that we do what we can to help communities get back on their feet so they can be a taxpayer. You know, they pay taxes just like the rest of us.

**MR. FOX:** There have been a lot of disasters in the past year. I wonder whether FEMA's personnel, FEMA's resources, are getting stretched too thin.

**MR. WITT:** It's been tough on all of us, but I think there's one thing that's important to know. The employees at FEMA love what they do. They're very dedicated, and since April, they have worked very hard to help reorganize FEMA and make FEMA a new agency.

**MR. FOX:** Now, I think it's fair to point out that the criticism that FEMA got after Hurricane Andrew and Hurricane Iniki in Hawaii came about when the agency was run by Bush administration political appointees. Since Mr. Witt has taken over in April, their major crisis they've had to deal with was the Midwest floods, and generally the agency's gotten very favorable reviews for the way it's dealt with that situation.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Mr. Witt, can you give us an estimated damage report so far?

**MR. WITT:** Dick and I have been trying to figure what the estimate would be, the response time and the costs and also the homes. And we're looking at probably, just a rough estimate, about \$500 million right now and probably growing.

**MR. GUMBEL:** When we talked a week ago of implementing that full federal effort that the president had talked about, you were very optimistic. Are you satisfied that to this point you've done all you can, all that's humanly possible?

**MR. WITT:** I think so, because what we're doing together, the state and federal agencies, we're working very close together. We set up four disaster application centers in record time, less than 36 hours after the declaration was made.

**MR. GUMBEL:** What are you finding are the priorities here, those who have been devastated by the fire? What do they want most from you?

**MR. WITT:** Information. Some of them need assistance. And what we're trying to do is encourage everyone to come in, you know, if they need information. We have the insurance industry and they're working with us. We have the state staff people and they're working with us. We have the Small Business Administration working with us and the disaster application center. We have the American Red Cross. We have every -- it's kind of a one-stop place for information or assistance.

**MR. GUMBEL:** So people are satisfied they're getting what they need.

**MR. WITT:** I think so. We had people to take applications last Friday and we got checked out Tuesday.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Are you getting what you need? We know the president offered \$15 million in federal aid to defray the cost of the firefighting effort. Realistically, how much of a dent is that going to make in your bill?

**MR. ANDREWS:** Well, it'll make an important initial dent. We estimated beginning before this round, the round that we had last week, that the total response costs were about \$41 million. It's, I would say, at least double that. So this will be a good initial payment for both, particularly the state department of forestry and also for the local agencies that are responding. We've got mutual aid units from across the state of California. The federal government also has been very, very responsive through the U.S. Forest Service. We've had major support from them with crews, with engines, with air tankers. So we're pleased with the support and the response we've gotten.

**MR. GUMBEL:** You take good news where you can get it, but how confident are you that the flames won't yet kick up when the wind does?

**MR. ANDREWS:** Well, we're not at all sure. I mean, we're still fighting some of the fires, you know, from last week. The forecast for Friday and Saturday is a return to a mild Santa Ana condition. But the weather service is advising us that the pattern of weather that we've been into shows signs of probably breaking up.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Your office announced yesterday, Mr. Witt, the national strategy would be designed to, if not prevent these kinds of problems in the future, to at least limit the damage. What kind of recommendations do you have in mind?

**MR. WITT:** What we're going to do is we will work with the states on a (hazard mitigation?) program to try to help people build safer through mitigation.

**MR. GUMBEL:** In retrospect, could California have done a better job if they had implemented some of those things and been a little more conscious of them up to this point?

**MR. WITT:** I think as people build in California now, I think they are building safer on newer homes at this time. And I think people are becoming aware that whether they're in a fire area or a flood-prone area or an earthquake area or beach erosion, I think they're becoming familiar with it and they are building safer.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Okay. But again, we want to stress the good news; 40 percent containment, the humidity is up, the temperature is down and the winds are way down.

**MR. ANDREWS:** Yeah. We're much more relaxed than we were two days ago.

**MR. GUMBEL:** Let's hope for the best. Mr. Andrews, Mr. Witt, thank you both, gentlemen.

TO: KATHY WAY  
WHITE HOUSE  
(202) 456-7028

FROM: James L. Witt  
Director, FEMA

SUBJECT: SPEECH - DES MOINES, September 16, 1993

I want to thank Joanne Grueskin (Grooskin) for that wonderful introduction. And to commend Tom Bredeweg (Bread e wig) for the outstanding job he has done in organizing this seminar especially considering the demands of dealing with the Great flood of 1993.

In many ways, the flood makes this seminar even more critical than usual. As you begin to rebuild your cities and towns and communities, the experiences, the ideas, the approaches, and the teamwork of your fellow local officials will be a key to your success and a very important source of moral support.

I have to say, I wasn't all that certain that I would be here because of some activities that are taking place back in Washington.

But I felt it was very important to be here with you, even briefly, to talk about how we can work together to rebuild Iowa.

As many of you know, I spent 12 years of my career as a County judge in Arkansas so I feel that we share a common commitment to local government and the people that we serve. As I moved up to State government and more recently, the Federal government, I have tried to keep the lessons I learned as County judge upmost in my mind. I have thought about the decisions I make and the policies I recommend, in the context of, how will it affect local governments, how will it benefit the community, the individual, the American public.

I came to Iowa several times during the flooding. Each time, I was inspired by the determination and courage of the people of Iowa. Wherever we went, there was a spirit of community, of neighbors helping neighbors, united in a common cause to protect their homes, their livelihoods and their communities.

In July, I stood next to President Clinton, right here in Des Moines, as he committed to the people of Iowa, and the entire Midwest, the support of his Administration to provide the help necessary to recover from the devastating floods.

I am here today to show my support to the people of Iowa who are on the front line of the recovery efforts.

I am here to tell you that the President and I understand the unique problems of Iowa and that he and I are committed to working with you to solve those problems. We are committed to finding every way possible to assist the towns and communities in the Midwest, and especially in Iowa-- to recover more quickly from the flooding.

The Mississippi flooding in the midwest severely impacted the entire Region; affecting nine States. In these States, 500 counties have been designated for Individual Assistance, Public Assistance or both. Every single county in Iowa has been declared.

The duration of the flooding has lasted up to six months in some States, with some areas experiencing flooding four times.

This extremely long length of time has caused unprecedented disruption of commerce, agriculture, and in many cases, local governments. This has resulted in significant economic losses to those States and communities. With these losses has come the loss of tax revenues to local governments and their tax bases.

Hundreds of thousands of people have applied for assistance. Individuals have been displaced from their homes and places of work. Entire communities were basically shut down.

The economic costs of this disaster are still being calculated. It is clear, however, that it is in the best interest of the Nation's economy to expedite a return to economic viability in the Midwest.

Equally important is the need to rebuild the social fabric of the region.

These are the facts and the extraordinary circumstances facing you as you attempt to rebuild.

To date, we have disbursed over 20 million dollars in disaster assistance for individual and family grants, housing and unemployment.

We provided one hundred percent of the cost of direct Federal assistance for emergency work and efforts to protect public health and safety. This has helped ease the tremendous financial burden these floods placed on State and local governments. Other agencies of the Federal government, Small Business Administration and Agriculture have provided almost one hundred million dollars to the stricken people of Iowa.

Together we have accomplished a great deal, and have helped a great many victims of this disaster. But as we move from the immediate response phase, we must look toward the restoration and rebuilding of our towns and communities.

I know this is the primary concern to you and to the people of Iowa. I know you are concerned about the costs of rebuilding and about your ability to meet the Federal cost share requirements for public assistance under our programs.

I can assure you these concerns are being heard. And they are being heard by the President. Over the past week, we have had extensive meetings at the White House to review the economic situation and the public assistance requirements brought on by the Mississippi flooding. In all of these conversations, our guiding factors have been to accelerate the region's economic and social return to normal and to assure that all of the States impacted by this disaster receive fair treatment.

We are very close to reaching a consensus on how we will resolve this issue. I will be returning to Washington immediately after talking with you today to continue to work, on your behalf, to reach a solution. A solution will allow the small communities of Iowa to have the opportunity to recover.

I am very optimistic that an announcement will be forthcoming very soon.

The President did request that I tell you he is asking the Congress to immediately reauthorize FEMA's Community Disaster Loan Program. This program was scheduled to expire on September 30, 1993.

With this request, there could be an additional 150 million dollars available to local governments impacted by the disaster. As many of you know this program provides low interest loans to local governments to allow them to meet their operating expenses. This significant program has helped numerous local governments continue to function as they work to rebuild their community.

With a duration of five years, I believe these can be a critical factor in allowing governments the resources and time to rebuild their revenue base. We also have agreement that these funds will be made available until expended which allows communities sufficient time to apply.

The floods of the Mississippi have taught us all many lessons. One of the clearest lessons is that it is time for the Nation to look at our approach to disaster assistance, especially the cost share policy. We need to consider the unique differences among States and populations.

However, I also believe we have to design a system that provides for fair treatment for all. Finally, we must have a system that is not so tied down in red tape and not so bureaucratic. A system that can be easily understood by State governments, local governments and individual citizens. We need to take the hocus-pocus out of disaster assistance.

Finally, I think we need to look at our disaster assistance programs to see if they really help us reduce the risks we face from natural hazards.

The opportunity is at hand to significantly reduce the number of people at risk from flooding in the affected areas. Against the backdrop of the Great Midwest floods of 1993, the time has come for each of you to make the hard political choices and to make the long term investment in mitigation.

The heroic efforts of the people of the Midwest to save their homes from the rising flood waters, provided inspiration to all of us.

But it also provides vivid evidence of the problems we face when we insist on challenging the forces of nature by our development and building practices.

These problems should be kept constantly in mind as we begin the long recovery and rebuilding process throughout the Midwest.

For those of you responsible for making investments in mitigation - mayors - county commissioners, the political support often isn't there or the short term economic costs can't be justified. We are -- you are - in a unique situation right now. The political support is there and the economic costs are justified. We at FEMA want to work together with you to make mitigation of the flood risk in the Midwest a reality.

While we recognize the need, in some cases, to look for protection from the flood risk by levees, that is not the mitigation I am talking about. Instead, we must look to providing assistance for communities to acquire flood damaged properties for open space use. We must look at assistance for relocating individuals and businesses to locations outside the flood hazard area.

And finally, we must assist people to elevate their homes and businesses so they can be reasonably protected from future floods.

At this moment, FEMA personnel throughout the flooded region are working in each community.

They are working with the affected homeowners or business owners, that are candidates for elevation or property acquisition to make sure they are notified of the availability of these programs.

FEMA is making available \$44 million to be used to cover the costs of these projects. An additional \$5 million is available under 1362 of the National Flood Program, \$200 million is available through the HUD Community Block Grant Program and \$50 million is available in HUD HOME funds.

We realize these funds may not be enough so we are continuing to explore alternative ways to fund these projects. We are working closely with Congress on this issue.

Clearly, there is a heightened recognition and interest in Congress to look at how we can find additional support for these elevation and buyout projects, how we can prevent a repeat of the devastation caused by these floods. On Tuesday, I testified in support of legislation proposed in the Senate which would provide more enhanced funding for home and business elevation and other mitigation activities.

The time has come to face the fact that this Nation can no longer afford the costs of natural disasters. We can no longer afford the economic costs to the American taxpayer, nor can we afford the social costs to our communities and individuals.

While we cannot control nature -- we will always have floods, hurricanes, earthquakes. But we do know how to control the corresponding losses. We must and can work to design and build our communities better and to the extent possible, out of harm's way.

You as local and State elected officials, have the constitutional responsibility to protect the life and property of your citizens.

Too often in recent years, this responsibility has been abdicated - to the Federal government. Too often I have heard comments like ... "we're not worried, if anything happens the Federal government will bail us out". As a Nation, we can no longer abide this sentiment.

Moreover, the dollars in assistance that we provide, cannot erase the human suffering and the long term consequences that disasters inflict on our communities.

I challenge you today to reclaim that responsibility as you proceed to rebuild your communities.

It is time for each of us to assume responsibility for the future safety of our communities and our people. It is time for each decision that we make to be carefully considered, for each one of you to stand up to the pressure not to simply rebuild just like it was before.

You have the power to make a change. One less home or one less building located in harm's way means

one less family or business that becomes a victim of disaster.

Each of you have the power to be leaders of change. We have an unprecedented opportunity before us to rebuild our communities to make them safer for our children and for generations to come.

That is the challenge I place before you today.

I pledge to you that FEMA will be a partner with you in this endeavor. From the pioneer days, the towns and cities and people of the Midwest have been the backbone of this Nation.

**The President and I have every faith that you will embrace this spirit to rebuild a new Midwest that will be an inspiration to all that follow.**

**Thank you very much for your time this morning.**