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**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE FOR ALL KIDS FOUNDATION
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
December 1, 1998**

Thank you, Whoopi, for your kind words and friendship. Congratulations Melinda and Bill Gates, Jane and Michael Eisner. And thank you all for this great honor. This White Rose Award is beautiful -- and a wonderful symbol. But as lovely as this award is, I think we all know that the most treasured rose here tonight is Rosie herself. Rosie, my friend, you rock. [*One of Rosie's favorite expressions*]

When *Newsweek* put Rosie on the cover, they called her the Queen of Nice. The fact is, Rosie is so thoroughly nice she rarely lets on that she absolutely hates that title. Tonight, instead of calling her the Queen of Nice, let's try a new one: the Queen of Hearts. Because while our nation is blessed with many giving souls, no one gives more of herself than Rosie. The best example is what Rosie and Michael Smith and the For All Kids Foundation are doing to help so many thousands of young people to live up to their God-given potential.

Over the years, I have been fortunate enough to visit and work with many of the organizations you are supporting. I have seen what a difference you have made for these organizations -- and what a difference they are making in the lives of children.

Today, on World AIDS Day, I've been thinking in particular about the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation. Elizabeth, one of the strongest and bravest women I've ever known, passed away four years ago Thursday. She left behind an incredible legacy. Instead of giving up on life, instead of being paralyzed by fear, Elizabeth put this nation on a course to end pediatric AIDS, so no mother would ever again have to watch her child fall to this cruel disease. This is just one of the hundreds of vital missions that For All Kids is supporting today.

Many of the organizations you support couldn't do it without you. And I am equally

aware that they couldn't do it without federal support as well. That is why I am so proud of the budget my husband signed in October, which included a fivefold increase in the number of children who will be able to participate in the kind of quality after-school programs For All Kids has championed across the country. That's five times as many children with safe, stable environments in which to learn. Five times as many children who can discover their creative potential through music and the arts. Five times as many children who will be able develop new skills and new aspirations for their lives.

So yes, a caring government has an important role to play. But, as others have mentioned tonight, it takes an entire village to help a parent raise a child. It takes caring teachers, coaches, and mentors. It takes big-hearted benefactors like Rosie, the Gateses, and the Eisners. And it takes committed groups like the For All Kids and all the wonderful organizations it supports. So again, thank you all for this great honor. And thank you even more for what you are doing every day to help so many young lives to blossom.

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FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE EVENT
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
December 2, 1998

Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to join New York's First Lady, Libby Pataki; Hon. Howard Safir (New York Police Commissioner and PAL Honorary President); Robert McGuire , former Police Commissioner and President of PAL); luncheon co-chairs Barbara Taylor Bradford and Patricia Fili-Krushel; and so many other distinguished supporters of PAL who have done so much to improve the lives of our children.

I want to start by thanking all of you for this special award. It means a great deal to me to be honored by an organization I admire as much as PAL. For nearly 85 years, PAL programs have helped generation after generation of children reach their highest potential. From Althea Gibbs, the first African American woman tennis star, to former New York City Police Commissioner Ben Ward, to the actor Jimmy Smits -- the roster of people who have participated in PAL reads like a Who's Who in America.

And we know that countless girls and boys here in New York and across America have benefited from PAL programs in ways too numerous to mention.

I want to talk to you for a minute today about how important I believe these programs are for the future of our children, and the future of our nation in the 21st Century. But before I do, I want to acknowledge and thank a few wonderful people who are here today.

First, I want to thank Robert Morgenthau for his years of commitment to the young people of New York. I want to thank PAL's Director of Development, Jami Landi, for everything she does to give the children of this city a better chance for a brighter future. I am very proud to share this honor today with Anne Fuchs and Andrea Jung -- in ways large and small, public and private, you are making an incredible difference in the lives of our children.

I also want to thank Liz Smith for using the power of her very public voice to draw our attention to so many important issues -- from after school programs to AIDS education and prevention.

And it is always a thrill to see my good friend Whoopi Goldberg -- although we're appearing together so often lately, we really are becoming quite a "sister act."

We are all here today because we share a goal: to keep our children safe and to give them the tools they need to succeed in life. Meeting this challenge has never been more difficult. Every day when the school bell rings at 3 o'clock, 15 million children with working parents grab their backpacks, slam their lockers shut, and leave the classroom behind. But where do they go? As all of you know, it is a worry that confronts every working parent in this country.

We know that most juvenile crime happens after school when parents aren't around -- and our children are at greatest risk of becoming victims of violent crime when school lets out for the day. But we also know that children who have something positive to do after school are less likely to get in trouble and more likely to stay in school.

In my travels around the country, I have heard from hundreds of parents, teachers, police officers, and kids themselves, and they all agree: when we give our children something to say yes to, it is much, much easier for them to say no to crime, and drugs, and gangs.

That is why programs like PAL are so vitally important. PAL community centers -- like the brand new one here in New York City's South Bronx -- are alive with activity. I'm particularly pleased that Center has a new computer lab and comprehensive library.

Kids come to these PAL centers not only for sports, but for help with homework, for special classes in art and music, for job training and mentoring. I have heard young people call these centers “a second home,” and it isn’t hard to understand why they feel that way. While there is no substitute for good parenting, in these days of working families, it really does take all of us to help raise a child -- and PAL is very much a part of our national effort to give our children that advantage.

We also know that when initiatives like this one -- which are at the core of our prevention strategy -- are matched with accountability measures like zero tolerance policies and community policing -- that children are not only better off. Crime and violence goes down. I know that crime in New York has dropped 33% since 1992 -- and I believe all of you here today should take some measure of credit for that progress.

I want to leave you with a wonderful story I recently heard about a little boy who came to PAL for help some years ago. He was already 10 years old, but he couldn't read. He was falling behind in school and worried that he would never catch up. If he hadn't found PAL, his fears may have come true. Instead, with the help of a PAL tutor, he learned to read ... and did he ever learn to write. Today, he is a successful author of mystery novels -- one of my favorite forms of escapism! His name is Tom Adcock, and he is with here us today.

Every one of our children has the same spark of possibility -- the same potential to realize his or her dreams. It is up to us to nurture those God-given gifts and to help our children to make the most of their lives. PAL is leading the way, and I thank you all for the work you do and will continue to do in the days ahead. And once again, I thank you for the honor of this award.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Annual National Conference of La Raza
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
July 20, 1998

Thank you, Administrator Alvarez, for that kind introduction. But more than that for the work that you and your colleagues at the Small Business Administration are doing every day to expand the circle of economic opportunity for all Americans.

It is indeed a great honor and pleasure for me to join all of you today -- at this annual gathering of the National Council of La Raza. For 30 years, your voices for freedom and equality for justice and inclusion have resonated across this nation. Every single significant social crusade of the last half century -- from voting rights to the expansion of educational opportunities, to fair housing and immigration reform and civil rights, and so much else -- has one thing in common -- the stamp of La Raza . Your values -- your family, community, self reliance; responsibility; those are not just La Raza's values, those are America's values. I thank you for standing up for them year after year.

I especially want to join in applauding your leader. You know, it is hard to think of enough superlatives(?) to apply to your president. Raul Yzaguirre has had the courage, the vision, and the passion for equality; which has led La Raza for nearly a quarter century. Even though Raul traces his family roots in Texas back to the 1720s -- far before I could trace my American roots -- as a child he was forced to carry an identity card with him at all times as proof of his American citizenship. His story is the story of so many Hispanic Americans, who have turned obstacles and challenges into opportunities and hopes fulfilled -- and like so many others he has inspired so many young people to do the same. He has been a tireless voice in promoting greater educational opportunities for Hispanic children -- serving as the chairperson of President Clinton's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans. I believe, not just Hispanic Americans, but every American owes him a great debt of gratitude.

I also want to acknowledge the outstanding work of your outgoing chair, Irma Flores Gonzales. Thank you very much for what you have done on behalf of La Raza. I want to welcome the incoming chair. Around the White House he is refereed to as Janet's older brother, but you him as a very accomplished Ramon Murguia -- who will be becoming the chair and will be leaving La Raza in June of next century.

The theme of this conference is so appropriate: "Honoring the Past: Forging our Future." Isn't it _____ that you would gather here in Philadelphia, where more than 200 years ago, people responded to the ringing of the Liberty Bell -- and came to hear for the first time the words of the Declaration of Independence. This is where a few years later, the founders of this nation affixed their signatures to our Constitution, enshrining in law the principles of liberty, democracy, and equality. Where we have been committing ourselves -- decade after decade -- to the fulfilling of those principles, by ensuring that the promise of America is a reality for all Americans.

I am delighted to be in a city that recognizes the Constitution with Hispanic Americans. I am pleased that you have so many elected officials from here in Philadelphia and throughout Pennsylvania attending the conference. It is fitted(?) that here in this city where our nation started, we would take _____ about how to honor the past and forge our future. As some of you may know, I am working on behalf of a millennium project sponsored by the White House Millennium Council. I have just returned from a trip that took me from Washington through and New Jersey and to Massachusetts and New York -- where I asked Americans to think about how we save "America's Treasures." Those monuments, the documents, those places that tell our story -- who we are as Americans, what we stand for, and who we want to be. I visited many interesting places from the laboratory of Thomas Edison to the home of Harriet Tubman --who led so many slaves to freedom. I watched proudly as our country made the commitment to save our Star Spangled Banner. This is ... others Seneca nation. I want to make clear that America's history includes every kind of American. It is not only in the places that I've named or visited so far, but it is in the ancient adobe churches in New Mexico, and the San Miguel Mission in Santa Fe.

Our history is in the lives of efforts and accomplishments of Hispanic Americans. Some of them are famous in this nation we honor, some of them are only known to their families and generations that have gone on. We need to be sure that as we take stock of our past, as we honor our past, we ensure that every American appreciates the many contributions of Hispanic Americans. Just think of where this country would be -- who would be shut out by our system, without the pioneering legal work of Mario Obledo -- who helped pulled down so many of the barriers of discrimination throughout the Southwest. Who could imagine America's struggle for human freedom and dignity without thinking about Cesar Chavez, and his courageous crusade on behalf of the poor and the dispossessed?

As I continue my work on behalf of staging "America's Treasures, I look forward to bringing to public attention many of the treasures that many of the natives from our Hispanic past that need to be included ... for all Americans to know we are part of ...past and...future. History is still being made. What countries might still be at war, or torn apart by fear and hatred, without the work of United Nations Ambassador, Bill Richardson -- and all that he has done to make our country and our world a safer place? We hope that Bill Richardson will be the next Secretary of Energy, and I hope that happens soon so that he could bring his talent to a number of very important tasks in our country. Think about the talents of Cabinet members like Administrator Alvarez or Henry Cisneros or Frederico Peña. Many others, who in this Administration are making history themselves.

I ... understanding that ... introduction of a number of the people who are in the audience with us today. I couldn't possibly mention all of them, but I must mention a few because of my personal relationship with them. Maria Echaveste has been a _____ of mine for more than 15 years. I recruited her into the campaign in 1992 -- I'm not sure she knew exactly what she was getting into. She grew up in California -- the child of farm workers -- and because of her extraordinary achievements -- first in the Department of Labor, then in the White House -- she is now the Deputy Chief of Staff for the President of the United States and she briefs the President every morning on what is going on in our country and the world.

As _____ just said, I care deeply about the state of our children and young people and I

was delighted that last Friday the President announced his intention to nominate Patricia Montoya as the commissioner for Children, Youth and Families at HHS. She will be overseeing Head Start, welfare, child support enforcement, and other issues critical to the health and well being of all of America's children.

I also am proud that this President is committed to making his administration reflect the diversity of our country. That means that he's not only placed Hispanics at the highest level of his Administration -- but has also appointed more Hispanics to the federal bench than the past 2 presidents combined. He's had 12 years to do it, and he has done it in five and a half years. Yet the Senate -- as many of you know all too well -- has refused to act on many of these appointments. That means that every day that goes by, our Judicial system and Americans are deprived of the skills of people like Sonia Sotomayer -- up for the Court of appeals in the 2nd Circuit, Richard Paez -- nominated for U.S. Court of appeals in the 9th circuit, and Jorge Rangel -- nominated for the court of Appeals in the 5th Circuit. Let's ask and put the qualified Americans into their position so that they can begin to administer justice for all Americans --and that means I hope that the Senate acts quickly to confirm these extraordinary nominees and give them the positions they are entitled and qualified for.

Now many of you know, it's certainly becoming the topic of some national discussion, that the Latino community is the fastest growing ethnic group in our nation. A recent report confirms that there are now over 10 million Hispanic children under 18 -- and soon -- as early as seven years from now -- Hispanics will become the nation's largest minority group. Now that's very exciting news but it also suggests some challenges and opportunities that can only be taken by those of you who are her today and the people you represent. Never before have you been in a stronger position to work to improve the future of your families, your community, and your nation. Never before -- as we move towards this new century and millennium -- has education been so critical to fulfilling that future.

*I hope that the long relationships and the friendships dating back many years; that Hispanic families have long recognized the importance of education as the gateway to

opportunity;* and that when education is married to responsibility, it does become the recipe for the American dream. I also know that for too many of our young people --living in inner cities or barrios throughout our country -- that dream is not yet a living reality in their lives. They do not yet respond to the call of action “Leer es poder.” It is that call to action that we must continue to repeat over and over again -- reading is power, education is power. Without it you cannot possibly be successful whether you are Hispanic American, African American, Asian American or any other kind of American, because the 21st century will be ruthless. It is a demand that all of us do what we can to get the education and skills necessary to compete in the global economy.

I have seen first hand and I know that so many of the lives here, if we turn out the lights and ask people to stand and tell their story, we would be here for a week. There are so many stories about parents who sacrificed, how great parents encouraged, how siblings did everything possible to make sure that every child in their family would get the education necessary.

I know first hand about the story of one of my top aides -- Patti Solis-Doyle. She has worked with me ever since 1991. She comes from my home town in Chicago, where she was born to Mexican immigrant parents in a poor neighborhood -- one of six children. Her mother only made it through sixth grade. And her father had only a 3rd grade education, but he understood the importance of making sure his children were educated, he held down 3 jobs from time to time. Both of Patti's parents were proud to become American citizens and determined to take advantage of the opportunities this country offered. They believed -- and it is still as true today as it was years ago in their house in Chicago, that education was the key to a better life. Patti's father would say over and over again to each of his children: “you must always value yourself.” Your values must be enhanced by the education you can achieve for yourself.

Patti went on to college and leads a productive life, holds down a very important position. She recently had her own child -- and she will pass on that same love of learning as her parents did for her. Yet we know in a recent report from her that is not happening in every family even today. The good news that just came out in a report of educational attainment is that African American students are now graduating from high school at the same rate as Caucasian

Americans. Latino children are still dropping out. You know better than I do the cultural and familial reasons why children still drop out. You know better than I how we must do everything in our power to reach every family -- every mother and father -- to persuade them to stand behind their children's education as Patti Solis' parents stood behind hers. It may take three jobs, it may mean stretching very skim resources that the family has, but it is an investment in the future. You cannot forge the future in today's world without education.

I know that you are going to release a report this week -- "Latino Education: Status and Prospects" that reveals the seriousness of the education gap that exists today -- and underscores the tremendous urgency for action. The gap of learning and opportunity not only hurts individual young people, and not even just holds back their families, it hurts all of us. It weakens America's chances to make sure every American has a productive future.

How do we forge a future for all Americans, -- when Latino children today are more likely to enter school with significant disadvantages, and less likely to be promoted to the next grade than other children? When today, as many as a third of Latino teenagers drop out of high school, and don't finish college? How do we move forward as a nation, when today, too many of our children are being left behind, deprived of the opportunities they need to participate fully in the growth and prosperity of America?

The report not only lays out the challenges before us, it also offers a blue print for what's working. I want to thank La Raza for bucking the trend that only tells the bad side of the story. There is a lot of good stories out there of schools and teachers and communities coming together to make sure children are educated. I have seen that in my own time -- a few years ago, I visited a school that is ensuring that Latino children succeed-- an elementary school in one of the poorest areas in the San Fernando Valley -- the vast majority of students are Hispanic -- and in the past student achievement was at an all time low.

Finally parents and teachers and business leaders and others in the community who cared about these children and said "enough". We know what will work, we just have to apply ourselves. So they did -- that school became a charter school. The parents and the teachers, they took action. They got rid of the crack house that was down at the corner. They made it possible for parents -- without any education themselves -- to feel welcome in the school, because they'd

show their respect for who they were: the parents of a child. So all of a sudden parents began to come into the school, volunteering their time, everybody worked together. Now there are computers in the classrooms, children wearing uniforms, parents volunteering as tutors, academic achievement have soared and this school has recently been named a National Blue Ribbon School -- the pride of the community.

Now there are many schools like that I could talk about, but there are not enough. That is where we all need to work together. We need to make it clear that children can learn; that all children have talents; that all children can contribute. For years, La Raza has made them a central commitment -- from the enrichment programs you started in the community-based projects, that you work on with AmericCorps and other partners. I believe that we need a partnership in order to improve educational opportunities for our children. I believe that you have shown how to do that. You know as well as I that this is not a matter that should be or can be left to the private marketplace which has never valued poor children ever. We need to be sure we make the public school system work and we need to make sure it works well as the time passes.

I am certainly aware that many people have discovered Hispanic communities. Many leaders have come to talk to you and they have talked to you about an education agenda, and their plans to create more jobs and greater opportunities. But I am reminded of something my mother and father taught me as I was growing up: Watch what they do, not what they say.

Every child in America deserves a world class education. The administration of the President's leadership is pushing such an aggressive education agenda -- that agenda includes 100,000 new teachers. I don't know how many of you have ever taught or spent a lot of time in a classroom in the last few years, but in our poor schools, there are sometimes 30-35, even 40 children demanding the attention of one teacher. In our suburban schools, children are going to school throughout their entire school year in portable bathrooms. If we have more teachers in the classroom, then we as a nation are putting our resources where our rhetoric is. We're saying that we want to be sure that every child gets that attention through a teacher that that child needs. It

is far more important that that child get that attention from a qualified, passionate teacher -- if English is not the child's first language.

The federal government helped hire 100,000 new teachers is similar to what the president did when he said that -- we could lower the crime rate if we put 100,000 new policemen on the streets -- and guess what, he was right. We have now put 76,000 police on the streets, the President has ... to ask balanced budget to ask for the other 24,000. Crime has gone down...low, it is still too high in many places but we are finally on the ... seeing we can work our way out of this problem with the right kind of strategy. There are no ... want the President from completing his plan for 100,000 police on the street. That makes no sense to me. When something is working, let's not change. I have faith and confidence that 100,000 teachers would have the same results in our classrooms.

We also need -- as the President has advocated -- to help build new schools and modernize the old schools. I have been to schools where the classroom is falling down, where the windows are broken, where the restrooms don't work and we expect our children to feel good about themselves -- they know better than that. Those poor children going to those decrepid schools know ... they are not valued, and we need to end that kind of...

The president ... to also end to social promotion; promote more public school choice -- like the charter school I visited in the San Fernando Valley; create higher standards so that all of our youngsters know what they're aiming for, and will continue to open wide the door to college through Pell Grants and Hope Scholarships.

An unprecedented commitment to boost the educational opportunities for Hispanic children. The Clinton Administration has requested more than \$600 million for the Hispanic Education Action Plan. It is a comprehensive new approach that will help Latino youngsters master the basics of reading and math -- and help them -- and their parents-- learn English, finish school, and prepare for college. Now this education agenda cannot be enacted unless Congress voted to enact it. I urge the Congress to make this commitment to educate all of our children -- with a special commitment to educate Hispanic children on the top of our priority list. We cannot wait any longer for Congress to pass and implement a strategy that would work.

These young people -- who are waiting for classrooms that are overcrowded, who are hoping for a chance to engage in public school choice, or go to college if they can afford it -- who have come here from many countries around the world -- know how important it is that they are successful in America. Teaching them English -- as Education Secretary Riley has so often said, is one of the great tasks of nation-building. We want So yes, that means we must strengthen bi-lingual education. Which is why we are committed to doubling federal funds -- from \$25 to \$50 million -- to meet the increasing demands for trained and certified teachers. But we can't afford to enact extreme measures that would simply cut off bi-lingual education, and the opportunity for success that it provides our children.

We are taking other steps as well, to improve educational opportunities for Latino children -- from a toll free line to make it easier for Spanish speaking callers to get the information they need to 200,000 Spanish-language copies of the Education Department's guide -- Getting Ready for College Early.

If we are to forge a future for all, then every college classroom; every corporate board room; every elected body must reflect the diversity that has always made this nation the strongest and most vibrant nation in the world.

If we are to forge a future for all, then every child needs a safe, healthy, stimulating start in life. We know how critical the first three years are for a child's brain development -- and for how that child will grow and learn for a lifetime. That's why this Administration is calling for a major investment in the Early Learning Fund -- seeking to double the number of infants and toddlers in Early Head Start programs -- and proposing the largest investment in quality, affordable child care in our nation's history. And many Latino children will benefit from those programs.

If we are to forge a future for all, then every child in America needs to grow up healthy - and have adequate health care coverage. Yet right now, there are 10 million children without

health care coverage. And I know that Hispanic children remain grossly under represented when it comes to that coverage. This Administration committed \$24 billion in last year's balanced budget -- to provide health care coverage to millions of uninsured children -- and many of those covered will be Latino children.

If we are to forge a future for all, then every family must be able to benefit from the expanding economy. This Administration -- through the Small Business Administration, and the innovative leadership of Administrator Alvarez -- is making that a priority for the Hispanic community. This Administration has created over 12.3 million new jobs -- 40% of which are filled by Hispanics.

If we are to forge a future for all, we must protect the most vulnerable in our society. That means not denying legal immigrants the benefits they've worked for -- and deserve. When the President signed the welfare bill -- he promised to restore the egregious cuts in benefits for legal immigrants made by the Republican Senate. And thanks to the tireless work of so many of you -- he fulfilled that promise. Last year's budget bill provided over \$11 billion to restore SSI and Medicaid benefits to hundreds of thousands of legal immigrants. And last month's Agriculture bill contained over \$800 million to restore food stamps to 250,000 elderly, disabled, and other needy legal immigrants.

If we are to forge a future for all, then we must have a fair and accurate census. According to the Census Bureau -- the 1990 Census missed 8.4 million people -- and Hispanics were undercounted by 5%. As the President has said -- It's not about politics, it's about people. And we need an accurate census to determine who we are-- and what we need-- to prepare all our people for the 21st Century.

This is no time to retreat on our nation's fundamental commitment to education and to economic opportunity. This is no time to forget our common values and shared priorities. Today -- as we face a new century and a new millennium, we are facing a stark choice; will

education be available primarily to those whose families can afford to send their children to college? Will we begin to close the doors of economic opportunity; pull up the ladders that many of us have been fortunate to climb -- because people held us up so we could reach that first rung?

Or will we -- true to our own values and our own history -- recognize that we must continue to invest in our young people and their futures, and be sure that every young person -- whether they live in a border town in Texas or in the heart of inner city Boston -- will have the chance to realize the American dream.

In these times of possibilities and challenges -- we must remember that we are a nation of immigrants; people of diverse beliefs; cultures and opinions; bound together by our common faith in democracy -- and our common commitment to our children. This country has survived and thrived for more than 2 centuries because those who came before us were willing to take risks -- against great odds -- because they believed that there was a better future. "Si lo quieres - si se puede" -- If you want it, it can be done. And we will continue to thrive -- because citizens have always risen to the challenge before us; to pull together; to recognize we are one nation.

All of you here today have risen to that challenge; by putting education and economic opportunity at the top of your agenda; by placing the highest value on civic participation, and ensuring your voices are heard through the power of the ballot box; and by demanding justice and equality for yourselves -- and for all people. Because if we want to redeem the promise of this nation -- started here in Philadelphia over 200 years ago, then we must forge a future in which the Liberty Bell rings for All Americans -- so that every child grows up safe and loved; every child attends a good school, and gains the tools to succeed in the 21st century; every citizen has the opportunity to contribute to their families, and to their nation; and every citizen leads a life of dignity and hope.

That is a future that I know we all seek. And one that I know we will work together to

achieve.

Viva la Raza.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TALKING POINTS
TEAM HARMONY
WASHINGTON, D.C.
MAY 28, 1998**

- Appreciation to public/private partnership of AT&T and Team Harmony Foundation for bringing everyone together today. Thank you to singer Jewel -- for this wonderful music; appreciation to Jon Jennings -- White House Fellow, who together with Reggie Lewis co-founded Team Harmony six years ago. So pleased that Reggie's family is here today.
- Congratulations to the five schools who are this year's Team Harmony award winners -- for their work in racial reconciliation and promotion of diversity in their schools. You are making a real difference in your communities.
- Welcome to all the 3500 students here today from across Maryland, Virginia and DC -- some of whom have traveled for three hours to be with us today.
- What you're doing to change attitudes and break down stereotypes, and open up hearts and minds -- is the most important work we ever do together.
- That's why the President has launched the Initiative on Race -- to help lead the nation in an effort to become One America in the 21st Century. That initiative invites all of us to talk about race; to look for and highlight promising practices; to recruit young leaders like yourselves; and to focus particularly on your generation -- today's young people. Because you are our future leaders -- and you will help shape the world of tomorrow.
- You're learning the most important lessons of your lives: tolerance; respect for others; the ability to reject stereotypes; and the importance of making positive contributions to your school and your communities. We don't learn from looking in the mirror. We learn from talking with and interacting with people who are different from ourselves.
- As Dr. Martin Luther King: "I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be... We are interdependent."
- So many great initiatives going on in your schools, including:
 - * Conflict resolution training;
 - * courses in tolerance and diversity;
 - * painting multi-cultural murals;
 - * reading stories about Africans and Native Americans;
 - * holding roundtables and workshops to talk about diversity;
- Keep challenging yourselves continue to stand against hatred and bigotry -- and celebrate diversity - so that we can become one America in the 21st Century.

**HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
VIDEO REMARKS FOR DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY
1998 THIRD ANNUAL CONGRESSIONAL FORUM
LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
FEBRUARY 25, 1998**

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to welcome you to The Dialogue on Diversity's Third Annual Congressional Forum. Over the past eight years, Dialogue on Diversity has helped advance the economic, political, and social status of women, in large part by promoting honest talk in forums like this one.

Last year at this Congressional Forum, Tipper Gore said one of the greatest challenges for government, in partnership with the private sector, was to promote and develop small businesses, especially those owned by women and minorities. And I'm here to tell you the President is working tirelessly to widen the circle of economic opportunity for all Americans -- especially women and minority entrepreneurs.

Today's topics -- affirmative action, problems at the workplace, and the ever changing role of women -- have all been at the forefront of the President's domestic agenda. Thanks to the work of dedicated members of Congress like Esteban Torres, Patsy Mink, Maxine Waters, Lucille Roybal-Allard, and Loretta Sanchez, the American people are benefitting from a healthier economy, greater educational opportunities, a cleaner environment, and a leaner, more efficient government.

I'd like to congratulate the recipients of this year's Diversity Awards, and all of you who are attending this forum. To Cristina Caballero, founder and president of the Dialogue for Diversity, and to everyone here today: keep up your important work on behalf of women and minority entrepreneurs. As we face the many challenges of a new Millennium, your efforts to expand opportunity and ensure diversity become even more valuable.

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
BUSINESS PHILANTHROPY SUMMIT
WASHINGTON, D.C.
APRIL 7, 1998

It is a great pleasure to be here at this Business Philanthropy Summit -- and to join so many of you in the private sector who have come together today to help secure a brighter future for this city and for the people who live and work here. I want to thank Jaime Gorelick for those kind words, but more importantly for her leadership at Fannie Mae, and her life of public service. She and others we have heard from this morning -- Mario Morino, Billy Shore, and Jerry Lowrie -- are powerful reminders of what can be accomplished when every sector of society commits resources and energy to promote a stronger, revitalized community.

Special appreciation to the two hosts of this event: Greater D.C. Cares, which does such invaluable work in matching thousands of volunteers every year with community service organizations, and the Washington Business Journal -- which is publishing a special business philanthropy guide to spotlight the area's best strategies, volunteer programs, and successful community partnerships. I also want to thank the Fannie Mae Foundation and AT&T for supporting this Summit -- and Jaime Gorelick and Jerry Lowrie for serving as honorary chairs.

This is an historic gathering -- and I want to thank all of the business leaders who have come here this morning. We meet here at a time of true promise and opportunity for our nation's Capital, fueled by renewed economic investments in downtown, explosive growth in technology companies in the greater Washington area, and a growing spirit of civic engagement. By working together, we have a unique opportunity to revitalize this City, and prepare our citizens for the extraordinary challenges of a new Century, and a new Millennium.

This City holds out a unique challenge for those of us who live and work here. This is the seat of the nation's government; the center of its cultural and historical life; a mecca for tourists, and a nerve center for international communications. This is not just the city for our country, but for the world. Shouldn't every citizen of the Capital of the greatest nation on earth have the opportunity to live in safe and thriving communities, with access to good schools, quality child care and health care, good jobs, affordable housing, and an ever expanding circle of opportunity for themselves and their children? The answer -- I'm sure you agree - is a resounding yes.

I'm proud that this Administration, and this President, are playing a pivotal role in helping to revitalize our nation's capital -- and fulfilling the hopes of its citizens. Under last year's Revitalization Act, the federal government helped revamp the City's criminal justice system; eliminated pension liability, increased Medicaid payments -- and expanded funds for school construction and repair. And in January, I joined Cabinet members and Congresswoman Norton in announcing the President's 1999 budget request -- which will include over \$100 million new dollars targeted directly to the District of Columbia. \$50 million will be used to capitalize the National Capital Revitalization Corporation, aimed at dramatically expanding opportunities for public/private partnerships in the area of economic development -- in both the

downtown area and in our neighborhoods.

When I joined the President in a December '97 meeting with this city's leaders -- he ended that session with a promise: "By the time we leave the White House, we want Washington, D.C. to be a far more prosperous and vital city than when we came -- a shining city on the Hill." I believe this Administration's commitment to help lift up those who live, learn, work and visit here is evident in this growing federal support.

And today, I'm very proud to build on that record -- by announcing a \$5 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education, which will keep the doors of 80 D.C. public schools open this summer, so that 20,000 of our young people can take extra academic instruction in reading and math. I can't think of a better way to ensure a brighter future for our nation's capital than by investing in the education of our next generation -- particularly those who are falling behind, or at risk of failing in school.

But the mission of today's Summit is not to talk about what government, or the business community, or the non profit sector can do on their own to revitalize our nation's capital -- but what we can do together -- as partners -- to fulfill the promise of this city -- and unleash the vast potential of the people who live here.

You are absolutely critical to realizing this transformation, and I applaud you for coming here today. Business leaders like yourselves have always been the engines for revitalization and innovation in our communities. In my travels across the country to cities like Cleveland, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Atlanta, I've seen first hand how businesses have become the catalytic partners for downtown renewal, community development, and educational initiatives. Today, I challenge all of you to become full partners in this city's revitalization.

And I'm not just talking about investments in bricks and mortar. The physical renaissance of Washington, D.C. is critical -- and we must focus a great deal of our attention and combined resources to ensure a revitalized downtown. When I met with members of the Downtown Interactive Task Force recently at the White House, I made a personal commitment to do what I could to help them in that mission.

But we must also invest in the heart and soul of this city -- in its neighborhoods and schools, in its local businesses and small enterprises, in its community and volunteer organizations, in its local cultural institutions, and most importantly, in the future of the children who live and learn here. It is for them that we must take up this challenge, and make this commitment to act.

The challenges facing this city are formidable. As this gathering knows so well -- we are surrounded by an economic boom -- particularly in the area of technology and communications industries. Yet many of you in the private sector can't find the skilled workforce you need to fill those jobs, because our schools are failing to give our children the quality of education they need to compete in the global marketplace.

Here in Washington, we continue to be "The Tale of Two Cities." One, the glittering seat of government, and the repository of our nation's cultural and historical heritage. And the other, a city divided along racial and economic lines, where too many families are struggling to find good jobs, decent child care, and safe communities in which to live and raise their children.

It's a public shame that here in our nation's capital, the roofs of our schools are falling in; half of our students are dropping out; a growing number of our children are living in poverty -- and our young people are being robbed of their childhood -- the victims of violence, drugs, and despair, because there is such a dearth of after school programs to keep them safe and stimulated.

It's time for all of us come together to end these inequities; close the gaps of opportunity, and fulfill our promise to the next generation. It's time to join forces to give the children in our nation's capital the opportunity to grow up safe and healthy, ready to learn, and fully prepared to become active citizens of their community and their world.

I've always said that no problem exists that hasn't been solved somewhere, by someone. And like so many of you, I've seen what's possible to achieve when people stop wringing their hands, and use them instead to rebuild communities, and lift up the lives of families and children.

I've been to child care centers in this city where children are loved and read to and given the skills they need to grow and learn. I've visited inner city schools where teachers have the highest expectations for their students. I've seen community lending institutions where banks and businesses are providing small but critical start up loans for local enterprises. And I've met with community and religious grass roots organizations where people are rebuilding the spiritual as well as the physical fabric of their lives, and putting children first.

The good news is, we're already making progress towards a revitalized City -- through public/private partnerships, through the tireless efforts of Washington's non profit community; and through the growing engagement and commitment of the business community. Today, let's recommit ourselves to the principle that no one sector can do this alone. We know it takes sustained collaboration to create sustainable communities.

I recently visited a new shopping center located east of the Anacostia River -- an area of the city that too many had written off for decades. The federal government dedicated more than \$13 million to help create the Good Hope Marketplace. Today, it is owned and operated by the community it serves. The government was the catalyst -- but the local business community was a critical partner. This is the kind of collaboration between the public and private sector that we need to boost economic growth, create more jobs, and help empower city residents to take their destinies into their own hands.

Yet I believe that putting the highest priority on our children will yield the greatest long term benefit for our city, and for our nation. Investing in their education is the single most important investment any of us can make, not only to improve their opportunities to live healthy, productive lives, but to enhance the quality of life -- and the economic potential -- of this city.

We've made significant strides. But we have so far yet to go. Imagine what could be accomplished, for example, if the corporate and business participants at this summit committed to ensuring every child in Washington the opportunity to attend an after school program by the year 2000. The need is clearly there -- only 10% of the city's 47,000 elementary school children -- and none of the middle or high school students -- having access to such programs. The federal partnership is there -- through efforts like the Administration's 21st Century Learning Centers Initiative. And the evidence that giving children a safe, stimulating place after school benefits them both academically and socially -- is there. With a comparatively small commitment of funds -- and large dose of volunteers -- we would watch student achievement levels go up; reading scores increase; attendance soar; parent participation grow; and suspensions plunge.

We invest in what we believe is critical to the future of our cities: in downtown office buildings; in football and baseball stadiums; in cultural institutions; in communication systems. We must enlist that same level of investment in our future leaders -- our children.

We are on the brink of a new century -- and a new millennium. Over the next three years, we have a unique opportunity to take stock of who we are and who we want to be as a nation and as a community. The President has invited all Americans to come together to help "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future" and to leave something meaningful to enrich the generations of tomorrow. To make a gift to the future.

This City has a special role to play in celebrating this milestone in America's history. The year 2000 also coincides with the 200th anniversary of White House -- the first meeting of Congress in the new Capitol, and the bicentennial of the Library of Congress. It's a time to look back with pride at the defining role this city has played in the birth of our nation, and to recognize, once again, the exceptional courage of those who struggled to forge a nation of diverse people into one America. What better opportunity, then, to reach out to the entire community of Washington, D.C., and enlist every government agency, business, institution, and individual as partners in the revitalization of this great city.

I challenge every one of you here today to make a "gift to the future" to the nation's capital. Set a quantifiable goal -- of after school programs established; reading programs created; neighborhoods revitalized; volunteers recruited. And a year from now, let's reconvene -- to take stock of our progress -- and to build upon it. As we enter the year 2000 -- I want all of us to be able to say: we did more than envision a brighter future for this city -- one worthy of this nation's founding ideals of equality and ever expanding opportunity. We sparked the beginning of the fulfillment of that pledge -- particularly for the leaders of the next generation -- our children.

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
BUSINESS PHILANTHROPY SUMMIT
WASHINGTON, D.C.
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It is a great pleasure to be here at this Business Philanthropy Summit -- and to join so many of you in the private sector who have come together today to help secure a brighter future for this city and for the people who live and work here. I want to thank Jamie Gorelick for those kind words, but more importantly for her leadership at Fannie Mae, and her life of public service. She and others we have heard from this morning -- Mario Morino, Billy Shore, and Jerry Lowrie -- are powerful reminders of what can be accomplished when every sector of society commits resources and energy to promote the common good.

Special thanks to the two hosts of this event: Greater D.C. Cares, which does such invaluable work in matching thousands of volunteers every year with community service organizations (David Bradt Jr., chair; and Elizabeth Miller, executive director). Appreciation to co-host Washington Business Journal -- which I know is publishing a special business philanthropy guide to spotlight the area's best strategies, volunteer programs, and successful community partnerships. I also want to thank the Fannie Mae Foundation and AT&T for underwriting this Summit -- and John McIlwain and Jerry Lowrie for serving as honorary chairs.

This is an historic gathering -- and we meet at a special moment in the history of our nation's Capital. We're entering a period of great promise and opportunity -- fueled by renewed economic investments in downtown, explosive growth in technology companies in the greater Washington area, and by growing progress in key areas like the public schools. Perhaps more than at any time in the past three decades -- we truly can generate real and sustained change.

This City holds out a unique challenge for those of us who live, and work, and visit here. This is the seat of the nation's government; the center of its cultural and historical life; a mecca for tourists, and a nerve center for international communications. This is not just the city for our country, but for the world. Yet the greatest resource of our nation's capital has always been its people -- and it's their prosperity and well being, their ability to lead independent, productive lives, and their capacity to meet the challenges of the next century, by which we truly gauge our progress. Together, we must ensure that Washington's residents realize what every American yearns for: to live in safe and thriving communities, with access to good schools, quality child care and health care, good jobs, affordable housing, and an ever expanding circle of opportunity for themselves and their children.

I'm proud that this Administration is playing a pivotal role in helping to revitalize our nation's capital -- and fulfilling the hopes of its citizens. Last year, under the Revitalization Act, the federal government helped revamp the City's criminal justice system; eliminated pension liability, increased Medicaid payments -- and expanded funds for school construction and repair. And in January, I joined Cabinet members and Congresswoman Norton in announcing the President's 1999 budget request -- which will include over \$100 million new dollars targeted directly to the District of Columbia -- to ensure that this city has the resources

and support to continue to grow and flourish in the next century. \$50 million will be used to capitalize a local economic development corporation -- which will open up greater opportunities for the business community to become full partners in revitalizing not only our downtown area but our neighborhoods as well. With this new budget, the Administration's commitment to help lift up those who live, learn, work and visit here is continuing to grow -- with a renewed focus on our schools, transportation, management, and our world class cultural institutions -- and on the entire nerve center of DC -- our downtown.

But this Summit -- and our collective mission here today -- is to reach beyond what government can and should do to revitalize our nation's capital. We're here to talk about how every sector of our society -- especially the city's business community -- can help fulfill the promise of this great city -- and unleash the vast potential of the people who live here, particularly our children.

The people in this room are absolutely critical to realizing this transformation. Business has always been the engine for revitalization and innovation in our communities. In my travels across the country to cities like Cleveland, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Atlanta, I've seen first hand how the private sector has become the catalysts for downtown renewal, community development, and educational initiatives. Today, I challenge all of you -- the leaders of Washington's business community -- to become those catalysts for progress.

And here, I'm not just talking about investments in bricks and mortar -- although the physical revitalization of this City -- particularly its downtown -- is of upmost importance. I'm also talking about investing in the heart and soul of this city -- in its neighborhoods and schools, in its local businesses and small enterprises, in its community and volunteer organizations, in its local cultural institutions, and most importantly, in the future of the children who live and learn here. It is for them that we must take up this challenge, and make this commitment to act.

Many of you here today were at last year's Summit on America's Future in Philadelphia -- and I understand today's summit is the result of that call to action to ensure America's young people have the essential resources they need to grow and learn and thrive in the 21st Century. It's that same spirit of coming together -- across the lines that too often divide us -- and that same act of reaching out -- to those who are still standing on the sidelines -- that we seek to reaffirm here today.

The challenges facing this city are formidable -- as this gathering knows so well. But we also know that no problem exists -- here in Washington or around the globe -- that hasn't been solved somewhere, by someone. And like so many of you, I've seen what's possible to achieve when people stop wringing their hands, and use them instead to build communities, and lift up the lives of families and children.

Here in Washington, I've visited child care centers where children are loved and read to and given the skills they need to grow and learn. I've visited schools in inner city neighborhoods where teachers have the highest expectations for their students -- and where parents and community groups have come together to ensure these young people have a safe, stimulating

learning experience. I've visited community lending institutions where banks and businesses have joined together to provide critical start up loans for local enterprises. And I've visited community and religious grass roots organizations where people are rebuilding the spiritual as well as the physical fabric of their lives, and putting children first.

But as all of us here know so well -- those success stories are too often the exception, not the rule. Here in Washington, we continue to be "The Tale of Two Cities." One, the glittering seat of government, and the repository of our nation's cultural and historical heritage. And the other, a city divided along racial and economic lines, where too many families are struggling to find quality health care they can afford; too many parents can't find the child care they need to succeed at home and at work; and too many children are not getting the world-class education they need to fulfill their dreams -- and compete in a global world.

It's a public shame that here in our nation's capital, the roofs of our schools are falling in; half of our students are dropping out; a growing number of our children are living in poverty -- almost half -- and too many of our young people are being robbed of their childhood -- the victims of violence, drugs, and despair.

It's time to end these inequities. It's time to close the gap of opportunity. It's time to fulfill the promise of this great democracy. It's time to give the children in our nation's capital the opportunity to grow up safe and healthy, ready to learn, and fully prepared to become active citizens of their community and their world.

The good news is: we're already making progress toward that goal -- through public/private partnerships, through the tireless efforts of Washington's non profit community; and through the growing engagement and commitment of the business community.

Whether it's Greater DC Cares, which provides trained volunteers to hundreds of non profit organizations citywide; or our nationally recognized community development corporations, which are expanding affordable housing and bringing back businesses and jobs; or church-based organizations like the Washington Interfaith Network and the Church Association for Community Services, where congregations are reaching out beyond their sanctuaries to serve the communities around them -- these efforts, and so many others, are drawing on the resources of the community, and are making a difference. They are "investment worthy" in every sense.

To me, the keys to building strong families and vibrant communities, are partnerships and a spirit of collaboration. Partnerships between the public and private sector; partnerships between community groups and local institutions; partnerships between citizens and their neighborhood schools, libraries, and cultural institutions. We need to recommit ourselves to the principle that no one sector can do this alone. It takes sustained collaboration to create sustainable communities.

I recently visited a new shopping center located east of the Anacostia River -- an area of the city that too many had written off for decades. The federal government dedicated more than \$13 million to help create the Good Hope Marketplace. Today, it is owned and operated by the

community it serves. The government was the catalyst -- but the local business community was a critical partner. This is the kind of collaboration between the public and private sector that we need to boost economic growth, create more jobs, and help empower city residents to take their destinies into their own hands.

Yet I believe that putting the highest priority on our children -- ensuring they have the opportunities to live up to their God-given potential, and the skills to compete in the 21st Century -- will yield the greatest long term benefit for our city, and for our nation. And I sense, as I hope you do, that there's a growing public will and determination to make that kind of investment. In my visits and meetings in this City over the years, I've seen what's already been achieved -- often against the odds -- when all sectors of the community come together on behalf of children and families.

We've made significant strides. But we have so far yet to go. Imagine what could be accomplished, for example, if the corporate and business participants at this summit committed to ensuring every child in Washington the opportunity to attend an after school program by the year 2000. The need is clearly there -- only 10% of the city's 47,000 elementary school children -- and none of the middle or high school students -- having access to such programs. The federal partnership is there -- through efforts like the Administration's 21st Century Learning Centers Initiative. And the evidence that giving children a safe, stimulating place after school benefits them both academically and socially -- is there. With a comparatively small amount of funds -- and large dose of volunteers -- we would watch student achievement levels go up; reading scores increase; attendance soar; parent participation grow; and suspensions and despair plunge.

We invest in what we believe is important to the future of our cities: in downtown office buildings; in football and baseball stadiums; in community and cultural institutions; in transportation and communication systems. We must, as a city and as a business community -- enlist that same level of creativity, time and resources to improving the future prospects of our children. Because if there's one lesson we've learned, it's that when children and families thrive, communities prosper, and our nation continues to flourish.

We are on the brink of a new century -- and a new millennium. Over the next three years, we have a unique opportunity to take stock of who we are and who we want to be -- not only as individuals and families, but as communities and as a nation. The theme we have chosen for the Millennium is Honor the Past, Imagine the future, and the President has invited all Americans to leave behind something meaningful to enrich the generations of tomorrow -- to make a gift to the future.

This City has a special role to play in celebrating this milestone in America's history. The year 2000 also coincides with the 200th anniversary of the first inhabitant of the White House -- the first meeting of Congress in the new Capitol, and the bicentennial of the Library of Congress. It's a time to look back with pride at the defining role this city has played in the birth of our nation, and to recognize, once again, the exceptional courage of those who struggled to forge a nation of diverse people into one America. What better opportunity, then, to reach out to the entire community of Washington, D.C., and enlist every government agency, business,

institution, and individual to participate in the revitalization of this great city -- and in the fulfillment of this nation's enduring promise of a brighter future for our children.

We already know what is required to lift up our neighborhoods, revitalize our downtown area, and create safe and stimulating learning environments for our children. We don't need another study. We don't need more model programs. Our children can't afford to wait any longer. What we do need are partnerships that work. What we do need is a sustained investment in the human and well as economic capital. But most importantly, we need leadership and the will to act. Is the leadership and will in this room? I believe it is.

I challenge every one of you here today to make a "gift to the future" to the nation's capital. Set a quantifiable goal -- of after school programs established; reading programs created; neighborhoods revitalized; volunteers recruited. And a year from now, let's reconvene -- to take stock of our progress -- and to build upon it. As we enter the year 2000 -- I want all of us to be able to say: we did more than envision a brighter future for this city -- one worthy of this nation's founding ideals of equality and ever expanding opportunity. We sparked the beginning of the fulfillment of that pledge -- particularly for the leaders of the next generation -- our children.

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It is a great pleasure to be here at this Business Philanthropy Summit -- and to join so many of you in the private sector who have come together today to help build a brighter future for this city and for the people who live and work here. I want to thank Jamie Gorelick for those kind words, but more importantly for her leadership at Fannie Mae, and her life of public service. She and others we have heard this morning -- Mario Morino, Billy Shore, and Jerry Lowrie -- are powerful reminders of what can be accomplished when every sector of society commits resources and energy to promote a stronger, revitalized community. I'm also very pleased to see some very distinguished friends of this nation's capital here today, Senator Jim Jeffords and Congresswoman Norton. ~~Go~~ Connie Maxwell

Special appreciation to the two hosts of this event: Greater D.C. Cares, which does such invaluable work in matching thousands of volunteers every year with community service organizations, and the Washington Business Journal -- which is publishing a special business philanthropy guide to spotlight the best strategies, volunteer programs, and successful community partnerships. I also want to thank the Fannie Mae Foundation and AT&T for underwriting this Summit -- and Jamie Gorelick and Gerald Lowrie for serving as honorary chairs.

This is an historic gathering, and I want to thank all of the business leaders who have come here this morning. We meet here at a time of true promise and opportunity for our nation's capital -- fueled by renewed economic investments in downtown, explosive growth in technology and communications companies, and a growing spirit of civic engagement. By working together, we have a unique opportunity to revitalize this City, and to prepare our citizens for the extraordinary challenges of a new Century, and a new Millennium.

This City holds out a unique challenge for those of us who live and work here. It is the seat of the nation's government; the center of its cultural and historical life; a mecca for tourists, and a nerve center for international communications. This is not just the city for the country, but for the world. And I'm sure you would agree that every citizen of the Capital of the greatest nation on earth should have the opportunity to live in a safe and vibrant community, with good schools, access to quality child care and health care, good jobs, affordable housing, and an ever widening circle of opportunity for themselves and their children.

I'm proud that this Administration is playing a significant role in helping to fulfill this challenge of rebirth for our nation's capital. Last year, under the Revitalization Act, the federal government began to revamp the City's criminal justice system; eliminated pension liability, increased Medicaid payments -- and expanded funds for school construction and repair. And in January, I joined Cabinet members and Congresswoman Norton in announcing the President's budget request for fiscal year 1999 -- which will include over \$100 million new dollars targeted directly to the District of Columbia. \$50 million will be used to capitalize the National Capital Revitalization Corporation, aimed at dramatically expanding opportunities for public/private partnerships to revitalize both the downtown area and the city's neighborhoods.

I believe my husband's and this Administration's commitment to help lift up those who live, learn, work and visit our nation's capital is evident in this growing federal support and engagement.

So today, I'm very pleased to announce that we are building on that record with a \$5 million dollar grant from the U.S. Department of Education. And I'm particularly pleased that Senator Jeffords and Congresswoman Norton, who have been such powerful voices on behalf of the people of this city -- are with us for this announcement. These funds will be used to keep the doors of 80 D.C. public schools open this summer, so that 20,000 of our young people can take extra academic instruction in reading and math. I can't think of a better way to ensure a brighter future for our nation's capital than by investing in the education of our next generation, particularly those at risk of falling behind or failing. This new initiative will support intensive efforts already underway in the District to help boost academic achievement -- and to involve more parents and community members in the enrichment of our young people's education.

And that's what today's summit is all about: what we can do together, as partners, to fulfill the promise of this city, and to unleash the vast potential of the people who live here.

As Washington's top business leaders, you are absolutely critical to realizing this transformation, and I applaud you for coming here today. Leaders like yourselves have always been the engines for revitalization and innovation in our communities. In my travels across the country to cities like Cleveland, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Atlanta, I've seen first hand how businesses have become the catalytic partners for downtown renewal and community development. Today, I challenge all of you to become those catalysts for change in our nation's capital.

And here, I'm not just talking about investments in bricks and mortar. The physical renaissance of Washington D.C. is critical -- and we must focus a great deal of our attention and combined resources to ensure a revitalized downtown. When I met with members of the Downtown Interactive Task Force recently at the White House, I pledged to do what I could to help them fulfill that mission.

But we must also invest in the heart and soul of this city -- in its neighborhoods and schools, in its local businesses and enterprises, in its community and volunteer organizations, and most importantly, in the future of the children who live and learn here. It is for them that we must take up this challenge, and make this commitment to act.

The challenges facing this city are formidable. As this gathering knows so well, we are surrounded by an economic boom. Yet many of you in the private sector can't find the skilled workforce you need to fill those jobs, because our schools are failing to give our children the skills they need to compete in the global marketplace.

Here in Washington, we continue to be “The Tale of Two Cities,” one the glittering seat of government and the repository of our nation’s cultural and historical heritage. The other, a city divided along racial and economic lines, where too many families are struggling to find good jobs, decent child care, and safe communities in which to live and raise their children.

It’s a public shame that here in our nation’s capital, the roofs of our schools are failing in; half of our students are dropping out; a growing number of our children are living in poverty, and too many of our young people are being robbed of their childhood, the victims of violence and drugs.

It’s time for all of us to come together to end these inequities; close the gaps of opportunity, and fulfill the promise to the next generation. It’s time to join forces to give the children in our nation’s capital the opportunity to grow up safe and healthy, ready to learn, and fully prepared to become active citizens of their community and their world.

I've always said that no problem exists that hasn't been solved somewhere, by someone. And like to many of you, I've seen what's possible to achieve when people stop wringing their hands, and use them instead to rebuild communities, and lift up the lives of families and children.

I've visited child care centers here in DC where children are being loved and read to and given the skills they need to succeed. I've visited inner city schools where teachers have the highest expectations of their students. I've visited community lending institutions where banks and businesses are providing small but critical start up loans for local enterprises. And I've met with community and religious grass roots organizations where people are rebuilding the spiritual as well as the physical fabric of their lives, and putting children first.

The good news is, we're already making progress toward a revitalized city, through public/private partnerships, through the tireless efforts of Washington's non profit community, and through the growing engagement and commitment of the business community. We know it takes sustained collaboration to create sustainable communities. And here, I want to commend the organizers of this Summit for the focus on "best practices" and model programs and partnerships that work.

I recently visited one of those model initiatives -- a new shopping center located east of the Anacostia River -- an area of the city that too many had written off for decades. The federal government dedicated more than \$13 million to help create the Good Hope Marketplace. Today, it is owned and operated by the community it serves. The government was the catalyst -- but the local business community was a critical partner in this community development initiative. This is the kind of public/private collaboration we need to boost economic growth, create more jobs, and empower city residents to take their destinies into their own hands.

Yet I believe that putting the highest priority on our children will yield the greatest long term benefit for our city, and for our nation. Imagine what could be accomplished, for example, if the corporate and business participants at this summit committed to ensuring every child in Washington the opportunity to attend an after school program by the year 2000. The need is there. The partnership with the federal government is there, through efforts like the Administration's 21st Century Learning Centers initiative. And the evidence that giving children a safe, stimulating place after school benefits them both academically and socially is there. With a comparatively small commitment of funds -- and a large does of volunteers - - we would watch student achievement go up; reading scores increase; attendance soar; parent participation grow, and suspensions and despair plunge.

We are on the brink of a new century, and a new millennium. Over the next three years, we have a unique opportunity to take stock of who we are and who we want to be as a nation and as a community. The President has invited all Americans to come together to help "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future," and to leave something meaningful to enrich the generations of the tomorrow.

I challenge every one of you here today to make a "gift to the future" to the nation's capital. Set a quantifiable goal -- of after school programs established; reading programs created; neighborhoods revitalized; volunteers recruited. And a year from now, let's reconvene, to take stock of our progress, and to build upon it. As we enter the year 2000, I want all of us to be able to say: we did more than envision a brighter future for this city -- one worthy of this nation's founding ideals of equality and ever expanding opportunity. We sparked the beginning of the fulfillment of that pledge here today -- by investing not only in the revitalization of our city -- but in a brighter future for the next generation, our children.



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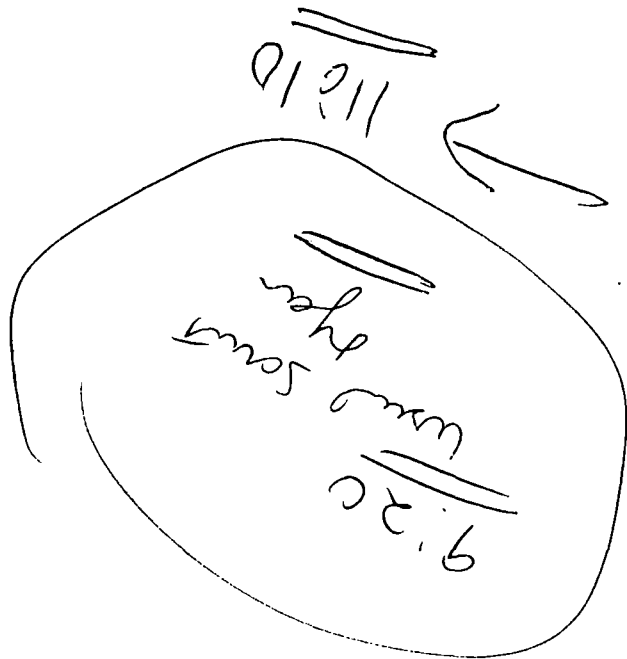
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To: Christine N. Macy/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject:

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. I want to talk with you today about how we can make this glorious spring a season of service all across America. As I have said many times, the era of big government may be over, but the era of big challenges for our nation is surely not. Citizen service is the main way we recognize that we are responsible for one another. It is the very American idea that we meet our challenges not through heavy-handed government or as isolated individuals, but as members of a true community, with all of us working together.



HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO EXTEND NATIONAL SERVICE LEGISLATION
CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
MARCH 19, 1998

It's a pleasure and honor to join Senator Barbara Mikulski, Representatives Robert Andrews; Timothy Roemer; Christopher Shays; and Harris Wofford, as we deliver the President's National Service Legislation to Capitol Hill. It's wonderful to stand with such a bipartisan group of Congress people -- and I know it's our shared hope that we can build on this spirit of bipartisanship and pass this critical piece of legislation. I also want to thank Harris Wofford for his lifelong devotion to public service -- as well as his extraordinary leadership of the Corporation for National Service. He's been an inspiration to us all.

We've just heard three powerful stories about what can be accomplished when people -- from all ages and backgrounds -- come together to rebuild their communities, and improve the lives of America's citizens. And thanks to the work of the Corporation for National Service over the past five years -- thousands of citizens with their same spirit of service are transforming lives and communities across the nation.

This week, AmeriCorps members are leading thousands of students who are spending their spring break building homes for low income residents -- in communities from Lynchburg, Virginia to Miami, Florida. This week, in hard hit states like California, young people are working with government agencies and the Red Cross to help families devastated by floods and tornadoes. This week, in communities across the country, Foster Grandparents are working with children with special needs, giving them the skills -- and the attention -- they need to succeed. This week, in inner city neighborhoods around the nation, citizens are tutoring kids, cleaning up streams, helping children get their immunization shots; making neighborhoods safer, and in the process: gaining a new sense of purpose in their lives.

We've put service at the top of the national agenda -- and we want to keep it there. The centerpiece of this Administration's efforts to get things done, bring people together, and help young people go to college -- is the Corporation for National Service, and its three initiatives, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the national Senior Service Corps.

Over the past five years, these National Service programs have developed a proven track record of progress and success -- contributing in very real ways to the most important task facing America today; preparing our citizens for the extraordinary challenges of the future. To fulfill that mission, we must help children and families overcome the many barriers facing them today: poverty, illiteracy and poor health; the lure of tobacco, alcohol and drugs; the pressures to acquire skills to compete in the global economy. And as I've traveled around the country, I've seen first hand, how AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and the national Senior Service Corps, are meeting those needs, turning communities around, and reigniting the spirit of service.

In Philadelphia, I visited an AmeriCorps project in the inner city, where twelve young men and women were rehabbing houses, so that neighbors with low incomes could buy them and begin rebuilding their own lives. Last April, I visited Cardozo High School, here in DC., where AmeriCorps members were spreading the spirit of service -- by helping to paint the school. And this past Martin Luther King Birthday -- a day on, not a day off -- I joined AmeriCorps members as we read to young people at the MCI Center.

I've also talked to teachers and community leaders across the country, participating in Learn and Serve America, who are involving students in service activities that complement their classroom studies. In Minnesota, for example, high school students test the water quality of the St. Louis River as part of their chemistry class. And in New York, nursing students help operate a community health center serving low income residents. These efforts are helping students make the very real connection between service -- and stronger, safer, and healthier communities.

Programs promoted by the Corporation for National Service help solve some of the most difficult problems facing cities and or neighborhood. They also help communities build the capacity to help themselves -- by strengthening already existing local organizations, and recruiting and training part time volunteers. And through these initiatives, we are expanding educational opportunities -- not only for AmeriCorps members, who are earning much needed money for college -- and college loans. But for our young people, who are receiving the invaluable benefits of mentoring, tutoring, and literacy programs.

For me, some of the most powerful arguments to extend and strengthen AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve, and Senior Corps are found not only in the stories of how these efforts succeed in transforming communities -- but how they transform the lives of those who have chosen to serve.

Vanesse Backe postponed medical school to join an AmeriCorps project here in Washington. Her experience changed her professional goal: she's now decided to use her medical knowledge to help under served populations.

Joe Whitlow, a Senior volunteer, has for years inspired and entertained 4-year olds attending a Head Start program in Bellevue, Washington.

Marilyn Concepcion, a high school dropout, joined AmeriCorps in Providence, Rhode Island, and tutored elementary school students English. She earned her GED, gained confidence to apply to college, and is now studying to become a pediatrician at Brown University.

Luis Pizarro, a former gang member and drug dealer, turned his life around by serving as an AmeriCorps member in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. In the same community where he used to deal drugs, he's now helping at-risk kids build self esteem, and find alternatives to joining gangs.

So many of the problems we are facing today, particularly with our young people, can be traced to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. They feel they don't have a positive way of expressing themselves; or contributing to the world around them. They yearn for a sense of

belonging, and a sense of purpose. These programs clearly help empower our young people, and enrich their lives in so many different ways. That's why the President and I participated in the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia last April -- and continue to work with America's Promise, General's Powell's follow-up organization.

As a nation, we are standing on the brink of a new century, and a new millennium. This historic moment offers us an extraordinary opportunity to take stock of who we are, who we want to be, and what values we want to carry with us into the 21st Century. The President has invited all Americans to come together -- to "Honor the Past and Imagine the Future." I hope all of you would agree that promoting the spirit of service -- and expanding the number of people engaged in these activities -- is a way to both honor America's best traditions of the past -- and imagine an even better future.

We know that community service is not a new idea. It's always been a hallmark of American citizenship. Alex de Tocqueville 150 years ago was impressed with how Americans didn't wait for government to act to solve a problem. If a school needed to be built, they built it. If a barn burned down, neighbors would pitch in to raise another. Service has always united us throughout our history. We cannot afford to lessen that commitment now.

Today, as we grapple with the challenges of an increasingly diverse -- and at times divided -- nation, there's even greater urgency to expand the opportunities for public service, so that every child, and every citizen, can reach his or her fullest potential. Service is the lifeblood of our democracy, giving those who participate a sense of responsibility for themselves, for their communities, and for our nation. But we can only reach that goal when everyone believes they have a role to play; and everyone has the opportunity to serve.

As Dr. Martin Luther King once said, "make a career of humanity -- and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in." This spirit of service -- so eloquently expressed by Dr. King so many years ago -- goes to the heart of our efforts to prepare Americans for the 21st Century.

I urge passage of the Corporation for National Service Legislation, and call on members of Congress to provide the bipartisan support we need to pass this legislation -- which is now so critical to our nation's future. Extending national service into the 21st Century will give millions more Americans the opportunity to strengthen their communities, improve the lives of our children, and expand opportunities for learning. We owe it to our children -- and our children's children -- to give them this gift to the future.

As we've seen here today, and in communities across America, people are overcoming their differences, and working hand in hand to improve the quality of life in our cities and communities. I hope that those of us in Washington can come together as well, in that same spirit of partnership, to build a better America in the 21st Century.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR SCREENING OF THE "FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON"
THE WHITE HOUSE
MARCH 5, 1998

~~Social Security~~

acknowledgments

Thank you. I am honored to join the President in welcoming all of you to the East Room of the White House. I would like to begin by thanking everyone who has helped make this evening a reality. Tom Hanks not only conceived of this remarkable series, but also produced, directed, wrote and acted in "From the Earth to the Moon." I also want to thank HBO and its Chairman, Jeff Bewkes [BEUKESS] for the tremendous amount of work they have done to make this series

the whole team at HBO
helping to bring this series to the nation
We are also honored to be joined by John F. Kennedy

(possible) [Also thanks to those who are joining us via the internet.]

Cybercast available over internet

Tonight, we are honoring a time in the not too distant past when our nation came together to forge a common destiny in the heavens. In tonight's presentation, we will witness a remarkable group of Americans who, through hard work, teamwork, and old-fashioned ingenuity, managed to launch men into space, send them to the moon, and bring them safely home again.

and Americans who are tuning in via the internet.

mean

When President Kennedy first proposed that the United States send a mission to the moon, the question his science advisor asked the engineers and scientists working on the space program was, "Can we do this?" The answer, as we will see so vividly tonight, was a resounding "Yes." As in every other period of American history when we faced a difficult test, the citizens of this nation rose to the challenge and triumphed over seemingly insurmountable odds.

had one question for

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Many of us remember where we were when we first landed. Set foot on the moon. We ... Sally Ride.

And

On the eve of the 21st century, we face new challenges and unparalleled possibilities. ^{The question is not just whether we can reach the heavens} As we continue to unlock the mysteries of the heavens, we also seek ^{but what we can discover to} to apply what we've learned to improving the lives of people here on earth. The knowledge we gain from our space ^{upcoming missions} explorations could help us treat diseases ^{like} from osteoporosis to ovarian cancer, or help us make our farms more productive.

Already, space technology is helping English twins, who were born with a rare birth defect, to go outside into the sun for the first time-- in their own protective space suits; technology developed for use in the Space Shuttle Program is now helping to bring health care to people in remote communities of the world; and NASA research is now helping to build structures that can better withstand vibrations -- such as those that occur in earthquakes.

^{entire of us as} This ongoing quest for discovery has inspired us as individuals, and as a nation, to reach new frontiers of knowledge -- and new levels of progress for our people. But America cannot continue to compete successfully in the 21st Century without ensuring our children get the best possible education in math and science. When I was very young, I remember President Eisenhower urging all of us schoolchildren to study more math and science. A successful space program, he said, would require many talented and visionary scientists, engineers, and mathematicians. I took his, and later President Kennedy's words to heart, believing that I could play a part in preparing our country for space exploration ⁱⁿ and the future.

*I can't say I enjoyed every math problem
that took joy in every math problem - but take*

I wish you could have seen the students at Dunbar High School
Today, more than ever, we need our young people to believe they can play a *to day when they met Tom Hanks and Eileen Collins* role in our nation's future in space. This afternoon, I visited Dunbar high school *we had you to talk to the way of study me. 5.* here in the District, along Tom Hanks and Eileen Collins -- *who was named today* as the first woman space shuttle commander. *We wanted to talk to these students* about why challenging themselves in fields like math and science is so important *about B. 5 or Apollo 13* not only to their future, but to our nation's future as well. *But what they wanted to know most was how to afford a college education and then what it took to be a commander.*

That's why I'm so pleased that HBO will be sending over 40,000 educational packets that complement "From the Earth to the Moon" to schools around the country. *Just as we found a way to reach the moon, we can help* Hopefully, by giving students a chance to see the magic of space *goal* exploration, we can encourage them to pursue their studies -- and careers -- in the *all the young people of the magic of space & the courage* fields of math and science. *fools they need to explore the heavens & the courage to reach for the stars*

And now, it's my pleasure to introduce Jeff Bewkes, chairman of HBO. I've heard that Jeff and his wife *Peggy* had a baby last year, and between being a good father and running HBO, Jeff hasn't had much time to get out lately. The President and I are honored that Jeff chose to come to the White House tonight to help us celebrate this remarkable series. It's a pleasure to welcome him this evening.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR THE CEREMONY HONORING
RECIPIENTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL MEDAL OF FREEDOM
JANUARY 15, 1998**

[ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: Secretary Shalala; Secretary Babbitt; Secretary Dalton; Secretary West; Senator Kennedy; Senator Robb; Senator Harkin, Senator Specter; Rep. Holmes Norton; Rep. Matsui; Rep [Joe] Kennedy; Rep Owens; Rep Tauscher; Rep Scott; Rep. Maloney; Mayor Barry]

I'm delighted to welcome all of you to the White House as we pay tribute to 15 men and women who have earned not only the highest civilian honor, but also the thanks of every single American.

It is, of course, appropriate that we hold this ceremony today, on what would have been Dr. Martin Luther King's 69th birthday. For it was Dr. King who taught us that with service, comes greatness. And it was Dr. King who called upon us to fight for freedom by reaching out our hands and opening up our hearts to others.

Almost 30 years ago, at his last Sunday Sermon at the National Cathedral, Dr. King told us: "We are all tied together in a single garment of destiny-- caught in an inescapable network of mutuality." This simple, yet powerful, idea has sustained us as individuals and as a nation. And it has guided the heroes that the President will recognize today.

If we look at all those who have been awarded the Medal of Freedom, their lives and contributions make up some of the most important chapters of the American story. The story of a nation struggling to end the plague of discrimination. The story of Americans working to preserve our culture and our environment. The story of our fight to secure peace abroad and freedom at home. Theirs is really the story of human progress -- a tale of what can be accomplished by the most powerful person in any democracy: a citizen.

I say citizenship because no one asked these distinguished Americans to stand up for those too often left behind. No regulation or law forced them to step up to the plate. They simply choose to act, and in so doing, to further the cause of service and freedom and human dignity that Dr. King dedicated his life to defending.

So, today, we honor ordinary Americans who accomplished extraordinary things. And we honor them not only for who they are, but also for who they inspire all of us to be.

[Introduce the President]

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR SEEDS OF PEACE VIDEO
MAY 6, 1998

I am so thankful to have this opportunity to be part of this extraordinary gathering of young people at the First Middle East Youth Summit. I only wish I could be there in person, to tell you how much I admire your efforts to bring peace and understanding to your communities. I want to thank everyone who has helped bring all of you together -- but especially John Wallach, who has devoted himself to giving you -- the children of war -- the opportunity to plant the seeds of peace. He is an inspiration to us all.

What you are doing at this summit is an extraordinary act of courage. As young people who have grown up surrounded by violence and hatred, you have every reason to think that the problems you face in the Middle East are too great to overcome. Many of you have lost sisters, or brothers, or parents, or grandparents to struggles that are centuries old. Yet you have not lost hope. In fact, you've found the courage to defy history -- and envision a new kind of future.

In your communities -- and now here at this summit -- you have shown the world that hatred is never a solution. That what we all share in common is far greater than what keeps us apart. That understanding each other's histories and cultures, and respecting each other's differences, are the foundations of a just society. That by looking into each others eyes -- we can sometimes touch each other's hearts. Your message is particularly important now -- as the leaders of your nations are struggling to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Through your work with the Seeds of Peace, you know how difficult it is to overcome hatred and misunderstanding. As one Egyptian girl said a few years ago while she was attending a Seeds of Peace camp in the United States: "the first step we have to make right now is not only to want peace for your own people.... You have to really want it, really desire it, for the others." She went on to say that "If you are an Israeli, you have to want for all the Palestinians to feel happy and safe and comfortable. And if you're a Palestinian, you have to want the same thing" for the Israelis.

This girl, and all of you, have already learned the greatest lessons of all. Yet tolerance and understanding, and the ability to come together over the lines that divide us, aren't just the tools of international diplomacy. They are the rules by which we try to live every day -- in our families, in our schools, and in our communities. Because it's only when these values are honored, and are a part of our every day lives, that we will have the strength to turn our communities -- and our nations -- toward justice and peace.

No country is immune from war, or hatred, or violence. Unfortunately, it's all around us, in every corner of the world. But you are offering us a different vision of what the future can hold -- a future where children can live free from violence and conflict; where every citizen can live in dignity; and where every child is able to live up to his or her fullest potential.

My husband, the President of the United States, is working very hard for the just and lasting peace you too are seeking. And I know he joins me in thanking all of you for what you are doing to fulfill that vision of peace not only in the Middle East, but throughout the world.

I look forward to talking with you about what you've learned over the past few days at this summit, and your plans for the future.

REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
DEDICATION OF NEW PEACE CORPS BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C.
SEPTEMBER 15, 1998

Thank you, Mark, for that kind introduction. It's a great pleasure to join you and so many others who have made today possible: the embodiment of the spirit of the Peace Corps himself, Sarge Shriver, and members of his family; returned Peace Corps volunteer and now our Secretary of HHS, Donna Shalala; our friends and supporters in Congress -- some of whom are also returned volunteers; members of the diplomatic corps; returned, current, and future members of the Peace Corps; and friends. I want to thank Mark Gearan again for his tireless efforts to make this day a reality -- but also for his astonishing record of accomplishment. With President Clinton's strong leadership and support, Mark has helped open new Peace Corps programs in South Africa, Jordan, Mozambique, and Bangladesh. Mark has also opened people's hearts, inspiring more people than ever to contact the Peace Corps about serving as volunteers.

It is a particular honor and personal pleasure to be here today with my friend, Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein of Jordan. As you have heard, Queen Noor has long had a personal interest in bringing the Peace Corps to her country -- and last year at the White House, I had the privilege of meeting the first Peace Corps volunteers to serve in Jordan. I was so pleased to hear from Ursula today about what she and the other volunteers are accomplishing over there.

Today, we dedicate a building that will enable our country to support the extraordinary work of the Peace Corps into the 21st Century. Its state-of-the-art technology will help the agency do an even better job of supporting its volunteers overseas -- and its new visitor's center will make it possible for young people in this country to learn more about the Peace Corps experience -- and our multi-cultural world. Perhaps most importantly, we celebrate a building that reflects America's most enduring values: our optimism about the future; the importance of service; the belief that every individual can make a difference -- located in the very heart of our nation's capitol -- where it belongs.

This new building will serve the Peace Corps well into the future. And I just had a brief glimpse of that future -- reflected in the eager faces of the 7th graders I met a few moments ago from D.C.'s Garnett Patterson middle school. They were the first school group to tour this magnificent new building -- thanks in large part to their teacher, Jo Bonney, who was a Peace Corps volunteer in Togo, Africa in the early 1970s, and who has already instilled her spirit of service in her young students. I also saw that future shine in the faces of the Peace Corps volunteers I just met -- who will leave for Malawi tomorrow. And as I always am -- I was so impressed with their extraordinary enthusiasm and commitment to make a difference.

As an example of how the Peace Corps is reaching out to its future leaders, these young 7th graders will be corresponding with the Peace Corps volunteers in Malawi -- as part of the World Wise School program -- aimed at connecting American students with Peace Corps volunteers around the world.

But as all of us here know so well, the Peace Corps would not have such a promising future -- let alone a treasured past -- if it weren't for the man whose name is enshrined in this hall: Sarge Shriver. One of my favorite stories about Sarge was early on -- when he and the other early architects of the Peace Corps were organizing the Agency. He was shown an organizational chart that had him at the top -- followed by various lines that showed who reported to whom. And at the bottom of the chart was the word "volunteer."

When he saw that chart, Sarge immediately turned it upside down -- so the word "volunteer" was at the top. And that's where it's remained ever since. To Sarge Shriver, the Peace Corps has always been about individual volunteers -- bringing their spirit of service to countries around the world -- and then returning home to share what they learned with others. His unswerving commitment to that ideal of service is one of the many reasons why President Clinton awarded him the Medal of Freedom -- our country's highest civilian honor. Today, we honor him again -- by naming this wonderful new room "Shriver Hall."

Over the past six years, I've had the privilege to see firsthand the tremendous difference that our Peace Corps workers are making around the world. In South Asia, South America, and most recently, in Africa, I've met hundreds of volunteers who are bringing hope and progress to individual families and entire communities. In fact, one of the things I enjoy most about my international travels is meeting the Peace Corps volunteers -- you know, those shy, quiet retiring types who just stand there and don't make any noise. You can spot them immediately.

Last year, Chelsea and I met an exceptional volunteer in Tanzania. Trevor Murphy led a class of young girls on a successful climb up Mount Kilimanjaro -- a feat -- as some of you may know -- that requires enormous amounts of preparation, discipline and courage -- and one that few girls in Tanzania every dream of accomplishing. And that trip captures for me what the Peace Corps does so well: giving people from all walks of life the skills and opportunities and encouragement to reach the top of the mountain on their own.

More people deserve to get that opportunity to change people's lives -- and their own. Today, we are here not only to dedicate a new building -- but to launch a new national recruitment drive -- aimed at meeting the goal of 10,000 volunteers serving by the year 2000. I want to commend your new recruitment film that we just saw -- which sends out such a powerful message for why we should be engaged in improving the world around us. I only hope that message will be heard in the Halls of Congress, so that they understand how important it is to support President Clinton's request to strengthen the Peace Corps in the years ahead.

I love the new recruitment theme "How Far Are you Willing to go to Make a Difference?" It reminds me of a young volunteer I met in Kathmandu, Nepal, who told me that to catch the bus that brought her to meet with me, she had walked ten hours from the remote village where she lived in a house without running water or electricity. She described her work at school where nearly all the students were boys -- since most girls were still denied schooling, and were often married by the age of twelve or thirteen.

How far was she -- and so many others -- willing to go to make a difference? Very far indeed. Sometimes it seems that the farther these Peace Corps volunteers travel -- whether that's measured in miles down a dirt road or in distance from their personal comfort zone -- the closer they get to what matters in life. And what matters in life is helping others realize their own power and live up to their own abilities. While every experience is different, each volunteer I've ever talked to agrees: I learned more than I taught; I received more than I gave. And in the process, these volunteers not only contributed to the development of a family, a village; a country -- but to a deeper understanding between Americans and the people of other countries.

The President and I believe that the work that the Peace Corps is carrying out today -- in 80 countries around the world -- has never -- ever -- been more important. We know the forces of globalization can help bring nations together -- or widen the fault lines that keep us apart. What better time to rekindle the spirit of democracy and promote justice in the farthest corners of the globe? What better time to strengthen our common purpose here at home? What better time, in other words, to support and expand the Peace Corps? Deep appreciation to all of you who have gone so far to make a difference. Now, let's recommit ourselves to ensuring this legacy lives on -- even brighter and stronger -- in the 21st Century.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 7, 1993

REMARKS OF THE FIRST LADY
AT LIZ CARPENTER'S LECTURESHIP SERIES

University of Texas
Austin, Texas

3:00 P.M. CDT

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you so much. I am reminded, in following Anne Richards, of that old story of the fellow who died in one of the early Arkansas floods and makes his way to heaven and is met at the gates. And St. Peter says, "Well, you're just in time for our monthly seminar. What do you want to talk about?" The man said, "I want to talk about the most important experience that I have ever encountered. I want to talk about what it is like to be in a flood. I feel like I can make a real contribution to that dialogue." St. Peter says, "Fine. You'll go on after Noah." (Laughter.) So, here we are after Noah. (Applause.)

You know, it is not a common experience for me to be in any Texas athletic facility and feel good about it -- (applause) -- but I must say that now that we're no longer in the same conferences, my state and yours, that I am honored to be -- (laughter) -- in the arena where the Lady Longhorns play. (Applause.) And I also have to say -- and I hope that you feel the same way I did -- I was mighty proud of Texas Tech, too. I thought that was a great victory. (Applause.)

You know, when Liz Carpenter asked me to come speak at her little seminar -- (laughter) -- it was one of those conversations that you have with Liz -- those of us who are lucky enough to know her and call her a friend -- where her enthusiasm just kind of takes over. She said, I'm going to have some of my friends in, we're going to do this lecture. You know, it will be fun. I'll get Anne to come over and Mrs. Johnson will come over, and we'll just have a good old time.

And I had this sort of mental image of being over in one of the small rooms at the LBJ School and sitting with a bunch of my friends, maybe with some students around a table. And then I just

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put it out of my mind. And over the last two weeks, as Liz knows, it's been kind of touch-and-go for me whether I thought I could be here, and I told Liz that I would certainly try. And when it became clearer that I could, I renewed contact with the people who were helping her put this on and was then told that there were going to be thousands, maybe 14,000 people at this event.

And my first response was no, no, no, you must have read it wrong, there's an extra zero in there somewhere. But my second was why would I doubt Liz Carpenter on anything? If she's going to put on a lectureship that's like Anne says, it's going to be a big one and besides it's in Texas. So what do we expect? And I'm just pleased to be part of it. (Applause.)

I also want to say a special word of appreciation to Mrs. Johnson. You know, there is that wonderful old saying about how you never quite know what it's like until you've walked in another person's moccasins. Well, I don't know if you've ever worn moccasins, Mrs. Johnson, but I'm getting a sense of what it is like to try to walk in the footsteps of you and the other women who have been in the position that I now find myself in. And every day that goes by, I am more impressed by the kind of qualities that you and other women in this position have brought to taking care of your personal business on behalf of your family and your husband, and also trying to make your contribution to the country. And all of us in this arena are grateful for the grace and beauty by which you carried out both of those functions and as a wonderful example, not just for me, but for all of us. And I very much wanted to say that to you publicly. (Applause.)

You know, after you hear what I have to say, you'll think that Governor Richards and I not only coordinated outfits but coordinated comments. And I suppose the only thing left for me is to get a hair-do like that. (Laughter.) You know, I'm actually due for a new one and I figure that if we ever want to get Bosnia off the front page, all I have to do is either put on a headband or change my hair and we'll be occupied with something else. (Laughter and applause.)

But what Anne Richards talked about is what I want to expand on in my remarks leading into the panel discussion with all of these distinguished panelists and with questions from many of you that I understand were submitted. Because the problems that she alluded to are not just American problems, they are not just governmental problems. We are at a stage in history, I would suggest, in which remolding society certainly in the West is one of the great challenges facing all of us as individuals and as citizens.

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And we have to begin realistically to take stock of where we are, stripping perhaps away the romanticism that Governor Richards referred to, to be able to understand where we are in history at this point and what our real challenges happen to be.

And I say that it is not just an American problem because if one looks around the Western world, if one looks at Europe, if one looks at the emerging democracies, at Asia, if one looks certainly here in North America, you can see the rumblings of discontent, almost regardless of political systems, as we come face to face with the problems that the modern age has dealt us.

And if we take a step back and ask ourselves, why is it in a country as economically wealthy as we are despite our economic problems, in a country that is the longest surviving democracy, there is this undercurrent of discontent -- this sense that somehow economic growth and prosperity, political democracy and freedom are not enough -- that we lack at some core level meaning in our individual lives and meaning collectively -- that sense that our lives are part of some greater effort, that we are connected to one another, that community means that we have a place where we belong no matter who we are. And it isn't very far below the surface because we can see popping through the surface the signs of alienation and despair and hopelessness that are all too common and cannot be ignored. They're in our living rooms at night on the news. They're on the front pages; they are in all of our neighborhoods.

On the plane coming down I read a phrase in an article in the newspaper this morning talking about how desperate conditions are in so many of our cities that are filled with hopeless girls with babies and angry boys with guns. And yet, it is not just the most violent and the most alienated that we can look to. The discontent of which I speak is broader than that, deeper than that. We are, I think, in a crisis of meaning. What do our governmental institutions mean? What do our lives in today's world mean? What does this economic global event that Governor Richards spoke of mean? What do all of our institutions mean? What does it mean to be educated? What does it mean to be a journalist? What does it mean in today's world to pursue not only vocations, to be part of institutions, but to be human?

And, certainly, coming off the last year when the ethos of selfishness and greed were given places of honor never before accorded, it is certainly timely to ask ourselves these questions. (Applause.)

One of the clearest and most poignant posings of this question that I have run across was the one provided by Lee Atwater as he lay dying. For those of you who may not know, Lee Atwater was

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credited with being the architect of the Republican victories of the '70s and the '80s. The vaunted campaign manager of Reagan and Bush. The man who knew how to fight bare-knuckled in the political arena, who was willing to engage in any tactics so long as it worked and he wasn't caught at it.

And yet, when Lee Atwater was struck down with cancer, he said something which we reprinted in Life Magazine, which I cut out and carry with me in a little book I have of sayings and Scriptures that I find important and that replenish me from time to time that I want to share with you.

He said the following: "Long before I was struck with cancer, I felt something stirring in American society. It was a sense among the people of the country, Republicans and Democrats alike, that something was missing from their lives, something crucial. I was trying to position the Republican Party to take advantage of it. But I wasn't exactly sure what it was. My illness helped me to see that what was missing in society is what was missing in me. A little heart, a lot of brotherhood.

The '80s were about acquiring -- acquiring wealth, power prestige. I know. I acquired more wealth, power, and prestige than most. But you can acquire all you want and still feel empty. What power wouldn't I trade for a little more time with my family? What price wouldn't I pay for an evening with friends? It took a deadly illness to put me eye-to-eye with that true, but it is a truth that the country, caught up in its ruthless ambitions and moral decay, can learn on my dime.

I don't know who will lead us through the '90s, but they must be made to speak to this spiritual vacuum at the heart of American society, this tumor of the soul."*

That to me will be Lee Atwater's real lasting legacy, not the elections that he helped to win. (Applause.)

But I think the answer to his question -- "who will lead us out of this spiritual vacuum" -- the answer is all of us. Because remolding society does not depend on just changing government, on just reinventing our institutions to be more in tune with present realities. It requires each of us to play our part in redefining what our lives are and what they should be.

We are caught between two great political forces. On the one hand we have our economy -- the market economy -- which knows the price of everything, but the value of nothing. That is not its job. And then the state or government which attempts to use its means of acquiring tax money, of making decisions to assist us in

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years is how does one define these new issues. How do we begin to inject some meaning? How do we take old values and apply them to these new -- for many of us -- undreamed of problems that we now confront? And that is what all of us must be engaged in in our own lives, at every level, in every institution with which we interact.

Let me just give you some examples. If we believe that the reconstruction of civil society with its institutions of family, friendship networks, communities, voluntary organizations, are really the glue of what holds us together; if we go back and read deToqueville and notice how he talked over and over again about the unique characteristics that he found among Americans and rooted so many of those in that kind of intermediary institution of civil society that I just mentioned, then we know we have to better understand what we can do to strengthen those institutions, to understand how they have changed over time, and to try to find meaning in them as they currently are.

That's why the debate over family values over the last year, which was devised for political purposes, seemed so off-point. There is no -- or should be no debates that our family structure is in trouble. There should be no debate that children need the stability, the predictability of a family. But there should be debate over how we best make sure that children and families flourish. And once that debate is carried out on honest terms, then we have to recognize that either the old idea that only parental influence and parental values matters, or the nearly as old idea that only state programmatic intervention matters are both equally fallacious.

Instead we ought to recognize what should be a common-sense truth -- that children are the result of both the values of their parents and the values of the society in which they live. And that you can have an important -- (applause) --
(end of side one tape)

(in progress) -- how best to make sure parental values are the ones that will help children grow and be strengthened, and how social values equally must be recognized for the role they play in how children feel about themselves and act in the world. And then we can begin to have what should be a sensible conversation about how to strengthen both. That's the kind of approach that has to get beyond the dogma of right or left, conservative or liberal. Those views are inadequate to the problems we see.

Any of you who have ever been in an inner city, working with young people as I have over the years, will know as I do the heroic stories of parents and grandparents who, against overwhelming odds, fight to keep their children safe -- just physically safe; and

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becoming a better, more equitable society as it defines it. That is what all societies are currently caught between -- forces that are more complex and bigger than any of us can understand. And missing in that equation, as we have political and ideological struggles between those who think market economics are the answer to everything, those who think government programs are the answer to everything, is the recognition among all of us that neither of those is an adequate explanation for the challenges confronting us.

And what we each must do is to break through the old thinking that has for too long captured us politically and institutionally, so that we can begin to devise new ways of thinking about not only what it means to have governments that work again, not only what it means to have economies that don't discard people like they were excess baggage that we no longer need, but to define our institutional and personal responsibilities in ways that answer this lack of meaning.

We need a new politics of meaning. We need a new ethos of individual responsibility and caring. We need a new definition of civil society which answers the unanswerable questions posed by both the market forces and the governmental ones, as to how we can have a society that fills us up again and makes us feel that we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

Now, will it be easy to do that? Of course not. Because we are breaking new ground. This is a trend that has been developing over hundreds of years. It is not something that just happened to us in the last decade or two. And so it is not going to be easy to redefine who we are as human beings in this post-modern age. Nor will it be easy to figure out how to make our institutions more responsive to the kind of human beings we wish to be.

But part of the great challenge of living is defining yourself in your moment, of seizing the opportunities that you are given, and of making the very best choices you can. That is what this administration, this President, and those of us who are hoping for these changes are attempting to do.

I used to wonder during the election when my husband would attempt to explain how so many of the problems that we were confronting were not easy Democratic-Republican-liberal-conservative problems. They were problems that shared different characteristics, that we had to not only define clearly, but search for new ways of confronting.

Then someone would say, well, you know, he can't make up his mind, or he doesn't know what he wants to say about that. When instead what I was hearing and what we had been struggling with for

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who hold high expectations for those children; whose values I would put up against any other person in the country, but who has no control over the day-to-day violence and influence that comes flooding in the doors of that housing project apartment; and who need a society that is more supportive of their value than the one they currently have. (Applause.)

Equally, all of us know the contrary story of families with enough economic means, affluent enough to live in neighborhoods that are as safe as they can be in our country today, so they have the social value structure of what we would hope that each child in America could have in terms of just basic kinds of fundamental safety and physical well-being, but whose parental values are not ones to promote a childhood that is a positive one, giving children the chance to grow up to achieve their own God-given potential. So that the presence of values of society are not enough, either.

There are so many examples of how we have to think differently and how we have to go beyond not only the traditions of the past, but unfortunately for many of us, well-held and cherished views of the past; and how we have to break out of the kind of gridlock mentality which exists not just in the Congress from time to time, but exists as well in all of us as we struggle to see the world differently and cope with the challenges it has given us.

Yet I am very hopeful about where we stand in this last decade of the 20th century, because for all of the problems that we see around us, both abroad and at home, there is a growing body of people who want to deal with them, who want to be part of this conversation about how we break through old views and deal with new problems. And we will need millions more of those conversations.

Those conversations need to take place in every family, every workplace, every political institution in our country. They need to take place in our schools, where we have to be honest about what we are and are not able to convey to our children; where we have to be honest about the conditions with which are confronting so many of our teachers and our students day in and day out; where we have to be honest that we do have to set high expectations for all children and we should not discard any because of who they are or where they come from. (Laughter.)

And where we need to hold accountable every member of the educational enterprise -- parents, teachers and students. Each should be held accountable for the opportunity they have been given to participate in one of the greatest efforts of humankind, passing on knowledge to children. And we have to expect more than we are currently getting. (Applause.)

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We also need to take a hard look at other institutions. As Governor Richards said we are in the midst of an intensive effort of trying to determine how we can provide decent, affordable health care to every American. (Applause.) And in that process we have had to ask hard questions about every aspect of our health care system. Why do doctors do what they do? Why are nurses not permitted to do more than they do? Why are patients put in the position they're in? (Applause.)

And we have with us today Bill Moyers, who has helped to enlighten all of us about how what we currently have is a system for taking care of sickness. We do not have a system for enhancing and promoting health. (Applause.) And what we need to do is recognize how each of us, whether we are a care giver or a care receiver -- and that role may change from time to time as we go through life -- will have to think differently about health care. And we will have to come up with a system that promotes wellness, promotes health and provides care for us when we are sick that we can afford.

But to give you just one example about how this ties in with what I have said before about how these problems we are confronting now in many ways are the result of our progress as we have moved toward being modern men and women: Our ancestors did not have to think about many of the issues we are now confronted with. When does life start; when does life end? Who makes those decisions? How do we dare to impinge upon these areas of such delicate, difficult questions? And, yet, every day in hospitals and homes and hospices all over this country, people are struggling with those very profound issues.

These are not issues that we have guidebooks about. They are issues that we have to summon up what we believe is morally and ethically and spiritually correct and do the best we can with God's guidance. How do we create a system that gets rid of the micromanagement, the regulation and the bureaucracy, and substitutes instead human caring, concern and love? And that is our real challenge in redesigning a health care system. (Applause.)

I want to say a word about another institution and that is the media, because it is the filter through which we see ourselves and one another. And in many ways the challenge confronting it is just as difficult as those confronting any other institution we can imagine. How does one keep up with the extraordinary pace of information now available? How do we make sense of that information? How do we make values about it even if we think we have made sense? How do we rid ourselves of the lowest common denominator that is the easiest way of conveying information? How do we have a media that understands how difficult these issues are and looks at itself

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honestly because the role it must play is so critical to our success in making decisions about how we will proceed as a society?

I remember in the beginning of the campaign being asked a question at an editorial meeting in South Carolina that my husband was at to meet a lot of the editors and reporters from a lot of the small-town papers. These were not folks who you'll see on a TV station anywhere; these are people who got up every day and did the best they could to put out the paper that covered their community or their region. And one of the men, after hearing my husband speak, said, "Now, you've talked about how we have to change. How we have to change government, how we have to change society. But as a journalist, how do I change to be able to understand and report on those changes?" My husband said, "You know, I can't answer that. That's something you have to answer. But I'm really glad you asked the question, because every institution in our life has to ask those hard questions about who we are, what contribution we make to dealing with our problems and to injecting meaning again in the lives of us all."

So every one of our institutions is under the same kind of mandate. Change will come whether we want it or not, and what we have to do is to try to make change our friend, not our enemy. But probably most profoundly and importantly, the changes that will count the most are the millions and millions of changes that take place on the individual level as people reject cynicism, as they are willing to be hopeful again, as they are willing to take risks to meet the challenges they see around them, as they truly begin to try to see other people as they wish to be seen and to treat them as they wish to be treated, to overcome all of the obstacles we have erected around ourselves that keep us apart from one another, fearful and afraid, not willing to build the bridges necessary, to fill that spiritual vacuum that Lee Atwater talked about.

You know, one of my other favorite quotes is from Albert Schweitzer. And he talks about how you know the disease in Central Africa called sleeping sickness; there also exists a sleeping sickness of the soul. The most dangerous aspect is that -- (gap in tape.)

(in progress) -- moving into a new millennium. Let us be willing to help our institutions to change, to deal with the new challenges that confront them. Let us try to restore the importance of civil society by committing ourselves to our children, our families, our friends; and to reaching out beyond the circle of those of whom we know, to the many others on whom we are dependent in this complex society; and understanding a little more about what their lives are like and doing what we can to help ease their burdens.

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Our greatest opportunities lie ahead, because so many of the struggles of the Depression and the World War and the other challenges posed by the Cold War and communism are behind us. The new ones are equally threatening. But we should have learned a lot in the last few years that will prepare us to play our part in remolding a society that we are proud to be a part of.

Thank you all very much.

* Lee Atwater ("Lee Atwater's Last Campaign", Life Magazine, February 1991)

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

REMARKS FOR MIRAMAX PREMIERE

OF “SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE”

THE ZIEGFELD THEATER

NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

December 4, 1998

It's wonderful to be here at the Ziegfeld Theater -- which has done so much to revitalize 6th Avenue -- and inspired so many movie-goers at premier events like this one. Thank you, Harvey, for that wonderful introduction. For many years now, your and Bob's friendship and support has meant a great deal to Bill and me. Your commitment to making great movies is known throughout the world. But your more quiet commitment to making our country a better place is an inspiration, and both Bill and I are very grateful to you.

In a way, this evening is a kind of raindate for Harvey and me -- and Gwyneth, too. Bill and Chelsea and I are all big film buffs. But as you might imagine, it isn't always easy for us to pop out of the White House to catch a movie. Over the years, Harvey and Bob have taken pity on us, and sent us dozens of fabulous, first-run movies from Miramax.

Both Chelsea and I were thrilled when Harvey offered to bring “Emma”-- and its star, Gwyneth Paltrow -- to the White House. And we were crushed when we realized that Chelsea had a college interview that day, and we wouldn’t be able to see “Emma” after all. But I want you to know that the President watched it all by himself, and enjoyed every minute!

“Emma” is just one in a seemingly endless string of critically acclaimed movies from Miramax. For nearly 20 years, Harvey and Bob have raised the bar for excellence in film, entertaining audiences around the world with deeply moving, thought-provoking movies that stay with you long after you leave the theater. You not only blazed a trail for others to follow -- you quite literally paved the superhighway for a new generation of independent film companies to drive on.

110 Academy Award nominations, 30 Oscars, and six Palme d'Or prizes since you first named your company after your mother, Miriam, who is here with us tonight, and your late father, Max. I think it is fair to say that Miramax has set a standard few can match.

I know that you are all eager to see "Shakespeare in Love." It is customary for movie theaters to run a few "Previews" before the feature film. Tonight, on the eve of Miramax's 20th anniversary, Harvey and Bob thought it would be appropriate to show you a few clips from some Miramax films we have already seen and loved, from "The English Patient" to "Good Will Hunting," from "Cinema Paradiso" to "Like Water For Chocolate." I am very proud to introduce this brief glimpse into the world of Harvey and Bob Weinstein -- and the remarkable movies of Miramax.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY RECEPTION
NEW YORK CITY
DECEMBER 1, 1998

- Acknowledgment and thanks to Norman Lear, whose magnificent citizenship and commitment to the defense of our precious freedoms has earned him the love and admiration of Americans across the country; deep appreciation to People For's Bobbie Handman and Carol Shields -- who have done such invaluable work to promote and protect America's First Amendment rights.
- Over the years, People For the American Way has -- in the words of this event -- celebrated the Spirit of Liberty. Just a few weeks ago -- we celebrated Bobbie at the White House for her extraordinary contributions to ensuring the conditions for a vibrant democracy. When the President awarded her the National Medal of the Arts -- he told the audience that Bobbie's "passionate advocacy of the First Amendment has enlarged our vital freedoms."

- In my travels over the past few years -- I have visited many countries who do not enjoy the basic rights and freedoms that we too often take for granted here in this country. To me, one of the most valuable roles that People For undertakes is to constantly remind us of how fortunate we are to live in a democracy -- but also how important it is to stay eternally vigilant against attacks to our freedoms.
- Since its founding almost 20 years ago, People For has contributed to a free and open society in so many ways: protecting our liberties from the extremists; promoting public education; ensuring the separation of church and state; defending freedom of expression.
- Your belief that an engaged and informed citizenry offers the best defense of liberties and democratic values is at the heart of your work. I know how hard you worked to get out the vote in the last election -- reminding citizens of their most basic obligations in a democracy -- and how you helped disseminate the historian's message on the Constitution, and what it stands for.

- Barbara Jordan once said that “What the people want is very simple. They want an America as good as its promise.”
- As we approach a new century and a new millennium -- it is important to remind ourselves of the core values that have always sustained us -- freedom, opportunity, tolerance, and diversity. It is up to all of us to ensure that those values not only survive but are strengthened in the years ahead. That we live up to our nation’s promise.
- Thanks to the champions of the First Amendment gathered here tonight -- I am confident that we will succeed in that mission.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR NEW YORK WOMEN'S AGENDA STAR
BREAKFAST
NEW YORK, NEW YORK
DECEMBER 2, 1998**

Good morning. Every month, I sit down with my staff to decide which invitations to accept -- and every year, when the STAR breakfast comes up, there's no discussion. Not only is it one of my favorite events, we also know that there is no way to resist a full-court press from Elly Guggenheimer. Most days, I'm lucky just to have half the energy Elly brings to her endeavors, especially her New York Women's Agenda and its goal of bringing the women of this great city together in common cause. Elly is a one-woman force for progress in New York City and all across America. And she usually gets her way.

So here I am. I am very delighted to join Elly, Muriel, Donna, Libby and so many other stellar women and men for this breakfast. Let me begin by congratulating today's award winners. With talent, a little bit of luck and countless hours of hard work, each of you has reached the pinnacle of your profession. You've earned seats in corporate suites that the vast majority of Americans -- men included -- never dream of seeing.

I want to thank you for blazing trails for future generations of women to follow.

I enjoy these breakfasts not only for the opportunity they present to celebrate the achievements of women, but also for the chance they give us to remember where we came from, where we are going, and how we will help others along the way.

It is always jolting -- especially when surrounded by so many women CEOs, MBAs, JD's and PhDs and elected officials -- to remember that so many of the rights we take for granted, the right to own property, to keep our own wages, to go to school, to vote, were alien to American women just a century ago. Last summer, I traveled to Seneca Falls, New York to help mark the 150th Anniversary of the First Women's Rights Convention. In Wesleyan Chapel, where the convention was held, it wasn't too difficult to hear echoes of the voices of the mothers and daughters, seamstresses and social activists who all came together to fight for the most basic rights of citizenship and to move America closer to our most cherished ideals.

Because of their pioneering courage, each generation of American women has enjoyed wider opportunities to make the most of their lives than the one before it. We must always be grateful to the women and men of Seneca Falls. And I know that they would be very proud of the women here today. But I also know that they would be telling us that the best way to show our appreciation for their hard work and sacrifice would be to keep moving forward, to keep opening new doors for more women, most of all, to keep working together in common cause as women.

As we can see from the breadth and depth of the membership roster of the New York Women's Agenda, all women, from the VP who sits in the corner office by day to the single mom who cleans it at night, from so-called "waitress moms" to "soccer moms," we are all bound together by shared interests and priorities -- priorities that we can, by speaking out and working together -- move to and keep at the top of the American agenda. I thank the Women's agenda for working hard to strengthen education and health care, to combat domestic violence, and to promote economic development and support the arts in this city. Today I'd like to talk about three more priorities that we as women share.

Priorities such as child care. In a letter to Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote, "Come here and I will do what I can to help you with your address, if you will hold the baby and make the pudding." Even then, women needed help balancing work and family. A century later, this same issue launched Elly on her own public advocacy career as she fought to convince New York City to take over federal funding of child care after World War II.

As a national issue, child care has come a long way. Last year, the President proposed the most comprehensive child care initiative in American history. This year, I am convinced that if women continue to raise our voices, we can make child care in America even better, safer and more affordable. We can ensure that all working moms and dads get the help they need to be productive at work and raise happy, healthy children in the 21st Century.

We must continue to work together to ensure more Americans get the quality health care they deserve. Three-quarters of all family health decisions are made by women. In many American households, women are the ones who deal most often with health care -- taking sick children to the doctor, caring for elderly parents, paying the medical bills.

Women more frequently suffer illnesses that require constant and specialized medical attention. That is why we must raise our voices and demand that Congress pass a Patients' Bill of Rights to protect all Americans in the age of managed care. I thank the Women's Agenda Health Committee for doing your part to empower New York City's women as consumers of health care.

We must work together to strengthen Social Security -- to make sure that it continues to serve our parents and that it survives to serve our children and grandchildren after a lifetime of work. Nearly a quarter of all elderly women rely on Social Security as their sole source of income. Without it, more than half of all elderly women would be living in poverty. Next week, the President will be holding a White House Conference on Social Security -- and I hope all of you will follow this discussion closely.

These are just a few of the many challenges facing America today. 150 years ago, the women of Seneca Falls lacked the most powerful weapon in American democracy -- the right to vote -- and yet they still managed to change the entire course of history.

So there is no reason why today -- when we have the very right they fought so hard for -- we can't do even more to change the course of history.

In this last election, women provided the margin victory in three senate races and one governor's race. If only men had voted in North Carolina, South Carolina, Wisconsin and Maryland, the outcomes of these elections would have been very different.

But unfortunately, the power women can exercise at the ballot box still has not reached its greatest potential. Too many women are still taking this hard fought right for granted. Can you imagine what Elizabeth Cady Stanton or Susan B. Anthony would say if they learned that millions of women still choose to stay home on election day? One hundred and fifty years ago, the women at Seneca falls were silenced by someone else. Today we silence ourselves. We have a choice. We have a voice. We must make ourselves heard.

So I ask all of you to keep working with me to empower more women -- to help them understand that the vote is not just a symbol of our equality. It can be, if used, a guarantee of results.

It is the way we hold our leaders and governments accountable. It is the way we bridge the gap between what we want our nation to be and what it is.

And it is the way we will build an America that works even harder to strengthen women and their families. I thank all of you for your leadership and dedication. I look forward to working with you in the days to come.