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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN PBS DIALOGUE ON RACE

WETA TV, PBS Studio

2:00 P.M. EDT

MR. LEHRER: Good evening. I'm Jim Lehrer. Welcome to an hour of conversation with President Clinton about race in America.

And welcome to you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Jim.

MR. LEHRER: The President's conversation will be with eight Americans -- four NewsHour regulars, essayist Richard Rodriguez of the Pacific News Service, Roger Rosenblatt and Clarence Page of the Chicago Tribune, and regional commentator Cynthia Tucker of the Atlanta Constitution; plus four others; Roberto Suro of The Washington Post, author of a recent book on Hispanic Americans; Kay James, dean of Regent University's School of Government, Elaine Chao, former head of United Way of America, now at the Heritage Foundation; and Sherman Alexie, novelist, poet, and screenwriter.

Keep in mind, please, that whatever their affiliation and most importantly, their race, each is here as an individual speaking only for him or herself.

Richard Rodriguez, what do you think is the single most important thing the President could do to improve race relations in

this country?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I think, Mr. President, I think America is growing more and more complicated and it seems to me that our conversation is not keeping up with that complexity. This year began -- this year of dialogue began with John Hope Franklin, the head of the Race Commission, saying that the unfinished business of America is black and white. But it strikes me that after this year, what we really need to do is to understand how complex this country is, with Samoan rock groups and Filipinos and Pakistani cab drivers. And the racial relationships now in America are so complex and so rich that it seems to me we don't have a language even to keep up with that complexity.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I basically agree with you about that. As a Southerner like Dr. Franklin, I think that there are unique and still unresolved issue between black and white Americans, and there are some conditions in America which disproportionately involve African Americans. Some of them are not old. Today there was just this Journal of American Medical Association story saying that African Americans metabolize nicotine in a different way than other races as far as we know, and therefore, even though blacks smoke fewer cigarettes, they're more likely to get lung cancer -- interesting thing.

But to get back to your main point, I have tried to emphasize that America is becoming a multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious society, and therefore it would be more important both to understand the differences and identify the common values that hold us together as a country.

And I often cite, since we're in Northern Virginia where this program is being filmed, I often cite the Fairfax County School District, which is now the most diverse school district in the country, with people from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups with over 100 different languages, actually, in this school district. And I think that's a pattern of where we're going. I've got a friend who is a Southern Baptist minister here, he used to be a minister in Arkansas. He's got a Korean ministry in his church. That's just one tiny example of the kind of things you're going to see more and more of in the country.

MR. LEHRER: Cynthia, is the unfinished business still black and white?

MS. TUCKER: Well, I think that there are, as you just said, Mr. President, some issues that are unique to black Americans and white Americans, and some conditions, especially, that disproportionately affect black Americans, and the most striking is poverty. In fact, I think that what many people think of as racial differences are often class differences. I worry not just about black poverty, the disproportionate amount of black poverty, but also

about the growing wealth gap.

There are blacks who are disproportionately poor, and that causes them to resent whites, because they blame whites; but there are also working-class white whose incomes are stagnating or declining and they blame blacks and immigrants. So it seems to me that the wealth gap has at least something to do with continuing racial problems in America.

THE PRESIDENT: There's no doubt about that. And I think that whenever possible if you think that there is a class-related or income-related element in the difficulties we have with race, we ought to have income-based solutions to it.

A lot of things that I've asked Congress to do over the last five and a half years, a lot of things that are in this budget now are designed to address that, with greater incentives for people to invest in inner cities and Native American reservations and other poor areas; tax systems, which would disproportionately benefit working people on the lower income of the scale. I think those things are very important because -- and there is, by the way, some evidence that in the last couple of years, the income inequality has begun to abate some.

But I think it's very important not to confuse the two. I mean, I believe the primary reason for income inequality -- increasing inequality in America is that we have changed the nature of the economy. That is, if you go back to 100 years ago, and you see when we moved from an agricultural to an industrial economy, we also had a big influx of immigrants. There was a huge increase in inequality, not so much because the immigrants, but because the way people made money changed. The whole basis of wealth changed. That's what's happened in this computer-based information economy, and the premium on education these days is so much greater than it's ever been, that there's a lot of stagnant incomes out there from people who have worked hard all of their lives, but aren't part of the modern economy. And I think that we need strategies to identify the people that aren't winning and turn them into winners. And at the very least, turn their children into winners.

MR. LEHRER: Kay James, class or race?

MS. JAMES: You know, it's interesting to me that when we have conversations about race, how quickly it turns to class, and I guess one of my experiences in America is that no matter how middle class you become, if you're still black, you're still discriminated against in many areas. And I guess I would also want to make the point that it's very important for us not to immediately go there, it's not immediately important to go the issues of poverty and class, because race is so important that it bears us spending some time there, I think, to talk about racism in America. Class is a very important discussion, and poverty is a very important discussion, but they don't necessarily immediately go into a discussion of race.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, obviously, I agree with that, or I wouldn't have set up this initiative. I think that the point I wanted to make is to whatever extent you can have an economic approach that embraces people of all races, if it elevates disproportionately -- racial groups that have been disproportionately depressed, you'll help to deal with the race problem.

But there is -- no one could look around the world -- if you forget about America, just look at the rest of the world -- no one could doubt the absence of a deep, inbred, predisposition of people to fear, look down on, separate themselves from, and when possible discriminate against people who are of different racial and ethnic groups than themselves. I mean, this is the primary factor in the world's politics today at the end of the Cold War.

MR. LEHRER: Sherman, does a poor Native American starting out face more hurdles than a poor white American starting out?

MR. ALEXIE: A poor Native American faces more hurdles than a poor anybody.

THE PRESIDENT: Anybody?

MR. ALEXIE: Anybody, in this country, certainly. We're talking about third-world conditions -- fourth-world conditions on Indian Reservations. I didn't have running water until I was seven years old. I still remember when the toilet came. So -- and there are no models of any success in any sort of field for Indians. We don't have any of that, so there's no idea of a role model existing. An Indian has not sat on this kind of panel before. So me being here for the first time is something amazing.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me ask you something. I'd like to start, because I think this will help us to get to the race issue you talked about. Let's just talk about the Native American population. When I was running for President in 1992, I didn't know much about the American Indian condition, except that we had a significant but very small population of Indians in my home state, and that my grandmother was one-quarter Cherokee; that's all I knew. And I spent a lot of time going around to the reservations and to meet with leaders and to learn about the sort of nation-to-nation legal relationship that's supposed to exist between the U.S. government and the Native American tribes.

I concluded that the American Indians had gotten the worst of both worlds -- that they had not been given enough empowerment or responsibility or tools to make the most of their own lives, and the sort of paternalistic relationship the U.S. government had kept them in was pathetic and inadequate. So they literally got the worst of both worlds. They weren't given enough help and they certainly didn't have enough responsibility and power in my view to build the future.

So what do you think the most important thing is for Americans to know about American Indians? And what do you think the most important thing American Indians should be doing for themselves or should ask us to do to change the future?

MR. ALEXIE: I think the primary thing that people need to know about Indians is that our identity is much less cultural now and much more political, that we really do exist as political entities in sovereign political nations. And that's the most important thing for people to understand, is that we are separate politically and economically and should be.

For Indians, themselves, I think we have to recognize the value of education, which is something culturally we have not done. And with the establishment of the American Indian College Fund and the 29 American Indian colleges on reservations and in the communities throughout the country, I think we've begun that process of understanding that education can be just as traditional, just as tribal as a powwow or any other ceremony, that education should become sacred.

MR. LEHRER: Elaine Chao, where do the Asian Americans, what kinds of obstacles do they start out with, compared to white Americans or Native Americans, or black Americans, whatever?

MS. CHAO: I think what exacerbates the relationship between the races is, in fact, the feeling of inequity, that somehow somebody else is getting a better deal through unfair means. And Asian Americans are a much maligned minority. On the one hand, they're sometimes counted as minorities when it's convenient for others to do so, and other times when they skew the figures in a less favorable way, like university admissions, then they're counted as white.

So Asian Americans suffer the brunt of both worlds. But in many ways, Asian Americans are now the victims of being an under-represented minority, which means they are excluded from many of the equal opportunities that are available in this country. And I think this is a very, very serious problem that I hope that your great panel will be able to address.

THE PRESIDENT: Give us an example.

MS. CHAO: Well, there's a single mother by the name of Charlene Lo (sp) in San Francisco, and she's raised two boys. One boy, Patrick, is applying to a school in San Francisco. It is a school system, unified San Francisco school system that has basically implemented a quota system through a consent -- and Patrick has always -- he scored 58 on his testing scores out of 69, was barred admission to the high school of his choice because there were "too many Chinese Americans." They had already fulfilled the Chinese quota. There are different standards in that school system for different students of different color.

If you are white, you have one standard. If you are Asian American you have the toughest standard to meet. And of course, other races have other standards as well. That is a horrible example of preferential treatment and of unfair treatment based on race. And I think something has got to be done about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Let's go back to what Kay said. What do you think the roots of racism are?

MS. JAMES: I think the root of racism, and it's out of vogue and out of style in this country to even use that kind of language, but I believe it, and so, I say it. I believe the root of racism is nothing but a very sinful and a very black and dark heart. I mean, after all, racism is a heart problem, a character problem, an integrity problem.

And that's why I think when we have a conversation about how we overcome race in America, it's important to talk on those issues and on those terms. I think the government and I think you, Mr. President, can do a great deal to end discrimination in America. And that's an important topic to talk about. What can we do to end racism? And I think that's going to happen as relationships are formed in communities, as people come to trust each other, as people come to spend time with one another, get to know one another. And that's when the stereotypes are dispelled. That's when people have the opportunity to set aside their preconceived notions, their prejudice, and they get to know each other as individuals.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you think young people -- and you're a dean of a school of government -- do you think young people are less racially prejudiced than their parents on the whole?

MS. JAMES: Well, that's interesting. I remember when I was a part of the group that integrated the schools in the South and, in particular, in my hometown of Richmond. And I can remember going into that school and hearing the young people parrot what their parents had said to them. And while the government took the correct and appropriate action of forcing immigration, I have to tell you it was the most segregated integrated environment I'd ever been in.

The good news is that over a period of time, there were relationships that were established. There were individuals that became friends for life out of that. And so I think we break down the barriers of discrimination and then we deal with the human condition and the human heart in terms of stereotyping and prejudice and bigotry.

MR. LEHRER: Roger Rosenblatt, how would you answer the President's question? Where do we get our attitudes about race? Where do they come from?

MR. ROSENBLATT: Well, they come from fear I guess, and they come from ignorance, and they come from a general sense of otherness, which doesn't only apply to us, it applies to everybody

perceiving something different and then backing off in some way. For the worst of those who back off, it takes a form of hatred; for the best, just a kind of shy retreat.

But what Kay was saying about integration came back to something you were saying, too, Mr. President -- what can the President do on this major issue, the deep issue. I would love to see the goal of integration be boisterously set again. You and I and others around this table remember -- they were hard, but the best of times in the early '60s when, frankly, people now at each other's throats, were all on the same side -- most people who believed in that side. Since then, Cynthia mentioned blame; that's all we've had is context of blame since -- or theories, or bigotry, or separatist notions.

If the race issue is a microcosm of what the country ought to be, then the solving of racism ought to be the solving of the country. We are one place; one complicated, broiling, difficult place in which a great deal of progress has been made, and that ought to be said, too. But if you could reaffirm the idea, remind us that integration is the goal, I think that would be a huge first step.

THE PRESIDENT: What about what Elaine said, though? Let me give you a little background, although I don't know about the facts of this case. California, I give them a lot of credit -- California is trying to have within the public school system a much higher performing school by, among other things, going to charter schools, which seek to have the benefits of public education with the strengths of private, standard state education. And San Francisco has a number of schools -- this is probably a part of their school choice program -- where they basically create schools, they get out from under the rules and regulations of central administration and they hold the kids to high standards.

But apparently, they've made a decision also that they think they ought to have some diversity within their student body. And so, is it fair for a Chinese student who may be the fifth best Chinese student, but also the fifth best overall student who has to get in a class, to be deprived of the chance to get in the class? And if it's not fair, if this child was unfairly treated, what do you do with the kids who didn't do very well and what school should they go to and how can you guarantee them the same standards?

MR. LEHRER: How would you answer that, Roberto?

MR. SURO: It's seems to be the sort of dilemma that points up the need to go beyond the black-white paradigm that we've worked with for so long. I mean, it's very hard to apply a matrix of a white majority and non-white minorities when you get to a situation as complicated as the San Francisco schools. And we don't have a language even to describe these situations, let alone mechanisms that are defined to work in situations where you've got -- where the lines aren't so clear anymore as to a group that's in a group that's out; where you have mobility of identity and of economic status, and where

racism takes a variety of forms.

You know, it's interesting -- we talked a little bit about history and when you talk about race, you often talk about your childhood memories of the South and how it has formed your views of it. My question is how we take that history and adapt it, move it, evolve it, into a very different demographic situation now than the one in which it was past -- and how you use it, how you take your memories of the black-white situation in the South and apply it to a much more complicated nation now.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the short answer is that I try to do now what I tried to do when I was a kid, when I realized what was going on, because I had an unusual background for a lower middle-class white guy in the South because I had grandparents who believed in integration, and my grandfather ran a little store and most of his customers were black. So I had an atypical background. But I was sort of hungering for contact with people who were different from me. And my theory, going back to what Kay said, is that basically if you would ask me, what's the most important thing we could do, I think it is the more people work, and learn, and worship if they have faith, and serve together, the more likely you are to strike the right balance between celebrating our differences instead of being afraid of them and still identifying common values.

Now, you still have -- you have a separate problem for Native Americans, who literally, many of whom still live on reservations. But there has to be a way -- you cannot overcome what you do not know. And if I could just say one other thing. One of the complicating -- believe me, there are lots of hard questions. I don't think -- one of the hard questions is the education question, whether it's affirmative action in college admissions or what Elaine said, for the simple reason that I believe there is an independent value to having young people learn in an environment where they're with people of many different racial and ethnic backgrounds. And the question is, how can you balance that with our devotion to merit and then not discriminating against people because of their race, in effect, when they would otherwise, on grounds of academic merit, get a certain situation. That's one of the hardest questions we face.

But I still think the more we are together -- I was quite impressed, for example, when our daughter was trying to select a college. And one of the things that she did, she went around and actually got the composition and make-up of every school to which she applied, because she wanted -- and then she actually went there to see whether those people were actually -- (laughter) -- not just admitted but actually really getting -- relating to each other.

But a lot of the young people in her generation that I spend time talking to understand that this is something they need to do. I mean, they figured out that their life is going to be real different from ours and they better figure out how to live together.

MR. LEHRER: Clarence, does that make sense to you?

MR. PAGE: It makes a lot of sense, Jim. We went around the table and I've exhibited great patience by withholding my comments because I wanted to hear. Everybody here is expressing this dream of integration, but we all have gotten to different questions about the pain we want to pay, the pay we want to experience to get there. Elaine wants, I'm sure, equal opportunity in a corporate world and educational world. But how much equal opportunity are you willing to sacrifice in pursuit of diversity, the integration dream that Roger is expressing. Let us get back to Richard's question about the language that we speak.

I've heard us go from prejudice to racism, get over to diversity and integration, thinking we're talking about the same thing, but we're not. You know, racism is institutional. We're talking about history here. And that is why, if you want diversity in San Francisco's schools, you want that virtue of having your kids exposed to other kids of different races and backgrounds, then you've got to be willing to say, we've got to put a ceiling on some people. And I've told the same thing to African Americans back in Chicago, with housing. Because we want desegregated housing, but you've got to tell black folks, as well as white folks, hey, we've got enough of you right now. And that's a hard thing to do.

But integration, desegregation does not come by just good wishes. You've got to work at it. You've got to take some mechanical steps to get from here to there. And until we can do that, we can't have an honest dialogue until we're willing to talk about how much are we willing to pay.

MR. LEHRER: Somebody has to get hurt in order for other people to be helped?

MR. PAGE: That's right. There's got to be some pain involved. And everybody talks about -- this is why affirmative action is so tough. And, Mr. President, I have written this, so it's only proper that I say this to you personally -- I feel like one problem with the race dialogue was that I think you were reluctant to deal with the question of affirmative action. It is the most divisive question that we've got along the lines of race in this country right now, besides crime, which is another question for a dialogue. But we need to talk -- and, of course, I agree with you fully, we need to mend it, not end it. We need affirmative action. But how do we define it and how do we deal with those people who feel like they're sacrificing?

And I think the sacrifices have been over-rated and the polls seem to bear me out. Most white folks don't feel that pained by affirmative action or so-called quotas, et cetera. That is a great political tool, and until we deal with it effectively and have a real dialogue about it, it's going to be exploited politically by various people in a positive or negative kind of way. And I guess I'll have to say, how do you feel about that in terms of the kind of tiptoeing around the --

THE PRESIDENT: See, I believe, I frankly -- I believe that the real reason it's a problem -- it's more a problem in education now than in economics because the unemployment rate is so low and because the jobs are opening up, so most gifted people feel that if they're willing to work hard, they can find a job. We don't have the anxiety about affirmative action we used to have when the police department and the fire departments were being integrated and promotions were being given. Every now and then you hear something about that, but most of the controversy now is about education. Why? Because people know education is really important and if parents and children make a decision about where they want to go to school -- in the case of Elaine, a public school -- that they believe is good, or a college, they're afraid if they don't get in where they want to get in, they'll get a substandard education.

I have a different view. The reason I've supported affirmative action, as long as you don't just let people in who are blatantly unqualified to anything, is that I think, number one, test scores and all these so-called objective measures are somewhat ambiguous and they're not perfect measures of people's capacity to grow. But secondly and even more importantly, I think our society has a vested interest in having people from diverse backgrounds.

When I went to college in the "Dark Ages," one of the reasons I applied to Georgetown was they had foreign students there and they had a policy of having a kid from every state there. Maybe I got in because there weren't so many people from Arkansas who applied, for all I know. I think that there are independent educational virtues to a diverse student body, and young people learn different things in different ways. And I don't think objective measurements are perfect. So I don't have a problem with it.

But I think the most important thing is that we have to understand that this is one of the hard questions. And it is best worked out, in my view, by people sitting around a table trying to work out the specifics, like in San Francisco. And when people feel like they have no voice, then they feel robbed. But there will never be a perfect resolution of this.

MR. LEHRER: Richard, do you agree? No perfect resolutions to this?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, I do agree. I think generally no perfect solution. I left the university affirmative action -- I was so appalled by it. I considered myself a Hubert Humphrey liberal. When it came time for me to get a position over you because you were white, and because America perceived me to belong to this new brown race, this complete fiction of the Hispanic race -- it does not exist, there's no Hispanic race left or right of Cuba. We -- my father is very light skinned, my mother looks very Indian. There are white Hispanics, there are black Hispanics. But the university didn't care about any of that. I was this new brown race, this new Hispanic race.

At a point in the American political discussion when the only person who was not a minority was people that you came from -- poor whites -- particularly poor white males in this society, who, in the language of affirmative action, is that they are somehow represented in the public society -- like hell they are. Where are the Appalachian white represented? Because there are white men in front of the airplane? And it came to me at a time when I was middle-class, Mexican American, perfectly capable of dealing with the competition for jobs, and the jobs came looking for me because I was their brown man. And I threw the jobs back and them at them. I didn't want those jobs. And if that's the way we are going to discuss race in America, with these bureaucratic understandings of who is a Hispanic, without even knowing what a Hispanic means, we are in real trouble in this country.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me ask you -- let me ask everybody -- first of all, I'm glad you said that, because we're in the business of defining stereotypes tonight, so that's good. I think all of us who have worked hard to get where we are are sort of proud of that. I mean, when I was a young man, I was the only person on my law school faculty that voted against our tenure policy because I never wanted anybody to guarantee me a job. I told them they could tell me to leave tomorrow and I'd go. I mean I really identify with what you -- I'm proud of that.

But suppose you're the president of the university, would you like, other things being equal, to have a faculty that were reasonably racially diverse? And even more importantly, would you like, other things being equal, to have a student body that reflected the America these young people are going to live in once they've graduated? And if you believe that, and you didn't want to infuriate people like you've been infuriated and make them feel like you've felt, how would you go about achieving that?

I think this is tough stuff. I don't pretend that my position is easy or totally defensible. How would you do it?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I think you would start at the bottom of the social ladder. You would start at first grade rather than in graduate school and trying to decide which ones of us get into law school. You would make sure that America had a system of education that saved children in first grade because we lose it there.

MR. ROSENBLATT: I think that's absolutely right. And I think that even though it sounds like a distinction without a difference, goals are better than quotas. And if you know what you want in a particular situation -- be it a workplace or a college class -- then you're not stuck in the exact situation Elaine mentioned in which you're doing something patently unfair. Also, the nice thing about goals is you don't always have to reach them. The idea is to keep your eyes on them and hope that you get the proper and reasonable mix in a group.

THE PRESIDENT: Let's go back to this. I want to ask you to come in because I want you to go in here. (Laughter). What exactly was it did you resent? Did you resent the fact they were going to guarantee you a job whether you were any good or not? Or did you resent the fact that they were looking for Hispanic faculty members?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I resented two things. I resented the fact I was being rewarded with the exclusion of other people of my ethnic group. In other words, I was a numerical minority at a point in which I was not a cultural minority. And the absence of those people -- because my people were not there, I as the 10th person became their minority. And I resented it for all the political, liberal reasons that I have and that there was something that didn't play on my soul -- the notion that I was entitled to the shot, and you weren't because I had darker skin, and it didn't play on me.

I was never a primary victim of racial discrimination in this country. I belong to California, but I grew up among Portuguese and Irish kids -- never, never a primary victim. In the name of the primary victims, I was advanced to graduate school.

MR. SURO: I've had some of the same experience, not quite as explicitly, but there are times when I have consciously not wanted to be regarded as a Hispanic journalist and define that as a central part of my definition or qualification. And even in doing reportage, I hope that I can deal with anybody. When I went overseas looking for -- I very consciously didn't go to Latin America.

It draws this distinction that Richard raised, I think, between primary victims of discrimination and people who have different kinds of history. And we're dealing with, now, how do you determine whether -- affirmative action was started as a historical remedy. Lyndon Johnson's speech here was about the foot race, was a reflection on history. And the question is, what do you do when you have people who don't have the same history, but belong to a minority group. Among Latinos now, you have people who have experienced real discrimination and have a real history of discrimination in places like South Texas, and you have people who arrived yesterday. Yet, our system of looking at them puts them all together in one group.

MR. LEHRER: Cynthia, the differences -- in other words, dealing with people differently.

MS. TUCKER: Well, this may be one of those places where, in fact, the black experience in America is distinct. I did grow up suffering discriminations -- real, in-your-face. I grew up in Southern Alabama under Jim Crow. And now, I am not offended by affirmative action programs at all. I happen to think, a, that that does not mean that the person is unqualified, but I also remember only too well when people that I knew were denied jobs because they were black. And so that is one of those places where the black experience is different, perhaps, from any other experience in this country with the possible exception of Native Americans.

MS. CHAO: Clearly, the history of this nation, as it went through the racial stages, has been very tragic; no one would dispute that. And it's clear, also, that we don't live in a perfect world in which there is equal treatment for everyone. But I think it's absolutely incumbent upon all of us to remember that this is the ideal, that equal opportunity must exist for everyone in this country, regardless of color or race or creed or whatever.

And when we talk about diversity, what a wonderful notion it is. Of course, most of us support it. I, for one, definitely support it. But the issue is, how does one create this diversity and who gets to sacrifice, as Clarence mentioned, and who gets to suffer?

As far as diversity is implemented right now, it's basically implemented through a numerical quota, goals, whatever they're called. Basically, the touchstone word is we want it to be representative of America, which means that it's 13 percent African American, 8 percent Latino Americans, 3 percent Asian Americans, and perhaps -- a certain percentage of Native Americans, and the rest white. When we don't evaluate things, and when we don't offer opportunity based on merit, how do we decide otherwise, and who becomes over-represented minorities? Who becomes under-represented minorities? And that just snowballs -- differential treatment, preferential treatment for one group versus another. I think we should hew to the overall core value of this country, the equal opportunity of rights for all. And there should be same standards for everyone.

Q Well, how do you define merit? Does there seem to be an equal opportunity to get into Berkeley and UCLA? But how do you define merit -- is it SATs or ACTs or other criteria?

MS. CHAO: No, I think clearly, merit.

MR. LEHRER: Let me ask Sherman, where do Native Americans fit into the affirmative action debate?

MR. ALEXIE: You know, I get this question asked a lot. I always say, if we were taking the jobs, and we were taking the spots in college, then why aren't we having jobs and why aren't we in college. (Laughter.) I mean, people worrying about medical school -- people worrying about blacks getting into medical school or law school, and I walk through the hospital and the brown people are mopping. So I think all this debate about affirmative action and about quotas is delusional and anecdotal. There's never been a black person who's been denied a job who's won a lawsuit against a company for not hiring him because they were black, and yet were determining national policy based on anecdotal lawsuits.

Q It's not anecdotal.

MR. ALEXIE: On one example, Texas, we changed the whole entire admissions system at universities in Texas based on one person losing a spot because of their job and it was one lawsuit that decided that, that turned the tide. And so if you want to talk about affirmative action, that's sort of a legal affirmative action, where a white person has more power in the courts, bringing a lawsuit against the university, than a black person would have bringing a suit against the university for not getting in.

Q Jim, I have to answer that, if I could, because it's not anecdotal evidence. There is a great database of differential standards that do exist for different racial groups. That is common practice in the admissions of university today all across America. That is common practice for many of our educational facilities, institutions, at the lower levels as well. There is definitely no question that it's just not anecdotal. At the Center for Equal Opportunity and many other think tanks have compiled a substantial database that do show this is part of the racial policies of America today.

I do want to say one thing about --

THE PRESIDENT: Do you want to answer Clarence?

Q I was going to say -- I think education -- Richard has a good point -- education is important. We ought not to talk about equal opportunity at this late stage, but how do we get back to K and 12? Our schools are falling apart. How do we fix our schools? How do we slash crime in our neighborhoods? How do we create economic opportunity for everyone? I mean, that's a real goal for our country.

THE PRESIDENT: What are you going to say about this?

MS. JAMES: I was just going to say, Mr. President, I think the operative phrase was, in your question, "all things being equal," wouldn't we like a diverse community, particularly in the academic arena. And I was looking around the table and thinking, gee whiz, I bet I'm the only one here at the table that has to make admissions decisions.

THE PRESIDENT: You've got to make these decisions.
(Laughter.)

MS. JAMES: And you're right, all things being equal, wouldn't we like to have a diverse community. And I think that's where most people in America are. Most people in America, of course, acknowledge and have high esteem for diversity and recognize that their lives are much more enriched in that environment. But what they have a problem with is feeling like there are set-asides or preferential treatment for some class of people that exist for them only because of their race.

As an example, I guess I run across so many middle class African American students who don't deserve to have preferential treatment based solely on their race. They've had every opportunity, they've been given every chance in America, and so it makes no sense to give them preference for purely race-based -- that maybe we should look more at some of the programs that exist in America that give treatment and preference to people out of poverty, that give preference and treatment for a variety of reasons. But to purely have race-based solutions in America today doesn't make a whole lot of sense.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me go back to something Clarence said at the beginning. You pointed out we've talked about prejudice, discrimination, then we started talking about diversity and all that. I think you need -- if I could go back to the very first thing that all of you started talking about -- we need a vocabulary that embraces America's future, and we need a vocabulary that embraces America's present and past on this race issue. And we need to know when we're making distinctions. And then we need to fess up to the fact at least when it comes to Native Americans that if we don't do something fairly dramatic, the future is going to be like the past for too many people.

For example, I think most Americans, whether they're conservatives or liberals or Republicans or Democrats, would support, for example, my budget proposal to give more resources to the EEOC to get rid of the backlog. Because all of the surveys show that 85 percent of the American people, or 90 percent or something, believe that actual discrimination against an individual person in the workplace is wrong based on race.

Now, the real problem is that affirmative action, I think now, since there are a lot of middle-class blacks, middle-class Hispanics, that it's almost -- people are not so sure in the workplace and the school place whether it is furthering the goal of getting rid of the lingering effects of discrimination, which is Cynthia's experience, and mine as a Southerner -- ours -- you know, or whether it is now being used to create a more diverse environment which people feel is a good thing, but not a good thing if it is sticking it to this hard-working Chinese mother in San Francisco and her children, who is raising her kids under adverse circumstances.

And I guess one of the things that bothers me is that a lot -- we need to make these kinds of discussions practical and institution or community-based, because, I'll say again, I think that we want our children to grow up to learn to live in a world that they will in fact live in. Therefore, if you forget about discrimination for a minute -- you can't ever do that, but let's just assume there is no discrimination -- America has a wonderful system of higher education. There are hundreds of schools I think you can get a world-class undergraduate education in. And I believe that, therefore, it's worth having some policy to try to diversify the student body.

It's interesting to see what Texas did when the Hopwood decision came down. They said, well, we don't want to have a totally segregated set of colleges and universities in Texas, so we'll just say the top 10 percent of every high school can automatically go to any Texas institution of higher education. That looks like a merit-based decision, but, of course, it's not any more merit-based than the other decision because there are segregated high schools and there are differences in test scores and all that.

So we need to kind of -- we need 10 hours to discuss this and I'd like to listen to you. But the only thing I want to point out is, the American people have got to decide, do they want a housing project in Chicago -- in this case, only the people from Chicago have to decide -- that's integrated. If so, the people who don't get in there, do they have reasonable alternatives? That's one realistic thing. If a child doesn't get into a good school that he or she wants to get in to, do they have an equivalent alternative? If they don't, you maybe have hurt them for life. Is it worth it to get rid of discrimination?

Or in the case -- look at Kay's problem. She runs a government department that makes these admission decisions in a school that has a certain religious and value-based approach to life. So if a child gets deprived of going into there, even if the kid goes to Harvard, it may not be cultural environment --

MS. JAMES: They couldn't get near the education they get at Regent. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: But let's assume it's equivalent. The child may lose something non-educational. So all these things are -- I just want the American people to start talking about this in a way that's real here.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Mr. President, one interesting -- I think we need to do as Americans is also wonder whether these terms we're using mean anything anymore. The fact is, we have been falling in love with each other for over 200 years in this country -- from Pocahontas to Thomas Jefferson's children. The fact is we care -- in America. The fact is that increasingly now I'm meeting young people who don't want to define themselves as belonging to a race.

And the two largest Hispanic groups in this country -- mulatto Puerto Ricans, mestizo Mexicans -- are entering in this country and injecting a kind of complexity into the whole way we understand race as a singular thing, and beginning to teach us that, in fact, we will belong in some future to many races.

When I said that there is not a vocabulary for this -- I also in San Francisco, I know this young woman who is -- I asked her what her racial identity was, and she said her father is African American and her mother is Mexican. And I said well, what are you? And she said I'm a "Blaxican." (Laughter). She said she's a "Blaxican" because there wasn't a word for it yet.

You asked that question of why young people -- I think American young people are going to be redefining the very stolid, old Crayolas that we have been calling Americans.

THE PRESIDENT: That's good.

MR. LEHRER: Cynthia and then to Roger -- on this question that the President raised, the new dialogue. And to Richard, what are the new words we use? What do we talk about in this new world?

MS. TUCKER: Well, I think one of the things we had to do is to simply acknowledge how much the world has changed. Richard is right. I have a Mexican brother-in-law, and my sister and he are about to have a baby. And she, too, I suppose will be "Blaxican" or whatever. (Laughter).

And so I think, first of all, more Americans need a stronger sense of history. I think there has to be an acknowledgment that African Americans and Native Americans especially have suffered burdens others have not. But I also think that all of us, including African Americans, need to acknowledge how much the world has changed. I think one of the reasons we hear so many interesting things from California, Elaine, is because California is cutting edge. Some days I look at California, and I think that's the wave of the future, and I think, oh goodness, no. But some days -- Chelsea chose to go to school there -- maybe California's doing okay. But I do think that the struggle among the various ethnic groups in California are a cautionary tale, quite frankly.

MR. ROSENBLATT: Now, when you think about how much the world has changed -- I don't want to flip to a Pollyanna-ish mode for the moment, but one way it's changed is that a lot of things have gotten better. Not only have they gotten more interesting, not only have they gotten more complicated -- all of which is true -- but you grew up in a world in which hatred was a useable instrument; where people couldn't go to same schools, you couldn't vote, you couldn't do this and you couldn't do that. And not only that, it was an instrument that was in some dark and deeply stupid way approved of by the silence of the majority. Now, as you say, that majority does not approve anymore.

We talk about racism in a country -- I'm not sure if we're talking about anything like the same racism with which you two grew up in and of which we were apprised. It isn't that I'll say that everything is getting better or good as fast as we could want it, but I sometimes wonder how important affirmative action as an issue for debate really is because I think, eventually, it's going to be phased out anyway. It's going to get there, and that, to go back to Richard's irrefutable point, to get down to the youngest people and the best education for them and all social programs into that would seem to be part of the new vocabulary you called for.

Q Roberto, how would you define the new vocabulary?

MR. SURO: We've talked a lot about how trying to describe the population and how it's changed. Roger touches on an important point. We have to have a new vocabulary to describe our attitudes. Discrimination is a different thing in this country than it was 20 years ago.

THE PRESIDENT: In what way?

MR. SURO: Well, I would say if you take the African American example, I'd say a young black male who lives in an inner city experiences being black differently than a middle-aged, middle-class female who lives in the suburb. It's a different experience of what it means to be a black in this country. And when you're talking about remedies of discrimination, when discrimination isn't simply based that all black people be excluded from certain institutions, as was the case earlier in our lifetime, you need more subtle remedies, more complicated remedies, and more complicated vocabularies to describe attitudes. More people are classified according to multiple markers, not just skin color but a variety of different things establish status in this country, and so the remedies have to address each of those different things, I believe.

Q I could beg to differ. I'm a middle-class black who lives in the suburbs, and in my suburb right now there are numerous complaints about black youths being stopped by the cops unfairly, just as they're stopped by the cops in the inner-city. And, Jim, you know, after the L.A. riots in '92, we had this discussion on this program, and I talked then about my three year old son that everybody thought was quite cute -- he looks just like me, naturally -- how else could they --

MR. LEHRER: I don't remember that coming up.
(Laughter.)

Q But I was saying then, where will he be 10 years from now? Well, my son is now nine, and now I have to say four years from now, because he's going to be a teenager. And when -- and today the most feared creature on urban streets today is a young black male. And that is the future I am looking toward with my son. I want a better life for my son like everybody else does, and the new vocabulary of race to me is very much like the old vocabulary, except it's got some new terms, like the gilded ghetto. The gilded ghetto is what middle-class blacks find themselves in out in the suburbs now because the white folks who used to be their neighbors have moved further out --

MR. LEHRER: What do you tell your son? What do you tell your son about why this is happening?

Q We treat race talk like sex talk around our house, Jim. We don't bring it up unless our son brings up a question, and then we answer the question he brings up. But we live, fortunately,

in a desegregated, integrated neighborhood. Our son is very well aware of racial difference, has been since he was four years old, as all children are. But he doesn't see racial value; he doesn't see one race being better than another -- I hope. I mean, certainly, by associations he has, he doesn't reflect that. I hope that is our future.

But I have to say -- and Richard and I always have this discussion and the vision he paints of the future is so beautiful, I hate to throw cold water on it. But I've got to say, in 1998, we are still a segregated society. Blacks and whites still live mostly separate lives. We're better off than we were 30 years ago, thank God, but we are still -- outside of the workplace, outside of the workplace we still live largely separate lives. Why in the workplace have we got this association? Because of affirmative action. That's a big reason.

Q In 1998, we are still unable to say that, in effect, we are part of each other's bloodstream. This is the heritage of racism, where we were never allowed to marry each other. And now we deny it to ourselves. We say that that doesn't make any difference. Well, I get stopped by police in San Francisco when I go jogging early before dawn. The last time I got stopped was by two black policemen, and I think to myself, this is a very complicated society we live in. (Laughter.)

Q Who said blacks couldn't be prejudiced?

THE PRESIDENT: I agree with that. You know, I'm very sympathetic with what you say. And I want it to be as you say. And I agreed that we have all kinds of overlapping stereotypes that we haven't even talked about. One of the things that came up after Los Angeles riots, you know, the attitudes of the African Americans to the Korean grocers and the Arab grocers and the Hispanic customers and all of that -- it's a lot more complicated than it used to be.

But as a factual matter, if you just look at the prison population -- you wanted to bring that up -- if you look at all the unemployment rate among young, single African American males without an education, if you look at the physical isolation of people in these inner-city neighborhoods -- we have the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years; there are still New York City neighborhoods where the unemployment rate is 15 percent -- if you look at these things, if I could just come back to sort of what I think is practical here, I think it is imperative that we somehow develop a bipartisan consensus in this country that we will do those things which we know will stop another generation of these kids from getting in that kind of trouble.

My best model now, I guess, is what they're trying to do in Chicago in the school system and what they've done in Boston with the juvenile justice system. In Boston, they went for two years without one kid under 18 being killed with a gun. Unheard of in a city that size. And if you look at what they did in Houston, we need

to at least adopt those strategies that will invest money in keeping these kids out of trouble in the first place and try to keep them out of jail and give them the chance to have a good life. And if there's disproportionate manifestation of race, then so be it. Then we ought to have an affirmative action program, if you will, that invests in those kids' futures and gives them a chance to stay out of trouble.

To me, it's the kids that are being lost altogether and the disproportionate presence of racial minorities among those kids that is still the most disturbing thing in the world. Because if you get these kids up there, 18 or 19, heck, they'll figure out things. Our kids will figure out things we weren't smart enough to figure out. That's how society goes on. That's what progress is all about. But I think we have to recognize that's still a big race problem in this country, especially for African Americans.

MR. LEHRER: Clarence raised the point, Sherman, about race talk in his family and the President -- Mr. President, you have said you had trouble getting people to talk bluntly and honestly about race.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. We're all too polite about it.

MR. LEHRER: How do you get people to talk about race?

MR. ALEXIE: Just walk into a room, I think. People are always talking about race. It's always coded language. They call it "class," or they use coded language. Nobody actually says, well, that's a black person, let's talk about being black, but it always ends up coming up. Usually what they'll do to me is come up and tell me they're Cherokee. (Laughter.) So that's usually what it amounts to.

Nobody talks about Indians, so I don't have to worry about that. We grew up not being talked about at all, and we're still not talked about. You know, I walked by the locker room out there, and there is a Washington Redskins bumper sticker on a locker. And I said, nobody cares about Indians.

MR. LEHRER: But do Indians talk about race?

MR. ALEXIE: Oh, yeah, we're actually probably a lot more conservative and racist than any other single group of people. We're much more reactionary. It's funny, politically, we give our money to Democrats, but we vote for Republicans. (Laughter.)

MR. LEHRER: I'm going to leave that one alone.
(Laughter.)

How do you get honest talk? Do you think there is honest talk about race?

MS. JAMES: All you have to do is get people to start talking out of their own personal experience and it gets there pretty quickly. And everyone has a story to tell. I've noticed around the table even today that as we talk about race in America and the distinctions of being African American and that it's really a black-white issue, I guarantee if we were bringing an Irish American in here, they would tell you they've experienced discrimination in this country. And if you get a -- you know, you talk to people in the Jewish community, and they'll say, well, our experience in America has been this. And so when you get people to talk out of their own experience, it gets there fairly quickly.

Q I think the bottom line is, I think there has to be not allocation of programs based on preferential treatment -- but that there is equal opportunity. And going back to Clarence's issue about merit --

MR. LEHRER: We're talking about talking bluntly about race.

Q Right. I think this is part of it. And I think the President wanted me to answer Clarence's comments, Clarence's question about merit.

MR. LEHRER: Okay, but we have to -- I have to interrupt you all now to say, thank you, Mr. President, and thanks to all the rest of --

THE PRESIDENT: We're just getting warmed up.

MR. LEHRER: I know, I know, I know.

Q It's got to be the same standards for everybody, however merit is defined.

MR. LEHRER: Okay. But from Washington this has been a conversation with President Clinton about race. I'm Jim Lehrer. Thank you and good night. And as you see, may the conversation continue.

END

3:00 P.M. EDT

Message Sent To: _____

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:
BUILDING ONE AMERICA**

April 14, 1998

"The story of race relations in America can be viewed through the prism of sports in our country. In many ways, sports has been ahead of the curve when it comes to recognizing that ability and talent, speed and sportsmanship count a lot more on the field than the color of a player's skin."

President Bill Clinton

April 14, 1998

Today, President Clinton travels to Houston, Texas to participate in ESPN's national conversation on race, "Race and Sports: Running in Place?" The town meeting will use sports as a microcosm for examining race related issues that affect other parts of society. Additionally, at a separate event, the First Lady announces an effort by the Anti-Defamation League and the Boys and Girls Clubs of America to create community based initiatives against hate.

The President's Initiative On Race (PIR). The President is leading the nation in an effort to become One America in the 21st Century. To achieve this goal, President Clinton is:

- **Developing policy that offers opportunity to all who work for it.** From education empowerment zones to stepping up enforcement to stop discrimination in housing, President Clinton is developing and implementing policies that help all Americans make the most of their lives;
- **Engaging Americans in a broad and constructive dialogue on race.** The President is encouraging communities across the country to engage in constructive dialogues on race. He is calling on them, not only to stand against discrimination, but to build greater understanding across racial lines;
- **Highlighting Promising Practices that work.** In communities throughout the country, people are working to bridge racial divides and to create greater opportunity for all. The President's Initiative is identifying and creating a compilation of these efforts, named "promising practices," so that others may participate in them or replicate them in their own communities;
- **Recruiting leaders.** The President is inviting leaders in all areas of American life to help him bring his One America Initiative to all communities;
- **Focusing on young Americans.** Recognizing that young Americans are the future leaders of this nation, President Clinton is making a special effort to actively engage youth in his Initiative;
- **Working with the PIR Advisory Board.** A small, diverse group of individuals, recognized for their outstanding leadership on race related issues, is advising and assisting the President in outreach efforts and consultations with experts;
- **Preparing a report for the nation.** The President will issue a report that: 1) presents his vision of One America, including an assessment of the growing diversity of our nation; 2) reflects the work that has occurred during the Initiative; and 3) provides recommendations and solutions that

enable individuals, communities, businesses, public and private organizations and government at all levels to address difficult issues and build on our best possibilities.

HRC — Chaz, you can lead &
have safe places to talk about
this issue — what schools
doing — ^{on net} updates — a lot of your
people — involved in ^{person-}
hand question — why am I
prejudiced? what can I do?
start w/ each of us — create
an effort —

→ Kid — Jim blessed — not a lot
of room — he is special — don't
really see colors — it's where
you're good players —

HRC got sports celebs — saw U
ESPN — yes — if engaged in some
common effort — win a game &
no time to insult each other
teen effort — how to take
those persons in on ballways?
classical — more collaboration
with —

Milano - Oct '97 - ^{#3} -
I came out of the closet - my
boy friend - man has known I was
gay - it was OK - Why hiding that?
- got a lot of looks - danced / talked -
Sister Gay Alliance -

educate everyone -

HRC have space to talk
about us - where they agree
or don't - if don't make a effort
and build walls - destruction -

Joe - Sen ^{philippines} recognized december
slurs - / go back on your boat -
you not answer - I'm over
here - Sen - Don't drink cans
on a boat - they came on a
plane - my uncle fought in
war - 3 yrs go - we still
young & beautiful - culture, sex,
stereotypes, anti racism signs -
a world of difference -

HRC? Anyone here? not a real
American - Carbon to what
it men - and the most
desire not in world - why we
so strong + successful - but
society unhappy america -
lots of different tolerances -

Student / stereotypes - all blends
are dumb - all Jews have curly
hair, big nose - cheap - all up
gotter dumb blend jobs - Oh, you
don't look Jewish - 4 u mean
Holocaust - Another Holocaust
only Rachel seemed survive -
because she don't look Jewish -
kids upset - feeling I was
really Jewish -
- her jeans pants - all blond -
to only 1

HRC

Some of most kindful - thus
can be said by people you
read / rely group - not
always as easy to define
what prejudice - its of
black or black / white or white -
religion or religion -

Take
Bay / → start - 20 min -
do you need help? no - he was
w/ his men - Eddie Bauer -
manager told us to let a you
guys - I didn't say anything -

HRC 2 problems - people do
act a stereotype - don't like you
don't belong in that neighborhood -
have to know we live in
complex + diverse neighborhood
challenge: how do you know things?
Let it go? usually not
sometimes - do - but control feelings

Q say anyone - don't want to
say something that escalates
the disruption - not on inside
w/ friend, family - to change
inside - if don't with away -
be careful about what you
say -

Student Ryan - In H. Spanish -
most of my friends are white -
half of them - make fun of Hispanic
people - don't know in Spanish -
I tell them they're wrong -

NRC have you made any
progress? changed any names?

Student / not really.

H&C If you friend know you - how
those feelings - why can't they say
they know to work on it.

He says he wants to get diverse
group together to talk about
what they are -

In abt of H.S. / Hawaiian
one of 2 white kids - white, gay
friends - I'd set back up, called
names - I → alaska - prejudice
about every day - think for yrs
me it was just him - look at
myself - I still pre-judge people -
you + him - you're her
whisper - got the word

HRC line encountered a few
stereotypes of that today - not
surprising - then few rumors
circulated - feel that how what
people should be like.

Abt of people drew conclusion -
Best thing to do - just

have to be yourself - and do what
you believe in re w - help
each other - I don't get upset
when I see stereotypes - but I do
think we have a commercial
where you get that idea?
well - smaller + more diverse
believe - talk to people all day
well - arrangements - but she
can't get along w people
a classroom + family
getting along + respecting
each other - well step, not
mistake - but try harder.

— Don't have to like everyone - up
your friend as - (see it as how)
that person before around —
not on what you think about
the group
Don't jump to conclusion -
race/religion/

St Mary's student

Hec Why is team Hannon different?
One of many are doing a very
good job - A lot of good programs -
they are for something to offer.
Web site best practices -

In Hawaii - no majority
now - seen California -
majority

all of us have states in which
along - US - so does - no
gap in majority -

Team Hannon began to do
understand how to be better
citizens in their societies.

Dinner

MLK - ^{don} bring people together

Hec Dream is still alive - We
made a lot of progress - For me as
we see change in my life -

breast taking charge.

Over before people of all race
was to stand together - right in
model - not none.

law } when to two - but
seen just in my lifetime
amazing difference.

Do we have justice? Yes

1963 - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
laws / vote / rights at heart -
seen about of positive change
In many ways - look now
to talk about - can pass a
law to go out + respect laws
that land challenge - judge
even the big centers of change
not color of skin -

HRC special debt - new core to
pick up black + white company piece of
unfinished business - in America.
legacy of slavery +

but everyone - what we did to
natural enemies / Japanese in
in WW II - China America -
what we do to "Koreans" -
Different elements about race.
no one for people in
racism -

☆☆☆

Great fan for Glenn Rees
"better to light one candle
than curse the darkness -"

(we all have their keep
not far -) Let's see Hanner
lighting also 9 candles - way to
see our way ^{clearly} into the
21st century -

→ Please

Talking Points
ESPN, Houston, Texas
A NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON RACE

- With ESPN as the host, on April 14, President Clinton will hold his second national dialogue on race in Houston, Texas. The event will be broadcast live on ESPN at 7:00 pm CST/8:00 pm EST.
- This national conversation on race, broadcast on ESPN, provides the President's Initiative on Race with the unique opportunity to engage the broadest possible audience in this important conversation.
- The dialogue will examine issues involving race in the sports arena and explore areas of success, challenges faced, and areas that still need work -- including how sports teams are preparing to meet the changing demographics of their communities in the 21st century.
- The dialogue will use sports as a starting point for examining issues of race that also have broader implications in society. The arena of sports offers us the opportunity to explore an area where personal, team and community commitment are needed to succeed, just as they are needed to build "One America."
- The sports world is reflective of a number of issues we face as a society, both negative and positive. In many cases, sports has been at the forefront of breaking down stereotypes. In some instances, it has also perpetuated them.
- The program will be moderated by Bob Ley (pronounced "Lee"), of ESPN's *Sports Center*, and will include questions from the audience in attendance at the Wortham Center in downtown Houston. President Clinton will both help lead the discussion and serve as one of the panelists.
- The other panelists will include:
Jim Brown, former Cleveland Brown (NFL) great;
Vince Dooley, athletic director at the University of Georgia;
Dennis Green, head coach of the Minnesota Vikings (NFL);
Keyshawn Johnson, wide receiver for the New York Jets (NFL);
Jackie Joyner-Kersey, track star and five-time Olympic medalist;
Felipe Lopez, shooting guard and small forward for St. John's University;
John Moores, chairman of the board of the San Diego Padres (MLB);
Joe Morgan, Cincinnati Reds (MLB) Hall of Famer and ESPN analyst;
Carmen Policy, president of the San Francisco 49ers (NFL); and
John Thompson, Georgetown University men's basketball head coach.
- Among the topics to be addressed are: minority hiring in sports; stereotypes in sports; and the responsibility of athletes to give back to their communities.
- ESPN has distributed 1000 tickets (the capacity of the hall) to a diverse selection of local community groups, schools and local elected officials, including five Members of Congress and the Mayor.
- Our hope is that an honest and constructive dialogue about race on ESPN will encourage

dialogues in many communities across the country.

ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY: The President's Initiative On Race

"Today, I ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union....That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America."

-- President Clinton, June 14, 1997

The President's Plan. The President is leading the nation in an effort to become One America in the 21st Century: a place where we respect others' differences and, at the same time, embrace the values that unite us. To achieve this goal, President Clinton has developed the following plan:

- 1) Continue To Develop Policy That Offers Opportunity To All Those Who Work For It.** Taking the recommendation of the President's Advisory Board, the primary focus of our policy actions will be to enhance educational and economic opportunity. A number of policy actions have been announced, including creating education empowerment zones, increasing quality teaching in underserved areas and stepping up enforcement to stop discrimination in housing.
- 2) Engage Americans In A Broad And Constructive Dialogue.** The President is encouraging communities across the country to engage in constructive dialogues on race. He is calling on them, not only to stand against discrimination, but also to build greater understanding across racial lines, and find resolutions to honest differences. From constructive dialogue, positive actions take root, like the Akron Coming Together Project.
- 3) Highlight Promising Practices That Are Working.** Community efforts are crucial to the success of the President's Initiative on Race. In communities throughout the country, people are working to bridge racial divides and to create equal opportunity for all. The Race Initiative staff is identifying and creating a compilation of these efforts, named "promising practices," so that others may participate in them or replicate them in their own communities, schools, businesses and religious organizations. These promising practices have been highlighted on the One America web site, at the President's Akron Town Meeting and Advisory Board Meetings.
- 4) Recruit Leaders.** The President is reaching out to leaders in several areas of American life with a special emphasis on recruiting youth, education, religious and business leaders. "One America" leaders are those people who take up the President's call by organizing efforts in their communities or professions. Through their leadership, the President's Initiative on Race will reach communities throughout the nation.
- 5) Focus On The Youth Of America.** The initiative has a special focus on youth. As our nation becomes more integrated in this era of global diversity, we need the active engagement of our nation's young people, because they will eventually lead this new America.
- 6) Advisory Board.** The President appointed a small, diverse group that will advise and assist him in outreach efforts and consultations with experts. They were chosen based on their outstanding leadership on this issue and their contributions to America's ongoing dialogue about race and reconciliation.
- 7) Deliver A Report from the President.** The President will issue a report in which he will: 1) present his vision of One America, including an assessment of the growing diversity of our nation; 2) reflect the work that has occurred during the initiative; and 3) provide recommendations and solutions that enable individuals, communities, businesses, public and private organizations and government at all levels to address difficult issues and build on our best possibilities.

(Talking Points as of April 13, 1998)

THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE ON RACE: Taking Action To Help Build One America

Summary of Major Events / Announcements.
As of April 13, 1998

DEVELOPING POLICY THAT OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO ALL THOSE WHO WORK FOR IT

Civil Rights

- **New Civil Rights Enforcement:** On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 19, 1998, Vice President Gore addressed the congregation at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. The Vice President announced the Administration's proposal for the largest single increase in the enforcement of our civil rights laws in nearly two decades. Through new reforms and through heightened commitment to enforcement, the Administration will seek to prevent discrimination before it occurs, and punish those who do discriminate in employment, in education, in housing, in health care, in access for those with disabilities. The Clinton Administration's Fiscal Year 1999 balanced budget contains \$602 million for civil rights enforcement agencies and offices -- an increase of \$86 million, or more than 16 percent, over last year's funding.

Education

- **Getting Good Teachers Into Underserved Areas.** In his speech to the NAACP on July 17, 1997, the President announced a \$350 million program to attract talented people of all backgrounds to teach at low-income schools across the nation and to dramatically improve the quality of training and preparation given to our future teachers. This new program will help bring nearly 35,000 outstanding new teachers into high-poverty schools in urban and rural areas over the next five years. The President proposed doing this by offering scholarships to those students preparing to become teachers who will teach in targeted communities for at least three years. This proposal responds to the nation's need for a diverse and excellent teaching force.
- **Hispanic Education Action Plan.** President Clinton's balanced budget plan includes funding for the first-ever national action plan to help Hispanic-American students stay in school -- and succeed in school. This unprecedented, \$600 million commitment helps Latino youngsters master the basics of reading and math; it helps them learn English, stay in school, and prepare for college; and, ultimately, it helps them succeed in college. The initiative also helps Hispanic adults learn English, and expands educational opportunities for migrant youth and adults.
- **Mentoring America's Youth:** On February 4, 1998, President Clinton announced a new initiative to inspire more young people to have high expectations, to stay in school and study hard, and to go to college. The High Hopes initiative is a long-term investment -- starting with \$140 million in the FY 99 Budget -- that promotes partnerships between colleges and middle or junior high schools in low-income communities, to help teach students how they should go to college by informing them about college options, academic requirements, costs, and financial aid, and by providing support services -- including tutoring, counseling, and mentoring.
- **Creating "Education Opportunity Zones."** On December 3, 1997, at President Clinton's first Race Town Meeting, the President announced a program aimed at demonstrating comprehensive, coordinated and effective approaches to expanding opportunities for students in high-poverty school districts. These grants are coupled with a balanced approach that places increased responsibility for results on school

administrators, educators and students themselves. High-poverty school districts will be eligible for additional Federal funding, *if* they (1) adopt tough reform measures -- like those adopted in Chicago -- that make administrators, principals, teachers and students truly accountable for success or failure, and (2) in time, show real improvement in student achievement.

- **Teaching America's History:** On April 7, 1998 Secretary Babbitt and Director Stanton unveiled the National Park Service's Underground Railroad education initiative to highlight and preserve information and locations connected with the Underground Railroad.

Business

- **Supporting Minority Business Communities.** On February 10, Vice President Gore unveiled an aggressive plan to increase lending and business services to the African American business community nationwide. Through this plan, SBA is committed to more than doubling the amount of capital and credit the community receives. The Administrator has set a goal of providing over 9,300 loans African-American small businesses for an estimated total of \$1.86 billion over a 3-year period. The agency will work with partners in the effort, including the National Urban League, the Minority Business Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National Black Chamber of Commerce, the National Council of Negro Women, the Organization for a New Equality and the Phelps-Stokes Fund.

Urban Agenda

- **Tapping The Potential Of America's Urban And Rural Communities.** On January 30, 1998, President Clinton announced another part of his community empowerment agenda. The President's budget includes \$400 million for a new Community Empowerment Fund (CEF) to help bring the spark of private enterprise to America's distressed urban and rural communities. The CEF will greatly enhance the ability of local communities to invest in businesses, helping to create jobs and providing strong incentives for the standardization of economic development lending, a crucial first step in creating an effective secondary market for economic development loans. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the \$400 million for the CEF is expected to leverage an estimated \$2 billion in private-sector loans and will support an estimated 280,000 jobs when projects are completed.
- **Acting To Prevent Housing Discrimination.** At a meeting with his Advisory Board on September 30, 1997, President Clinton announced a plan to ensure better enforcement of existing laws preventing housing discrimination. Under the plan, HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo will double the number of civil rights enforcement actions by the year 2000 to respond to the increase in reported cases of serious fair-housing violations. Secretary Cuomo also committed \$15 million to 67 fair-housing centers around the country to assist in combating housing discrimination this year. Also, Secretary Cuomo now focuses on one race-based housing discrimination case each week and conducts a community forum that focuses around each case.

Crime

- **Fighting Hate Crimes.** On November 10, 1997, the President and Attorney General Janet Reno hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Hate Crimes, which featured many experts and law enforcement officers from around the country. The President announced significant law enforcement and prevention initiatives to get tough on hate crimes.
- **Fighting Crime In America's Cities.** On January 30, 1998, at the U.S. Conference of Mayors' Winter Meeting, the President outlined his agenda to help lead our cities into the 21st Century and announced new measures to help communities keep up the fight against

crime and drugs. Specifically, the President announced that his FY 1999 budget will include: (1) an initiative to hire as many as a thousand new community prosecutors; (2) an initiative to crack down on illegal gun traffickers; and (3) over \$17 billion to fund the most comprehensive National Drug Strategy ever.

Health

- **Eliminating Ethnic Health Disparities.** On February 21, 1998, President Clinton announced a new initiative that sets a national goal of eliminating by the year 2010, longstanding disparities in health status that affect racial and ethnic minority groups. The President announced that the Federal government will, for the first time, set high national health goals for all Americans, ending a practice of separate, lower goals for racial and ethnic minorities. To help reach these ambitious targets, the President also announced a five-step plan to mobilize the resources and expertise of the Federal government, the private sector, and local communities to eliminate disparities that for too long have been treated as intractable.

ENGAGING AMERICANS IN A BROAD AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

- **Presidential Town Meetings.** On April 14, 1998, the President will hold his second national conversation on Race in Houston, Texas. On December 3, 1997, President Clinton led the first Race Town Meeting in Akron, Ohio to open up a national dialogue on race relations. In conjunction with the President's Akron town meeting, there were more than ninety watch sites held throughout the nation by members of the Advisory Board, the President's Cabinet, and senior Administration officials. On Capitol Hill, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) sponsored a mini-town-hall for the D.C. area.
- **Advisory Board.** The President's Race Initiative Advisory Board is actively involved in public outreach efforts to engage Americans across the nation in this historic effort. To date, the Advisory Board has held public meetings in 5 states and the District of Columbia on issues ranging from education to employment. Its members have also individually attended dozens of meetings with a wide variety of communities and constituencies.
- **April 1998: A Month of Dialogue.** The month of April 1998 has been designated by the President's Initiative on Race as a "Month of Dialogue." A special effort is underway to involve young Americans in these conversations. From April 6-9, colleges and universities were engaged in a "Campus Week of Dialogue" organizing hundreds of race-related events across the nation.
- **Conversations That Bring Us Together.** The Administration has launched a program that enlists Administration appointees, Advisory Board Members, Cabinet Members, and Race Initiative staff to host conversations in towns and cities throughout the nation. To date, thousands of people have participated in these conversations in dozens of cities across the nation.
- **Super Bowl XXXII PSA:** In a unique partnership, the White House and the National Football League teamed up to create a public service announcement for President Clinton's Initiative on Race. The PSA aired prior to kick-off to an estimated audience of 140 million people. The spot highlighted the example of players from different racial and ethnic backgrounds coming together for a common goal, and how that is an example for all Americans. President Clinton urged all Americans to remember that we are on the same team, and that through working together, we can build One America.
- **Presidential Meeting With Conservative Writers and Academics.** When President Clinton launched his Race Initiative, he called for a national dialogue that includes voices from a wide array of views. On December 19, President Clinton brought together a group of conservative thinkers -- including Ward

Connerly, Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom, Linda Chavez and Elaine Chao -- to continue the national dialogue and listen to their opinions on race relations in America.

- **Informing The Nation.** For the first time in history, the President's Economic Report to Congress included an entire chapter devoted to reviewing trends in racial and ethnic economic inequality.

HIGHLIGHTING PROMISING PRACTICES THAT ARE WORKING TO BUILD ONE AMERICA

- **Highlighting Promising Practices.** One of the critical elements of the Race Initiative is that local communities are the source of some of the best ideas and successful programs. The Race Initiative is compiling and assessing information on "promising practices," which are examples of communities and organizations that have ideas and programs that are working to help bring people together as One America. To date, 110 such promising practices have been identified, and the list continues to grow.
- **Making Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday A "Day On" Instead of A "Day Off."** On January 19, in honor of Martin Luther King Day, President Clinton helped paint classrooms at Cardozo High School in Washington, D.C., Vice President Gore addressed the congregation at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia and the First Lady read to children in Washington, D.C. At the same time, 12 Cabinet Secretaries and agency heads, members of the President's Initiative on Race Advisory Board, and numerous other White House and Administration staff members joined Americans across the country to celebrate the Martin Luther King holiday by serving or participating in community events highlighting the importance of service. In 1994, President Clinton signed into law the King Holiday and Service Act making the holiday a day of service that brings people together, promotes racial cooperation and helps to solve problems through citizen action. This year the Corporation for National Service provided \$225,000 in grants to 73 sites across the nation to help spur service projects on MLK Day.
- **First Lady Highlights Boston "Team Harmony" Promising Practice.** To highlight successful community efforts, Mrs. Clinton visited Boston, Massachusetts on December 9, 1997 to highlight "Team Harmony," a program that brings together youth of different backgrounds. More than 8000 Boston youth participated in Mrs. Clinton's visit.

RECRUITING LEADERS TO HELP BUILD ONE AMERICA

- **Calling On Wall Street To Invest In Untapped Potential Of Our Diversity.** On January 15, 1998, President Clinton joined Reverend Jesse L. Jackson at the "Wall Street Project" Conference at the World Trade Center in New York City. The President told business executives that Wall Street must "draw on the talent and diversity of all our people in communities long bypassed by capital but full of potential." Treasury Secretary Robert E. Rubin, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, and Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Arthur Levitt Jr. also participated in the event.
- **Creating Historic Partnerships.** On February 19, 1998, Vice President Gore and SBA Administrator Alvarez announced an unprecedented agreement with the "Big Three" U.S. automakers that will increase subcontracting awards to minority businesses by nearly \$3 billion over the next 3 years -- a 50 percent increase over current levels. The agreement among SBA, General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. is an important public-private partnership that will improve opportunities for minority-owned small businesses in a major industry. It marks the first time an industrial group of this size and economic importance has engaged in a partnership with SBA.
- **Mobilizing Business Leaders.** On April 2, 1998, Vice President Gore announced a business roundtable series during an appearance on *Black Entertainment Television*. This series will be chaired by the Vice

president and will consist of four meetings with business leaders to discuss issues involving minorities and business.

- **Holding Corporate Forums Across the Country.** Hundreds of corporate leaders have participated in corporate forums held by the Initiative in conjunction with members of the President's Cabinet. These forums have taken place across the country -- from Florida to Arizona.
- **Partnering With Universities.** Nearly a quarter of America's colleges and universities have agreed to partner with the Race Initiative to encourage every college and university to conduct special programs focusing on race and other dimensions of diversity in American society. The combined membership of ACE and AACU represents over 2,100 colleges and universities across the nation.
- **Reaching Out To Religious Leaders.** Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook of the Advisory Board is leading the Race Initiative's efforts to organize the national faith community so that they too can play an integral part in the effort.

FOCUSING ON THE YOUTH OF AMERICA

- **Public Service Announcement Released.** On December 2, 1997, the President's Initiative on Race released a public service announcement developed in conjunction with the Leadership Conference on Education Fund and the Ad Council. The PSA challenges youth to become more active in eradicating racism and prejudice, and asks young people to let President Clinton know what they are doing to improve race relations in America.
- **Call To Action To Young Leaders.** On November 28, 1997, the President sent a letter to 25,000 high school senior class presidents, college and university class presidents, and other young leaders from national and local organizations. In this letter, President Clinton issued a call to action by asking these young people to each commit to participating in at least one project aimed at moving our country closer together. Hundreds of youth leaders from across the country have responded to the President's call. Many of these youth activities will be highlighted as promising practices on the One America Website at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/initiatives/oneamerica>.
- **Vice President Briefing With Youth Media.** On December 1, 1997, the Vice President hosted a briefing at the White House for youth-oriented and specialty media, such as *Vibe Magazine*, *MTV* and *Univision*. At the briefing, the Vice President spoke about the special emphasis the Race Initiative is placing on youth and activities underway to reach out to America's youth. The Vice President called on the media representatives to find ways to use their creative energies to reach young people on the subject of race.

(Accomplishments Document as of April 13, 1998)



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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Houston, Texas)

For Immediate Release

April 14, 1998

PRESS BRIEFING BY
JOE LOCKHART

Hyatt Regency Hotel

Houston,
Texas

4:20 P.M. CDT

MR. LOCKHART: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to Houston. We have some people here who can offer you some wisdom on the town hall we're doing tonight. Joining us are Judy Winston, the Executive Director of the President's Initiative on Race; Paul Begala, the President's Counsellor, who has been very involved in putting this event together; and Mr. Carmen Policy, the President of the San Francisco 49ers who will be one of the panelists tonight at the ESPN town hall. I'm going to have them take some questions on that subject. When you're exhausted on that I'll come back and clean up anything else you have on your mind.

Q Why did you --

MS. WINSTON: Well, we find that this is a unique opportunity to reach out to a community of people who might not have been involved in this dialogue on race before. Sports offers an analogy -- race and sports offers an analogy that really can be translated into the larger society. And so we think this is a great opportunity to illustrate some substantial points, using sports as an

example of the way we've dealt with race relations, both our successes and continuing challenges.

Q -- right now to say -- the Hispanic community seems to be upset with this, saying that you didn't include -- (inaudible) -- Houston as their home base.

MS. WINSTON: Well, we're here in Houston in large measure because we know there is a great diverse population here, including a substantial Hispanic population which we expect to be well represented in the audience this evening.

Q -- be specific about the group you say you're going to -- this is an opportunity to reach out to? Who are you talking about?

MS. WINSTON: Well, I'm really talking about sports fans, I'm talking about the people who generally tune into ESPN. ESPN has some of the demographics around its viewership, and it was an offer -- an opportunity that was offered to us. We are reaching out to every community and we have been systematically talking with a number of communities and a number of places across America. And this is yet another opportunity to build the audience and the number of people who are participating in this constructive dialogue on race that the President started last summer.

Q The people who tune into ESPN -- that would be white men?

MS. WINSTON: I think there's a large percentage of white men who tune into ESPN.

Q Did the President speak with Hispanic leaders from this community today at lunch? Has he dealt with them about some of the concerns in this community, and what, if so, has he said?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, he's actually in a meeting with local Hispanic leaders as we speak. It's not related to the questions that came before. We're in Houston and he's just reaching out to some of the local leadership.

On the question -- we dealt with this yesterday, on the Hispanic leaders. But let me point out again that ESPN, we believe, has done a very good job in putting together a program that we think will be interesting and enlightening. They reached out -- they put together the panel, but we did work with them as far as laying out the idea that we wanted a panel that was diverse. We believe we have a good panel. There was some discussion over the weekend while the panel was still being put together about Hispanic participation. We're very excited that Felipe Lopez has agreed to participate

tonight.

It is a good panel, bringing a wide variety of opinions and experience. And the President is very much looking forward to having a chance to sit down and talk both to the panel and to the audience that will be there tonight.

Q Can you give us a readout from the meeting that is going on now, some kind of readout afterwards?

MR. LOCKHART: Sure, afterwards, yes.

Q By focusing it on sports tonight, it's obviously generated a lot more interest in what's going on with the race panel as opposed to other town halls where there's been very little interest. Why not do this with, say, musicians or Hollywood stars or people who people are interested in listening to?

MR. BEGALA: Well, let me praise first the President's approach on sports. I think you're right, that people are interested in sports; it is a useful -- it's not a perfect microcosm, but it's a useful prism at least to look at the successes and setbacks we've had on issues of race. And it may well be that there are other similar venues in the future where the President and the initiative might do that. I wouldn't rule that out at all. But, yes, to the notion of we're trying to call attention to important issues that play themselves out in sports, but also are reflected in the larger society. Yes, we plead guilty.

MR. POLICY: I agreed to come up here because I was told you'd only have questions for me about the upcoming draft this weekend. (Laughter.) But I think, speaking again from my own little corner of the world that involves only the NFL, I think that what we are doing in the NFL is particularly relevant in terms of the President's initiative on race because I think we have a unique opportunity to score a victory. I think that we are on the verge of really taking some giant steps in terms of getting something that's very, very productive, very, very positive done.

I feel that we are really on the verge of throwing tokenism out the window. I like the leadership that I see from Paul Tagliabu (phonetic). I think that the alarm clock has gone off with the owners of the NFL. We understand that this is an issue that has to be addressed, and we're addressing it at the right time for the NFL, because we have peace within the NFL -- we have labor peace. We have a significant and rather comfortable TV contract. We have our game pretty well in hand. So now is the time to look at our infrastructure, now is the time to look at the kind of relations that we have with the talent within our own ranks.

Q You say you're on the verge of throwing tokenism out the window. What examples of tokenism are in the NFL right now?

MR. POLICY: Well, there are certainly feelings amongst

certain minority assistant coaches and other people connected with the NFL from outside that there is a form of tokenism just by virtue of certain interviews that don't result in jobs, and at times there is not even interviews. So I think there is a perception of tokenism, and in our business, perception is the equivalent of reality.

Q How many African American head coaches are there in the NFL?

MR. POLICY: At the present time, three. There could have been four, but Tyrone Willingham, the head coach of Stanford University, decided to stay in the college ranks.

Q The polls show -- not the polls, but the lineups of which sports have more minorities show that the NFL has the worst record.

MR. POLICY: I disagree with that.

Q Well, 90 percent white head coaches and managers, versus -- in the NFL -- versus 76 percent in the NBA, 86 percent in major league baseball. How can you say that you're at a turning point? What's happened -- what's going to happen in the next year or so that is going to wipe this away?

MR. POLICY: Well, I think just the steps that we've taken as of late. I do disagree with your evaluation. But, forgetting about that, I think the important part is the second aspect of your question -- what are the steps we're taking and where are we going with it. I think that we're really formulating not so much an affirmative action policy as an affirmative interaction program that's going to open up the pipeline to bring that talent pool closer to the decision-makers, closer to the top executives and ownership in the league that traditionally have not been exposed to the kinds of talent that we're talking about -- to the assistant coaches, black and white.

I think that what's happened is the Commissioner has indicated that all doors will be open. We're having an historic meeting in May at our spring league meeting in Florida, at which time head coaches and several assistant coaches, black and white, will be there as part of the ownership meeting, engaging in seminars together, but more importantly, engaging in other meetings together and socializing together.

We're going to probably engage in what I consider to be a major effort to fine-tune the kind of talents that some of our minority coaches already possess, but bring them to a better hue -- just simply, how do they interview, how do they deal with the media, how are they going to approach the family of a man who faces scrutiny every morning when he wakes up because he owns a team in that town

and he's got to answer as to whether or not they're winning or losing.

Q You mentioned specific coaches -- what about -- in ownership? There are no minority owners in the NFL currently --

MR. POLICY: I'm not sure I heard your question. Did I hear you say -- question about minority ownership?

Q -- is owned by a woman -- is she still the owner of the Rams?

MR. POLICY: Yes, she's the majority owner of the Rams.

Q So you have no minority ownership in the NFL.

MR. POLICY: Well, I think minority ownership is an issue of dollars. I don't think there's any question that -- for example, if Bill Cosby stepped up to the Commissioner's Office and said, I would like to buy a piece of or all of an NFL team, the Commissioner and several of us in the league would be breaking our backs to find a team that he'd be able to buy. I don't think there's any question about minority ownership -- it's an issue of capital and the willingness of the person who possesses that capital to put it into a sports franchise, which, by the way, sports franchises are not notoriously successful in making money. So you've got to have a special impetus driving you to want to own a professional sports franchise before you put that kind of money into it.

Q -- question of money, critics have argued that a brand of institutional racism are the exclusionary prices. In other words, \$124, for instance, towards the Washington Wizards, play basketball in Washington, a predominantly black city, the crowd is white. You're own program, you fill up your stadium with a predominantly white crowd. Is there any talk whatsoever of beginning to get to the root of the problem in terms of ticket prices so that people from neighborhoods can actually enjoy these teams, their so-called teams?

MR. POLICY: Forgive the shameless plug, but the San Francisco 49ers have as part of their stadium project a community section where we're going to dedicate approximately 3,000 to 5,000 seats to the community. They will be sold at approximately \$15 a seat in today's prices. The league has agreed that those seats will not be part of our manifest for determining whether or not there's a blackout for TV purposes. I think that that's a step in that direction.

But it's probably not enough. There's a certain elitism that goes with our sporting events today that we have to address, that has to be really brought back down to earth and has to be given an opportunity to be expanded amongst our fan base. So we don't want

to become a TV only event. We need the interrelationship with the fans in the stadium.

Q -- sort of locate us in the race initiative now -- how much more time do you envision the panel being -- when do you envision the President making his final report?

MS. WINSTON: The Advisory Board is chartered through September 1998 and will stay in existence until that time, until the end of September. We expect that the President's report will be issued to the American people towards the end of the year or early next year.

We've conducted over the past several months a number of dialogues including the Advisory Board meetings. In addition, I should remind you just in terms of where the Advisory Board is that we actually have three operational vehicles. We have a study, a dialogue and action component of our initiative. And while a lot of focus has been placed on the dialogue piece, the constructive talk that we've been engaged in, you should also know that over the course of the last seven months we've also had lots of action as well.

The President has announced several substantial policies including the largest percentage increase for the civil rights enforcement budgets. He's announced the Hispanic education plan, a mentoring program for youngsters in our poorest rural and urban areas, the High Hopes program. We have a number of initiatives with respect to minority businesses, increasing contracting of minority businesses, and entered into a memorandum of understanding with the three top automakers. So there are lots and lots of things that we've been doing as part of the race initiative to advance the ball, so to speak, in this area, including having all of these meetings in which we are also presenting information and receiving information about critical areas of race relations in the country.

Q Is September enough time? I mean, it's such a huge problem. Would there be a benefit to extending --

MS. WINSTON: We understood from the beginning that we were not going to be solving the race relations problems in one year. What we -- where we will be at the end of this year, we will be at the end of the beginning. What we will be doing, what the President will be doing in issuing his report is talking about what we've learned this year, what we've accomplished and what more we have to do. And he will be presenting to the American people a word plan, a blueprint for where we go from here.

One of the critical things that has been done over the last seven months is we've been identifying promising practices all over the country -- these are community efforts that are focused on improving race relations in those communities, bringing people together across racial lines to engage in problem solving, to engage in problem solving not necessarily even around racial issues so much as issues of common concern to a community -- housing opportunities,

education opportunities. And we've been sharing this information with communities all across the country, communities that have indicated that they want to be involved, that they want to work towards racial reconciliation. And so we will be sharing in the President's report a full compendium of these promising and best practices.

Q How do you respond in the big picture to these folks in a couple of the different meetings -- this one and the one I think in Denver -- that there are groups on the outside looking in, and chiefly, this is a discussion about the relationship just between blacks and whites? How do you respond to that?

MS. WINSTON: Well, I respond by saying, one, this has never been just a discussion between blacks and whites. We have recognized from the very beginning that this country is and will continue to be a racially and ethnically diverse country -- even more so in the 21st century. And what we are doing is we are looking at our future and trying to understand better how we can get to the point where we both respect and celebrate differences at the same time united by some common and shared values.

The fact of the matter is that we do need to understand that the past has consequences. We need to look at our history and understand the way we have related to one another across racial lines, and that necessarily requires us to look at certain issues in race relations that affected African Americans. But we certainly are looking at and studying and talking with American Indians, Hispanic and Asian Americans, as well as ethnic Americans, traditional -- folks who have come to this country, come from Europe and other places.

So we feel very strongly that we've not left any community out of this discussion. We know that there is the opportunity for much more in the way of constructive conversation, and we are inviting everyone to come and be part of this. And we have taken lots of important steps, I think, to make sure that we are inclusive in all of the work that we've done over the past seven months.

Q Mr. Policy, what do you think the White House or the President can or should do on this issue? What do you expect out of tonight? What do you expect down the road to come out of the government on this issue?

MR. POLICY: Again, speaking only from the perspective of the NFL, I think he's done for us what he should do -- he's opened up the dialogue. He's created this environment that we're getting together here tonight and we're talking about it; we've prepared for it. I've had conversations with the Commissioner and the league office about this, other owners. It's being televised to at least a significant part of America. And I think that's what he has to do and that's what he's done in terms of our industry.

Now, going outside of, again, my little corner of the world, I can't comment. But he's certainly had an impact on us. And I think that there's going to be a lot of good that's going to flow from the kind of dialogue we've had tonight. I'm not saying that something wouldn't have happened if it weren't for tonight, but I can tell you what -- something is going to happen a lot faster.

Q Can you tell us in planning tonight's town hall what specifically you learned from Akron that you maybe tried to apply, and what you're shooting for, what kind of conversation you're hoping for?

MR. BEGALA: Well, one of the things that I've learned from watching this initiative as it's developed is that you're always going to have imperfections, that the reason that this is a year-long conversation, not a one-day dialogue, is because it's going to take some time and it has taken and continues to take some time to look at all the various aspects of this issue.

So I, for example, have learned not to judge the entire initiative by one event -- even this event, which I think tonight's event will be quite successful -- but instead to take a year-long effort that has included, I think, important policy proposals as well as study, as well as the conversations like we're having tonight, and to have that sort of appreciation for the fact that this is a year-long effort.

And in terms of, I think, the media filter, it's trying to strike the right balance. You obviously want people's attention and that will always generate some sense of controversy. And sometimes we've been criticized for not having enough, and sometimes we've been criticized for having too much. And that's really out of our hands.

Q When have you been criticized?

MR. BEGALA: When have we been? Well, I don't want to start pointing out criticisms of the initiative, but there have been several times when I think there's been plenty of -- there's been an abundance of controversy. And that's not bad. The reason you get that is because this matters. This is the single most difficult issue in American history, I would argue. It is something that no President before Bill Clinton ever called the country to look at when we weren't in one way or another at war with ourselves over race. And the reason no other President has tried this is because it's so very difficult. And that's why you've had so much, I think, attention to this, and that's good.

Q Do you think improving race relations will turn out to be President Clinton's legacy?

MR. BEGALA: I don't use the L word in my job. I think that one of the many things that the President is doing and will continue to do for the next 1,000 days, and has done for the last

five and a half years, is call the country to make -- to look at all the strengths that comes from our diversity and, looking into the 21st century, how best to take this wonderful tapestry of diversity we have and make it a strength and stitch these ties that bind together, rather than tensions that divide us.

Q -- media filter that you just talked about -- this room is generally filled with white men. Is there a problem with the way that this is being covered, or is the media not devoting enough resources to minorities?

MR. BEGALA: You know what, I'll wait and see how you all cover tonight's event and then complain in the morning.

Q -- on another topic, Kenneth Starr's repeated efforts to try and make the Secret Service testify. The Secret Service said that it's very unhelpful to their jobs, that they don't want to do it. What do you think of Mr. Starr's efforts to try and do this?

MR. BEGALA: I don't have anything to say about that. Those are issues out of my hands, being handled by the Justice Department and the independent counsel.

Q Could I get you to clarify something you said earlier? I want to make sure I understood it -- that ESPN was an attractive venue, from your point of view, predominantly because it has a heavily white male audience?

MS. WINSTON: No, I didn't say that. I said we were looking at -- reaching another audience, an audience that it may not have reached. I was responding to a question or a comment about -- the fact of the matter is that I think that the audience for ESPN, as I understand it, consists largely of men who are sports fans, although I have to admit I watch a lot of ESPN. I like sports and have two daughters who watch as well. But I think that the demography of the viewership suggests that these are sports fans who would be particularly interested we believe in understanding the way this issue relates to their interests. And we think that by engaging this issue of sports and race we will spark an interest in the larger discussion of race in society, and so many of these sports fans will begin to understand better the way that race affects their communities, their schools, the places where they work. And we expect that the dialogue, the conversation would continue even after the program ends this evening.

Q -- conservative critique I've heard from numerous commentators who say sports and athletics is precisely a rejoinder to affirmative action, that there's no affirmative action on the basketball court or on the football field or on the baseball diamond, and yet minorities excel. And therefore, it's a rebuke to the idea that affirmative action is needed in other venues.

MS. WINSTON: Well, I think that there has been in recent years certainly a reaching out to minority communities to interest youngsters in sports and to make sure that there are opportunities to identify the most talented individuals who can participate in these sports, and indeed, to provide opportunities that help develop that talent. I don't think that that is very different from what we are doing and what has been done in terms of affirmative action. So I guess that that would be my rejoinder, that we are seeing in sports in many instances the same kind of constructive outreach that provides opportunities to develop talent and to identify talent.

Q How many NFL football teams are there? (Laughter.)

MR. POLICY: I want to thank you for being a season ticket holder as well. (Laughter.) There's 30 NFL teams at the present time, with one more ready to join us shortly in Cleveland.

Thank you very much.

Q Joe, may I ask about tomorrow in Alabama -- I understand that Clinton is actually visiting areas in Alabama where the black community --

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I know the President is planning to make stops in two neighborhoods, both that were severely affected by the tornadoes last week. One is Pratt City, which I understand is primarily an African American community, and then he's going to go over to the chapel that I think everyone has seen who has been watching the news over the last few days.

The President is going there to demonstrate the federal government's commitment to helping these people begin to rebuild their lives. And certainly the tornado didn't take a direct route and crossed many neighborhoods, and we're going to show that the federal government is committed to working with state and local officials, with FEMA, and within these communities to help people rebuild. That's the message tomorrow.

Q -- lawmakers in Montgomery have said that the attention given -- is mostly white area.

MR. LOCKHART: I would say that we have an excellent team at FEMA. There's been excellent work and cooperation among FEMA and the local communities both at the state and local level, and they've gone to where the problem is and they've been working without any other thought but to helping these people rebuild their communities and their lives.

Q -- (inaudible) --

MR. LOCKHART: No. I think we fully intend to -- we just started making arrangements yesterday to go and I think one of the first places they went to look at as a possible site was Pratt City, where we are going. So I'm not aware of any impact -- first of all, I'm not aware of the groundswell that you're speaking of. But we are going to the areas that have been very hard hit by this natural disaster and going to demonstrate our commitment to helping them rebuild.

Q What can the President add to what is already done?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, I think the President can go -- the President is the President, and he's speaks for our government. And I think he wants the people down there to know that we are committed to providing the resources that they need to rebuild those areas. And I think he wants to personally go down and review the work that's being done by the good offices at FEMA, and also at the state and local level.

Q One more on -- (inaudible.)

MR. LOCKHART: I would say that FEMA does excellent work around the country. James Lee Witt has completely revitalized that agency from where it was when he took over and it has gone from what was a problem in the federal government to actually one of the model agencies. They do excellent work, and they go to where the help is needed. And that's the work that they're in the business of doing, and that's what they do.

Q (inaudible.)

MR. LOCKHART: The President will go tomorrow and meet with some people in sort of a roundtable format at a disaster recovery center, and also tour some of the worst affected areas.

Thank you very much.

END

5:00 P.M. CDT

Message Sent To: _____



01:54:23 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Christine N. Macy/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: BACKGROUND DATA ON HBCUs for Graduation Speeches

----- Forwarded by Michael A. O'Mary/OPD/EOP on 04/28/98 01:53 PM -----



Sterling Henry @ ed.gov (Sterling Henry)

04/27/98 12:43:52 PM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: BACKGROUND DATA ON HBCUs for Graduation Speeches

To: All that are preparing Speeches to be Presented at a Historically
Black Colleges this Graduation Season

RE: BACKGROUND DATA ON HBCUs and HBCUs & the Clinton Administration
(I hope it Helps!!!!)

Any Questions Call me at 708-8667

HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
"A NATIONAL RESOURCE"

The Historically Black Colleges and Universities are sources of accomplishment and pride for the African American community and the entire Nation. The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, defines an HBCU as: "...any historically colleges or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was and is the education of Black Americans and that is accredited college by the Secretary of Education"

The majority of the 105 HBCUs are located in the Southeastern United States, the District of Columbia, and the Virgin Islands. They included public and private four-year and two-year institutions. HBCU enrollment ranges from colleges with fewer than 500 students, to universities with graduate and professional schools and enrollments of more than 12,000 students. Most are more than 100 years old with Cheyney State University of Pennsylvania, founded in 1837, being the oldest of these institutions.

HBCUs provide a significant bridge of upward mobility for African American young people. HBCUs enroll 16 percent of all African American

students in higher education. (Of the approximately 300,000 students, 80-90% receive Federal Student Assistance)

Although HBCUs constitute only 3 percent of America's institutions of higher education and matriculate nearly 16% of all African American students enrolled in four-year colleges, they produce nearly a 1/3 of all baccalaureate degrees earned by African American Students and award the majority of master's degrees and first - professional degrees earned by African Americans nationwide. A significant percentage of HBCU graduates are first generation college graduates.

According to the US Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics 1994 Report on HBCUs, HBCUs trained and graduated:

- * 44% of African American students who were awarded Bachelor's in the Physical Sciences;
- * 41% of African American students who were awarded Bachelor's in Mathematics;
- * 38% of African American students who were awarded Bachelor's in Computer Science;
- * 38% of African American students who were awarded Bachelor's in Life Sciences;
- * 37% of African American students who were awarded Bachelor's in Education;
- * 25% of African American students who were awarded Bachelor's in Engineering;
- * a majority of all African American lawyers, teachers, dentists, and doctors in the country.

Overall, HBCUs have produced over 60% of all African American college graduates.

HBCUs offer all students, regardless of race, an opportunity to develop their skills and talents. These institutions train the young and the not so young, who go on to serve in domestic and international professions in the private and public sectors.

In addition to their achievements in producing undergraduates, HBCUs have a major and growing impact on the development of African American PhD's. For example: in 1986-1988, 9 of the top 10 schools identified HBCUs as the baccalaureate origin for the Black Ph.D. Graduates. Blacks who attend HBCUs as undergraduates are more likely to persist and earn graduate degrees than African Americans who attend Majority Schools.

*In 1996 Howard University and Florida A&M University led the nation in recruiting National Achievement Scholars, who are among the most highly sought-after African American students in the country.

*Howard is the largest producers of AA Phd's and MD's on this Planet.

*Two African American Nobel Laureates are HBCU Graduates: novelist Toni Morrison (Howard) and Civil Rights Leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (Morehouse College)

*1997 Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida was selected by Time Magazine/The Princeton Review, as their first ever "College of the Year".

*Xavier University of Louisiana leads the nation among US Colleges in placing African American students into Medical Schools. 50% of all African American Pharmacist living in the South are Xavier

Graduates.

*Morgan State Univ. in 1997 produced:

45% of all African American graduating in Elementary Education in the State Maryland;

67% ofin Chemistry.....

74% ofin Electrical Engineering

96% ofin Civil Engineering

100% of.....in Engineering Physics.

(These numbers are similar in ever stats where HBCUs are Located)

Historically Black Colleges and Universities are successful in their missions, in part of the experience of 150 years. From the earliest beginning until today, HBCUs have had an unwavering commitment to providing Black youth with a first rate education in nurturing, and supportive environments, with high expectations of the students.

In an article written over 70 years ago, in the Journal of Negro Education, reported on the role these institutions have played through the years: "First, they have taught race pride; second, they have developed Negro leadership; third, they have been instruments working for the adaptation of the Negro to his environment; and, fourth, they have been centers for independent thought."

These basic principles remain as true today for these institutions in keeping with the vision of their founding fathers over 100 years ago.

These institutions are second only to the Black Church as the most revered institutions in the African American community. Managed and led by African Americans, historically Black institutions of higher education are a national resource to be treasured, nurtured and developed.

BLACK COLLEGE ALUMNI IN THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION:

President has selected top talent from HBCUs to help him to carry forth his agenda. Including:

*Alexis Herman,

Sec. of Labor and Former Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison, - Xavier University

*Togo West

Sec. of Veterans Affairs, and Former Sec. of the Army

*Former Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary, - Fisk University;

*Former Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Epsy, - Howard Univ.

*Bob Nash, Director of White House Personnel - Howard University

*Harris Wofford, CEO,Corporation for National Service - Howard U. (Law School)

*Loretta Argett, Assistant Attorney General for Tax - Howard U.

*Benard Anderson, Assistant Sec. of Labor, - Livingston College

*David Satcher, US Surgeon General, - Morehouse College

*James Joseph, US Ambassador to South Africa, - Southern University

*Dr. John Hope Franklin - Chair, Pres. Init. on Race, - Fisk U.

*Judith Winston, Executive Director President Init. on Race,- Howard U

*Singleton McAllister, General Counsel - AID, - Howard U.

*Jena Roscoe, White House - Office of Public Liaison, Howard U

*Sterling Henry, White House Initiative on HBCUs - Howard U.

17 members of Congress who are graduates of HBCUs

CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS:
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (HBCUs):

Strongest Executive Order on HBCUs on Record:

President Clinton signed Executive Order 12876 on HBCUs on November 1, 1993.

This order is considered the strongest Executive Order on HBCUs on record. Executive Order 12876:

- institutes Office of Management & Budget oversight for compliance;
- requires that a senior administrator in each agency have oversight in implementing the Executive Order in that agency;
- requires more stringent reporting requirements and specific dollar goals; and
- reestablishes a Presidential Advisory Committee on HBCUs;

Currently \$1.3 Billion in Federal Support go to HBCUs, \$250 million above FY '92. (Over \$5.8 Billion over the last 5 Years)

The 30 Federal agencies under this Executive Order increased their total support to

Historically Black Colleges by 22.5% over the funding level for FY '92. This figure represents approximately 5% of the total funding for all institutions of higher education.

27 of the 30 agencies increased their funding to HBCUs over the time period, many substantially.

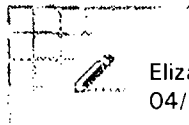
Federal funding for HBCUs ranged from all forms of student financial aid and direct institutional subsidies, to facilities and equipment, grants, facilities fellowships, to major research projects.

Other Distinguished HBCU Alumni:

- *Marian Wright Edelman, Children Defense Fund, - Spelman College
- *Martin Luther King, Jr., Nobel Laureate, - Morehouse College.
- *Toni Morrison, (Writer and Nobel Laureate), - Howard U.
- *Alice Walker, Writer, - Spelman College
- *Alex Haley, Author, - Elizabeth City State University
- *Earl Graves, President of Black Enterprise Mag., - Morgan State U.
- *Mary McLeod Bethune, Educator & Advisor to Presidents- Baber-Scotia College
- *Marva Collins, Educator, - Clark Atlanta Univ.
- *Thurgood Marshall, Supreme Court Justice - Howard U.
- *Kweisi Mfume, President, NAACP - Morgan State
- *Andrew Young, Former UN Ambassador to the UN - Howard U.
- *David Dinkins, Former Mayor of NYC - Howard U.
- *L. Douglas Wilder, Former Gov. of Virginia - Howard U.
- *Wilson Goode, Former Mayor of Philadelphia, - Morgan State U.
- *(Late) Ernest "Dutch" Morial, Mayor of New Orleans, - Xavier U.

Message Sent To:

Janet.friedl @ OST.dot.gov
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Michael A. O'Mary/OPD/EOP
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Elizabeth R. Newman
04/15/98 08:22:37 AM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: 4-14-98 ESPN Town Hall

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Houston, Texas)

For Immediate Release April 14, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT IN ESPN LIVE A CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT SPORTS AND RACE: RUNNING IN PLACE?

Cullen Theater
Wortham Theater Center
Houston, Texas

7:00 P.M. CDT

MR. LEY: Thank you, Mr. President, for being here. We deeply appreciate it. I know your race initiative has been underway for seven or eight months. There are problems in this country, issues in this country. As we talk tonight race and sports, what can this dialogue bring to the nation at large, for there are bigger issues than simply those in sports?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, let me thank you and ESPN for doing this for the second time, and thank our panelists for being willing to put themselves on the line and be honest and open and accountable to the audience.

I'd like to say a couple of things I think we can achieve. First of all, America, rightly or wrongly, is a sports crazy country and we often see games as a metaphor or a symbol of what we are as a people. So I think by dealing with both the positive things which have happened in terms of opportunity for people of all races, and people getting together and working together, and the continuing challenges in athletics, I think just by doing that we learn more about the rest of the country and what needs to be done.

Beyond that, I think that it's important that people see that in athletics in America, that the rules are fair, that people get their fair chance, and I would hope, too, that the concern for the lives of the players off the field, off the court, and what they're doing when their athletic careers are over and whether they still will be full and equal members of society, closing the opportunity gaps that have existed historically between the races in our country -- whether there's something we can do about that, because that clearly will have larger implications for the society as a whole.

But all of us as Americans, I think, should be both proud of how far we've come when we see what racial and ethnic and religious tensions are doing in other parts of the world, and at the same time, should be very determined to continue to meet the challenges that still exist, because our country is becoming more and more racially and ethnically diverse, and if we can be one America, celebrating our diversity, but knowing what we have in common, then it's the greatest asset I can imagine for us to take into the 21st century. But it's something we really have to work at as I'm sure all these folks will tell.

MR. LEY: Well, we've got 90 minutes to try.

Let me turn to the gentleman seated to your left, Jim Brown. You were on our panel 14 months ago. Put your finger in the water here, take the temperature -- what's the last 14 months brought to your mind on this continuum of race of sports?

MR. BROWN: Well, the first thing I'd like to say is that I'm very happy that the President visited Africa and deal with the scientific fact of humankind. For all of my black brothers and sisters out there, I would like to say there's no reason to feel inferior because, as the President pointed out, mankind started in Africa, and we're all of that particular race.

Having said that, I would like to say that I feel that in the last 14 months that we have made tremendous progress. Contrary to common belief, white America has stood up in so many cases -- going back to Paul Brown, dealing with the 49ers, dealing with Bob Kraft of the New England Patriots -- we have had tremendous opportunities. If we take advantage of those opportunities and use the rules of economics, we will then find our rightful place in this society.

Use the positive spin. Talk to those who have been positive who have helped us, rather than addressing the negative aspects of racism.

MR. LEY: Well, John Thompson, several times in the last few years -- '89 you walked off over issues with the NCAA; '94 there was nearly a boycott by the Black Coaches Association. Is it still an issue, though, in sports where you have to almost verge on civil disobedience '90s style and bring attention to these issues?

MR. THOMPSON: I don't know whether you have to do a civil disobedience, but I think you've got to create a consciousness of the fact that there's still a lot of people who are able to participate in the cotton field who is not able to be the foreman or not able to be the boss, or not able to have that opportunity. And that's what I think you try to do. You've got to be able to talk about it sensibly without people becoming so sensitive to it and acting as if it doesn't exist.

Several kids who are able to play at universities in this country who wouldn't even be considered for a job. And that's a fact. It's a sensitive subject; it doesn't mean that you become hostile, but you cannot close your eyes and act as if this doesn't exist. And I think that that's very important for us to discuss it, and that's why you need to be commended for having this type of a show, so we can discuss it intelligently.

MR. LEY: Well, why is it so sensitive?

MR. THOMPSON: Why is it so sensitive -- it's very sensitive because of the very fact that, first of all, a lot of folks want to act as if it doesn't exist. It's obvious by the fact that if you look in our society today at the number of kids who participate particularly in basketball, which is the area that I'm in -- if you look at the number

of athletic directors that are in this country, if you look at the number of basketball coaches that are in this country, it's amazing to me how a person can be so competent as a player and so incompetent and his knowledge leaves him once he graduates from a university. And that same university does not select him to participate at any level.

I think that becomes sensitive when you discuss that with folks. It shouldn't be sensitive. You should be able to openly sit down and you should be able to talk about it. But it's a fact.

MR. LEY: Keyshawn, you're of the young generation of athletes. Your experiences vary, certainly, from many of the other people on the panel. You talk in your book about your perceptions of racism in sports. Give me the box-top answer. Where is it now to your mind?

MR. JOHNSON: I think when I first got drafted into the National Football League there were things that were said to me as an individual player as everything being treated fairly and equally. I didn't see it that way my rookie year, which is a very sensitive subject. But also, in my mind, I wanted to do these great things for this team and help this team win, and at the time, we had individuals working within our organization that for some reason they didn't see it in the same point of view. So when I decided to write my book, those are things along the line that were race topics and issues that preyed in my mind and I thought that needed to be discussed.

MR. LEY: You take none of it back?

MR. JOHNSON: Excuse me?

MR. LEY: You take none of it back? You stand by what you wrote two years ago, right?

MR. JOHNSON: Oh, yes, definitely.

MR. LEY: Oh, Carmen Policy, you work in football, and you have to make personnel decisions. I'm sure you're familiar with Keyshawn, with what he had to say about the Jets and personnel decisions. What was your reading of that, and as you look at personnel decisions that have to be made, how they can be interpreted?

MR. POLICY: Well, I think what you had in Keyshawn's book was a young man speaking his mind. I think he was speaking his heart, as well. I think that having talked to Keyshawn before tonight's program began, he feels differently about his experience with the Jets today than he did last year. And I think he'd write a different book if he had the opportunity to do so in five years.

And I think that you have to understand that we're dealing with very young athletes who are expected to be professionals. We're dealing with 21, 22-year-old passionate young men. And we have to take that into consideration when we bring them into the ranks of the pros.

MR. LEY: Let's talk about hiring practices, though, in your league. You know, two winters ago there were 11 vacancies -- 0 for 11 on minority hires. Even in the past year, with a special head hunter in place for the NFL, reportedly that head hunter was not even contacted -- a gentleman who was supposed to find minority candidates -- as these positions were filled. Are you satisfied with what the NFL is doing?

MR. POLICY: I think we have to understand a given. I don't believe there's an owner in the NFL that if he felt that an individual was the best candidate to be the head coach of his team and if that candidate were black, he would not get a job. There's no question in my mind he'd be selected. But I think the process by which we go about selecting our head coaches and the time frame into which it's squeezed is so flawed that we don't have the opportunity to reach out, go through the kind of barriers that are there and find that talent pool that's available -- and should be available -- to make our business a better business and make our sport a better sport.

MR. LEY: Denny Green, how did you break through that barrier?

MR. GREEN: Well, I don't call it a barrier, I call it a hurdle. And I think a hurdle is something that you can jump over, and I'm clearly ready to jump over that hurdle maybe for the rest of my life. I don't want my three children to have to jump over the exact same hurdle.

I think one of things that we're doing here now is we're bringing a tremendous amount of focus on sports because we love sports. And I look at the National Football League; I've tried to be as involved as I can, as well as trying to bring a championship to the Vikings, but also to try to be involved with the Commissioner, Paul Tagliabue, and the rest of the, I think, leadership of the National Football League. But if you have a goal, you have to be able to measure the goal. If you measure the goal, 0 for 15 in the last three years, we have to say that the goals are specific, they're measurable, they're attainable, they're realistic and timely, and we failed in reaching our goal. We have not had any coaches hired in the last two years and I think that's wrong.

MR. LEY: Let me ask the President, if I could, sir, so much of this is about numbers in sports and you know Dr. Richard Lapchik (phonetic) very well and his numbers that take into account -- should we be drawing conclusions from the numbers -- 0 for 15 over the course of three years -- does that say something?

THE PRESIDENT: It says something. We just have to make sure we know what it says. For example, very often we assume that those numbers are there, there's some maybe even an illegal practice, which may not be true. But if you go back to what Carmen said, one of the things that I've seen -- or go back to what John Thompson said -- and you know, Georgetown is my alma mater so I always try to cheer for John and try never to disagree with him. (Laughter.) But there's some -- let's assume that there is absolutely no conscious racism in any of these decisions. I have been now in an executive position, I've been President for five and half years nearly. I was governor of my state for 12 years. I've hired hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people. And every position I've ever held, I've always hired more minorities than my predecessors. When I was governor, I hired more minorities and -- more than all my predecessors combined. No one ever accused me of giving anybody anything for which they weren't qualified.

But what I found out was, if that was goal, and you knew it was important, there was a certain network by which -- the easy network by which those decisions are made, and you've got to break through the network and change the rules if you want to do it. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: So the numbers are important then?

THE PRESIDENT: Number are important. But my reaction was, when Keyshawn's book came out -- you know, I'm a big football fan, I saw this and I saw him play in college. You know, if I were running his team, I'd just want to make as many touchdowns as I could, you know. And what I think you have to do is to kind of -- Carmen went around here and he really prepared for this tonight. So I think that's what we need people to do for these coaching positions. We need to think if this is a problem, we want more minority coaches in the NFL, we want more minority coaches in the college ranks, you have to say -- and we're making an honest effort to pick the most qualified people, why aren't we producing them?

I'd say there's something wrong with the recruitment system, with the pool, and you've got to rethink that and make a real effort. My experience, my personal experiences, if you make a real effort there are lots people out there. Since I believe intelligence and ability are evenly distributed across racial and ethnic groups, if you look at it, you can find it. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Let me go to John Moores who owns the San Diego Padres. John, we're very happy that you're here tonight. We did this 14 months ago and baseball was unable to give us an owner. And going through the Commissioner's Office this time around, I will tell you, it was difficult, and finally we directly asked you and you did appear. Baseball, when it's graded out, subjectively, doesn't grade out well in this category. Are you satisfied with what your industry is doing, as an equity shareholder, to hire fairly?

MR. MOORES: Oh, absolutely not. I think baseball is clearly the most diverse sport and it has more opportunity to show that diversity in hiring. One of the surprising things I found in baseball is that there are a

number of extremely qualified people who have been passed over for reasons I don't understand. In particular, I'd like to put a plug in for Davy Lopes, who I think is probably the most qualified person on the planet who's not a manager of a major league team. And even though I would hate to lose him as one of our coaches, he clearly would add something to another club.

I'd like to see him in the American League rather than the National League. (Laughter.) But that does give me pause and you wonder why those things happen.

MR. LEY: Why do you think they happen?

MR. MOORES: Well, I think the country has come a long way. And I'm terribly pleased to be in Clyde Drexler's hometown right now, where -- (applause) -- Clyde will restore the University of Houston and Phi Slamma-Jamma to its rightful position. (Laughter and applause.)

MR. LEY: You're playing to the house. (Laughter.)

MR. MOORES: But I must say, what Clyde would do -- the reception this community -- you just heard it -- has given Clyde is overwhelming. The university is having trouble keeping tickets in stock. That would not have been the case when I was a student there many years ago. We had a great white coach, but under no circumstances could that school have thought about anybody other than a white guy. So I think society is clearly moving in the right direction. But obviously, we have miles to go before we sleep.

MR. LEY: All right, you're a baseball owner, Joe Morgan, you made your name and your fame in baseball. You were in our first town hall meeting 14 months ago, at which baseball did provide an owner at that point. What is your take of the temperature of the water of the last 14 months?

MR. MORGAN: I think it has made a slight change. I think sometimes progress is subtle, like racism. It's hard to measure sometimes the progress. For instance, we have now -- meaning we, baseball -- has hired another minority manager, Jerry Manuel, but prior to that, there had been, like, 33 job openings and minorities had not even been given interviews.

You can't say that we should have X-number of major league managers who are African Americans. I don't believe that. All I've ever wanted or asked baseball to do is to make sure that when an opening occurs, that African Americans are part of the interview process. There's no way in my mind that if Davy Lopes -- who I happen to agree with John -- Chris Shambless, Cito Gaston -- there are a lot of players who are qualified to major league manager and they're not even interviewed when these job openings occur. And that's the problem I have. Like I said, you can't use numbers. I just feel like if you put them in the interview process, maybe, as Ron Shuler said, you can be overwhelmed -- as Jerry Manuel did, to get the job. But if you're not interviewed, you're not going to get the opportunity to prove that you're capable of being a major league manager.

And I guess I go back to what John said; some of the greatest players in baseball history have been African Americans. Yet once they're finished, there's no place for them to go. And that includes the broadcast booth; that includes management positions, front office positions, even coaching positions. I think you'll find that there have been more African American hitting coaches than anywhere else -- not bench coaches who are helping make the decisions, but hitting instructors, because they're able to get along with the players well.

So my point is, I just want them to be part of the interviewing process. Give them an opportunity to prove to the management people that they are qualified. If you don't ask them the question, they can't give you the answer. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Vince Dooley, in Division One college football, over half the players are African American, 93 percent of the head coaches are white and 94 percent of the time in the last three years, the job has been filled from a white coach to a white coach. Are those numbers -- can you explain them and are they defensible?

MR. DOOLEY: Well, before speaking about the numbers -- and I will answer that question -- I would

like to make this comment to the President, because as some point in time in his life, the history will be written about his administration and there will be two sides to that history. But I think that one focus that will be true of any historian that will write about the President, that this initiative, this particular initiative of getting people to talk about race relations and about diversity, is going to be the most positive thing that ever happened. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

MR. DOOLEY: And I say that because I see it around the country and I see it in my hometown of Athens, Georgia, where the University of Georgia is. My wife has a radio call-in show and she now has a series on race relations where leaders of black in the community, and in the white community, and the Asian community now come together and discuss this.

In college football we've made a lot of strides -- we've made a lot of strides in inter-collegiate athletics. What we need more of is the John Thompsons, we need more of the Tubby Smiths in the world. When you have a Tubby Smith -- he came with us only two years, but we can at least brag that he got some of his last training before he went to Kentucky to win the national championship. (Laughter.) But when we have those -- and we have a lot in basketball and I think that a Tubby Smith in the south has done more for sports and the opportunities than a lot of things that have happened recently. What we need is more success in college football. Dennis Green was a very successful college football coach, but he left us. And what we need is more Dennis Greens, and when we have that, that's going to help our situation.

MR. LEY:

MR. LOPEZ: Well, for myself, I don't really think so. I think that I got the help that I really needed within the people around me. I've been fortunate to know a lot of great people within the basketball area, and those have been some of the things that have helped me be the person that I am. And I think the opportunity that people could get by just being in such a different racial community is that you can get so much out of -- from so much different people. And that definitely you can learn from anything that the race can bring to you. And I've just been fortunate, because of what I have learned from other people.

MR. LEY: Well, Jackie, let me ask you, in East St. Louis, so involved with the kids, and also on the flip side now, the business world -- where do you think it's easier to talk about it, among kids -- among suits?

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: Well, personally, I think having the dialogue, it starts there, but we can talk and we can talk, but people need to listen and people need to do something about it. And for me, even working with kids, we talk about diversity, a melting pot, you're hearing from great players, coaches, owners, and you're talking about also that setting an example -- and you wonder why kids don't want to be in administration or why they don't strive to want to be a major league owner, or NBA owner -- because they don't see that.

But then you see, we come together and we talk about this race initiative, this program that we're trying to do and trying to not just reach kids or reach the suits. For me, as a woman, there are things that we have to deal with, just being a woman in general. It's obvious the color that I am; that should not be an issue. It should be that if the person is qualified, that person is qualified. But then you talk about the networking. If we don't have the opportunity to be in that environment, to be a part of that network, I don't see how you're going to get to that next level.

Even with myself, with trying to run a foundation, and you bring in people to set up -- to ask questions. They ask questions that's not really related to what you're trying to do. They don't even share your vision, so that automatically eliminates somebody that might be qualified because they did not ask the right question, or they're on a quota or point system and those points don't add up.

So it's subtle racism, it's hidden racism. There's hidden agendas and there are things that we as people have to deal with. But also we as people have to be listening and want to deal with it, and not just brush things

under the table and say, oh, well, when the next person comes along -- because it's going to be the next person, the next person after that. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Well, we are talking about it tonight. We are going to step aside for a commercial break, and as we continue we'll look at the issue of stereotypes in sports -- images such as Cordell Stewart quarterbacking for the Steelers; or Keith Van Horn taking it to the hole for the New Jersey Nets. Things that people think about and sometimes talk about, as we continue live from Houston.

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MR. LEY: Let me ask Keyshawn this. You've got Rich Chrebet on your team -- Wayne Chrebet, excuse me -- and you've got Jason Sehorn who plays in the same stadium, a white cornerback that has been talked about in stereotypes. We talked to some NFL players who line up against Sehorn and they told as black players, I can take this guy. Do you think that there is a subtle point even in a professional athlete's mind about the stereotyping by position, by appearance?

MR. JOHNSON: I think so because it comes, first of all, it comes from the media. I think that's where it starts, because back a while ago, the media points and targets certain athletes at certain positions. Most runningbacks are African American; most quarterbacks are white; most cornerbacks are African American except for Jason. I played with Jason in college; I line up across from Jason -- I don't even look at him like that, I look at him as a cornerback.

Then on the flip side, you walk back and somebody says, well, a white dude, he beat you up. (Laughter.) Afterwards, he's done a great job, then the media takes it and turns it into wanting to make him into the next great white corner. I don't know what cornerback was a good white cornerback in the day from -- (laughter.)

MR. LEY: Do you think it is the media, the media is the reason, or there are other reasons why he is the only white cornerback in the National Football League?

MR. JOHNSON: I think so. I think there's a reason why he's one of the only white cornerbacks. It has to do with the people upstairs and some of the coaches. They go out and they time these players and in that position you have to run a certain time, you have to be fast, you have to be aggressive. And a lot of times, because of the stereotypes, white athletes they feel are not aggressive enough to play that position to stop individuals like myself or individuals like Jerry Rice, big receivers.

So a lot of time you don't find an athlete -- Jason Sehorn's bigger than me. He stands about 6'4", about 220 pounds, and can probably run like sub-4-3, which is on the board, on paper, is like a superstar athlete. I guess in so many words, certain white athletes, you just don't find that. They say that you find the smart quarterback that can make the quick decisions, when an African American quarterback can't make that quick decision.

MR. LEY: Let's go outside for our first question, and we'll get back to the panel. Let's go over to microphone B here for a question.

Q Good evening. My name is Michael Waters. I'm 18 years old and student vice president at my high school. Mr. Brown, I've heard that many people believe that blacks are physically equipped better to play sports than many whites. Do you feel that this statement is a form of discrimination against whites, and more in particular, white athletes?

MR. BROWN: I think the lack of education -- I think these stereotypes that we're talking about, these cliches that we're using up here is really not getting to the point. If I might make this one point -- Keyshawn, I understand what you say, but in the '60s and the '50s we dealt with discrimination. No one up here has made an important point about economics. We have -- (applause.) We have athletes and coaches that are black that are

making millions of dollars. You have not brought that subject up. You have not said to them, why don't you hire black lawyers, agents and managers? (Applause.)

Those black lawyers, agents and managers would be handling those investment dollars. Right now the black investment dollars go into other neighborhoods. (Applause.) We stood up and we talk about one more black coach. One more black coach is a symbolic situation. Those investment dollars are the way to rebuild communities, show people that we can have racial unity, and that we understand the principles of economics.

So I'd like to see someone address that and get away from these simplistic stereotypes. I don't particularly care about what anybody thinks about -- (applause.)

MR. JOHNSON: I have an African American attorney. (Laughter.) But I didn't hire him because he was African American, I gave him the opportunity for the application, to fill it out, to inquire, but I wanted to know if he could handle the job. I interviewed many whites, all across the board, some of the top agents in the business -- as well as my investment financial people happen to be black. But they fit the mold of things that I want to do. I want to get back into my community, put the dollars in industry -- (applause.)

MR. LEY: Well, Jackie, you're an agent now. How important is that to you to have African American clients and to begin to do what Jim talked about?

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: Well, for me personally, when I brought up the issue about time to find an executive director for my foundation, and working with a board, but I also having them to understand, too, that if I don't give this person an opportunity, who will? And I'm in a position where I can do that. And this is just working from the community base, but also trying to be an agent, trying to work with other just young athletes.

Because I find that sometimes athletes take for granted that they're just going to get certain things, and you have to make sure that you put them in a position or they're in a position where they can take care of their business, and can take care of their finances, but also trying to help you along the way, too. But I think there's a fine line there, that as an agent, I have responsibilities, too, but also as I've tried to go after student athletes, I want to make sure that they not only represent themselves in a good way, but also represent and stand for some of the same things that I stand for.

MR. LEY: Let me ask John Thompson, if I could -- just quickly, John, what went through your mind when you heard Jim Brown talk about the need to have African American attorneys? You have David Faulk, one of the most powerful legends in sports.

MR. THOMPSON: I can't use profanity on the show.

MR. LEY: Well, we're cable, John.

MR. THOMPSON: No, well, I think that's the struggle that we're in in society. I probably receive a lot of criticism because of my outspokenness about racial issues, and David Faulk represents a lot of my players. Unfortunately, I find it very difficult to fire David because he's white when I started out as a young coach at Georgetown and no African American wanted to help me, but David did. And David took the time to work and be concerned about players that weren't superstars.

Now that John Thompson is successful and has successful players, I find it very difficult to fire David Faulk because the pigmentation in his skin is white, besides the fact that he is competent and he's my friend. (Applause.)

But let me caution you about that statement. It pulls at me and it also hurts me because I am also very sympathetic with what has occurred in our society, and I am very sensitive to the fact of what Jim is saying and what she is saying. But how far do you go? Do I pick a black dentist, do I pick a black lawyer, do I pick a black -- society has caused that. I didn't cause that. Society made us racial -- I hate to use the word "racist" because

we all get very nervous when people start talking about racism. But society has made us racial. But you have to constantly be in that struggle of being able to deal with that.

I had a young man that happened to be white, was the only young man that wanted to do the broadcasting at Georgetown when I started off. We couldn't get on television, we couldn't get on radio. A young white kid came up to me at a game one time and said, if you let me do it, I'll go out and sell the advertisement. I let him go out and sell the advertisement, and once he sold the advertisement and put us on the air, some blacks came to me and said, you're an Uncle Tom because you got that white boy. That's the struggle that society has caused, and that's why these kinds of conversations are extremely important.

The racial composition of my team -- whites will come to you and say, because my team is predominantly black that you're a racist. Well, I'm an Uncle Tom to blacks; I'm a racist -- (laughter) -- and I'm going to tell you something. I don't give a damn what either side says. (Laughter and applause.)

MR. LEY: You want to win, right? You want to win.

MR. THOMPSON: What is very, very important for a John Thompson is consciously in my mind to know that I am doing what is best. But society created that problem. I have to question myself in everything that I do.

Let me just say one thing to speak on what Mr. Dooley said. You know what I have a problem with? I have a problem with the John Thompsons and the Tubby Smiths of society. I'm sick of it. I'm sick of it. And I'm going to why I'm sick of them. It's simply because there are a whole lot of white coaches who aren't successful. Blacks don't have to win the national championship to get an opportunity to coach. (Applause.) And you hear that in relation to education, you hear that in relation to professors. You ask, why don't you have more black professors. I will take a black if he's competent. Well, hell, there's hell of a lot of white failing. (Laughter.) All we want is an opportunity to get out there and to try and a right to fail also. And respectfully I am saying that to you. (Applause.) I'm sick of us having to be perfect to get the job. (Laughter.) I don't want to be perfect to get the job. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Having said that, Vince, when you hired Tubby Smith several years ago you were quoted as saying, he's the only guy I wanted, I went after him, he was the only guy I interviewed. And I know a columnist in Atlanta raised the question, could you, would you have been able to say that about a white coach -- the flip side of the coin? Could you have said that or would you have been under such political correctness pressure to say, no, we canvassed and this is my coach? Tubby Smith, African American, that was your hire.

MR. DOOLEY: Yes, I could have said that if I knew in my mind who I wanted and that person, white or black, was the one I wanted, then he would be the only one that I would interview -- that's right. I think I would do that, because, going with what John said, I believe that I'm doing what I believe is right, regardless of whether --

MR. LEY: Don't you acknowledge, though, the reality in 1998 that if an athletic director said, I've got -- especially in college basketball, where you have such a majority African American composition of athletes, you have to give at least the appearance of a fair and open search, but that to take a Tubby Smith, who had been trumpeted in the media and is African American, that's a politically safe choice. It's a good choice, but it's politically safe.

MR. DOOLEY: Well, when one searches, one does not necessarily have to interview. If you look -- that the interview might be the least most important thing of all the things that you'd like to find. The history of success -- and we do want to hire good coaches. I mean, as an athletic director I'm not just looking to hire coaches, I want to hire good coaches, the best coach that I can hire. But it may not necessarily be that I interview that individual. Certainly the history of success of that individual goes a long ways and rates much higher than how someone can be able to give just an interview.

MR. LEY: We've covered a lot of ground. Mr. President, I'd just like to get your impressions of the last 15 minutes at this point -- kind of a mid-point.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I appreciate the honesty of the interchange and that shows basically the -- actually the progress that's been made on this issue in athletics. Why? Because I basically -- I agree with the point Jim Brown made, but I respect what John Thompson said. That is, if you have personal experiences with people who have helped you to achieve your goals, even if they're of different races, and you're not going to turn around and abandon your friends or abandon people who are doing a good job for you. And that's good.

The point Jim is making, however, is a different one and I'd just like to sort of -- because when we get to the last section, there's another issue I want us to get to, which is related to this -- but what he's pointing out, there's still a huge opportunity gap in our society by race in terms of economic standing. That's the only point he was making -- and that if we want a stable society, we want large middle classes among African Americans, large middle classes among Hispanic Americans, large middle classes among Asian American immigrants -- first generation immigrants. That's the point Jim's making. And that if a group, a certain group within the African American community, let's say, has amassed his wealth and then has to reinvest it, to the extent that they can also help to create this larger middle class while helping themselves and doing something, that's a good thing.

I think you can say that and still respect John's decision, which I think we all do, and respect any other individual decisions that would cross racial lines. But the effort to create a middle class, people whose names will never be in the newspaper but who helped to build a big, stable society, I think that's a very important goal for us here. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Do you think athletes have a special responsibility to have a social conscience to act, to be involved in the communities, or is that unfair?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think it's unfair. I think, first of all, I think anybody with a special gift has a special responsibility. And if you've got a special gift, whatever the gift is -- if you're a great singer, if you're great at making money, if you're a brilliant scientist -- I think if you have a special gift, if God gave you something that other people don't normally have, and no matter how hard they work they can't get there, then you owe more back. That's what I believe. So, yes, I believe that. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: We're going to step aside for just a moment. We'll continue -- Felipe will get to that point -- as we take a commercial break and we'll be back in Houston in just a moment, continuing with our town meeting, live on ESPN.

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MR. LEY: Welcome back to Houston as we continue live with the President and our panel here in Houston.

Denny Green, I know you wanted to jump in. You talked in your book about a scenario that you'd like to buy an NFL team, a specific team at the time. You've also been outspoken in trying to help assistant coaches learn how to interview. How do you see the access to the power structure?

MR. GREEN: I think the access has to be improved greatly. I think there's some attempts to get there, but we have a long way to go. I remember on March 20th, last month, screaming headlines in The New York Times, "give us a chance to compete." That was not by a coach to the National Football League or any other special interest group, it was by the CEOs, chief executive officers, of the banking, insurance and the security business. Why? Because everybody wants to have a chance to compete on the level playing field. The President is going to have his hands full because they have taken matters into their own hands.

What we want as coaches is a criteria that will give us a chance to compete in the National Football

League. And what I said in my book, "No Room for Cry-Babies," was the National Football League has a new way to pick its players. This is not the '60s or the '70s, '80s, and '90s, a level playing field for the players, but it's still using the same old system of picking its coaches. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: What about picking its owners? If you had a group together with \$300 million in credit and somebody with a heck of a lot of money -- you talked about it and it stirred up a hornet's nest -- about buying the team. Could you buy a team?

MR. GREEN: Well, you can buy the team because no one puts their own money into buying the team. They borrow the money from the banks. And I think -- (laughter) -- as long as you can service the loan, you can buy the team. (Laughter and applause.)

MR. LEY: But how do you explain the fact throughout all of major professional sports there's not one top guy of color?

MR. GREEN: Well, first off, you have to have focus, you have to have opportunity. And I think that's what it comes down to. I never had an opportunity to buy a team in the National Football League and I know of only a few African Americans that have had a chance -- or basically even people of color who have had a chance to be involved in the ownership level. I think it's a process. We all were players; at one point you become coaches, managers. At one point, if ownership is going to be there, it comes from the same idea of equal access, equal opportunity, looking at me as a man first, and not a black man. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Jim, go ahead.

MR. BROWN: It isn't a matter of a chance of acquiring a team. It's a matter of amassing the amount of dollars. And I'm sure that any African American group today that raised enough money could purchase a team. In my mind, there's no doubt about. I'm sorry, sir, in that sense.

We talk about chance and opportunity and being allowed, yet our economic dollars are never pooled in a manner to give us that kind of power. If you talk about access to a major corporation, you talk about Michael Jordan, you talk about Tiger Woods -- they're with Nike, right? They have the ear of Phil Knight. On a massive scale, from the standpoint of delivering black folks into any arena, what are they doing? That's all I'm saying. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: John Thompson, you're on Nike's board of directors -- (laughter) -- I'm sorry, but let me ask you first the question as a capitalist. I mean, when prominent black Americans and people in athletics get together and chat, do they float the idea, gee, you know, a couple of million here or there -- men of substance could get it together. Why hasn't it happened?

MR. THOMPSON: I think it hasn't happened for a lot of reasons. I think, first of all, in defense of my great company, Nike, I think -- (laughter) --

MR. LEY: You've done it again, Jim. (Laughter.)

MR. THOMPSON: I think one of the things that we have to remember and give Phil Knight credit for is the fact that Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods were put in a position that very few blacks in the history of this country have ever been placed in, including this gentleman who is probably one of the greatest ever to be in athletics. Never was he provided with an opportunity to have national commercials or national dollars with his talents. So let's give credit where credit belongs first.

MR. LEY: Mr. Brown?

MR. BROWN: Because Nike is benefitting --

MR. THOMPSON: Very much benefitting --

MR. BROWN: Those individuals have made that company very successful. (Applause.)

MR. THOMPSON: I also feel you would have made a lot of companies extremely successful had they given you the opportunity that these people did not get. (Applause.) That's the point. The point is, is that Phil Knight was one of the very first in the history of this country to ever give blacks that kind of opportunity. Do they talk about it? Certainly they talk about it.

I think also what the gentleman to my right, who sees the seams in a baseball, says -- (laughter) -- is that you have to be able to get the money from the bank, as Coach Green said. Those are relationships with people from financial houses which we don't have. We don't have those relationships. Nobody -- Michael Jordan would be an absolute idiot to take his money and put it into a baseball team. He would be an absolute idiot. What Michael Jordan has to be able to do is to be able to get that money from the financial houses and that is extremely difficult for any black in this country to do.

MR. LEY: Jackie, jump in. Go ahead.

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: I also like to add, too, whereas taking a company like Nike -- they are reinvesting into the Boys and Girls Clubs, putting \$5 million to \$10 million across the country, trying to help inner-city programs throughout the country. And that's a great program -- (applause) -- as well as taking old shoes, recycling those shoes and turning them into different courts across the country.

And then you have -- even with Michael Jordan now, to brand Michael, now to have his own, say, company, he is his own CEO. Those are things that -- I think they're doing a great job. I mean, you use Michael as one example; then you have Tiger Woods. Tiger Woods is 21 years of age. He's embarking on a whole new realm of things and he's having the Tiger Woods Foundation, he's doing different things in the inner city. And that's also bringing dollars into those inner cities. When Tiger Woods goes into that city, people are coming out to see Tiger Woods. And that's reinvesting into that community, bringing dollars that wouldn't ordinarily come there, and also bringing different races all together to be a part of a great event. (Applause.)

MR. BROWN: Sophistication and sentimentality is two different things. John says that -- when I brought the subject up of the millions of dollars within the black athletic community, I was talking about a capital base. That doesn't have anything to do with a bank. There are entrepreneurs all over this country that have gotten together, pooled their money and created mammoth businesses.

Jackie, it is great that these individuals go into the community, work with the Boys and Girls Clubs, and so forth. That's wonderful because they're working with children. But when you talk about what white America doesn't do, and you ask this man to hire somebody because he's black, or you talk about the numbers and you skip right over the fact that we have the resources to create any industry that we want to if we come together and use the same principles. That's just the way it goes. (Applause.)

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: But also, you could talk about creating those resources, but you've got to deal with the individual. Do I want to do that? You've got to take it to each one of those individual you're talking about and building that base.

MR. BROWN: You have a choice.

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: If you don't want to do that -- you can't force them to do it. I understand --

MR. BROWN: We all have a choice.

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: Yes, we have a choice, and that choice is not for us to do that.

MR. BROWN: And so does that man, and so does that man.

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: Right, that's true.

MR. BROWN: That's my only point.

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: But when you talked about blacks building that capital, they no sooner got that capital -- if they don't want to put that capital in there, we can't force them as human beings.

MR. BROWN: Does that go for whites, too?

MS. JOYNER-KERSEE: That goes for whites, too. But they go and they do that. They would do that. But you can't criticize one if they don't want to do it. If I made all this money and I want my money invested here, I have a right to do that. That is my choice. That's why we live in America, because we have choice. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Let's go upstairs for a question.

Q Hello, my name is Fernando Tamayo. I'm a senior at Washington High School. My question is, you, the panel, mentioned white, black, Asian. Not once have I heard you mention Hispanic. (Applause.) Not only are we the fastest minority growing, we are also helping America grow economically.

MR. LEY: Let me ask Felipe. Felipe, do you think Hispanics are lost in the -- especially the sporting world?

MR. LOPEZ: It's a great point which he made. We are one of the communities that every day is growing rapidly. And I think the things that we are doing for this country should be pulling out there, into the world, because people really have to realize that we are making a great contribution to this country.

And I think one other thing that we, as Hispanic people, should realize is that the more we work together, the more opportunity we are going to get in society. And that's why we all have to stick -- as a community we have to stick together, because no matter what, we want to be looking out for each other. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Let me make one observation about this. Hispanic Americans are the fastest growing ethnic group in our country. Historically, they have done very well in America through an enormous work ethic and an enormous commitment to family.

There was a wonderful movie a couple of years ago with Edward James Olmos and a number of other Hispanic actors and actresses called *Mi Familia*. It was a wonderful movie -- some of you may have seen it. But we have a problem today that athletics could play a role in solving with the Hispanic community, and I hope we'll get into this a little more in the last section -- that is, what about all the athletes whose names you never know, who play in junior high or high school or college or even in the pros? And what about the rest of their lives? I hope we can talk about that a little bit before we leave.

But last year, for the first time in modern history, the graduation rates from high school of African Americans and white Americans were virtually identical -- the first time ever. The graduation rates of Hispanics is much lower; the dropout rate is higher. Part of that is because there has been a heritage in Hispanic immigrant families of kids dropping out of school and going to work to support the family.

The problem is, today if you don't have a high school diploma and a couple years of college, it's hard to get a job where your income grows over time. So one of the things that I'm hoping is that we'll have more Hispanic young people in athletic programs and at least in high school; that will get more big coaches to convince them and their brothers and sisters to stay in high school and hopefully go on to college. Because America is not

going to function very well if we have a Hispanic dropout rate that's 20 percent higher than the rest of society. (Applause.)

MR. LOPEZ: I agree with the President, because that's one of my points of view. As a basketball player, I just try to use my basketball skill just not to be a basketball player, I want to be someone in life besides a basketball player. I want people to see me not just, oh, that's the guy that played basketball. Obviously, I go to school and I'm getting educated because I want people to respect me, not just for the individual that I am.

And for myself, I just try to use my knowledge to enrich a lot of independent kids, to a lot of Spanish-speaking people, especially in the area of New York and other areas -- to see not just the -- of being better by just trying to go to school, just trying to get themselves better, just trying to find themselves -- not just a job, just to survive right there. To try to see the future. Because if we see ourselves in the great future, we're going to be a greater community.

MR. LEY: Do you feel a special burden because there are so few Hispanic basketball players? You're going to be visible next year as a rookie. You're going to be drafted in two and a half months. Do you feel that?

MR. LOPEZ: I feel like I'm one of the few. And basically, it's like I say -- I just try to use any type of opportunity for me to spread myself out, basically to get a better idea, to get more information to those people who are there. Obviously, not everyone got the same talent. For myself, I feel that if I get the opportunity to play in the pro league, I'm going to be one of the great influences to give back to my community. Why? Because in order for me to be successful, I have gotten the help from a lot of people in my community.

MR. LEY: Okay. Let's go outside here for a quick question.

Q Good evening. My name is Martin Garcia. I'm from Jesse H. Jones Senior High School. And my question goes to Mr. John Moores. Mr. Moores, the majority of Hispanic players are from foreign countries. Why isn't anyone doing anything to promote Little League in the inner cities?

MR. MOORES: That's a good question. Actually, baseball is doing a lot currently and something that I'm real proud of. When I was a kid, a lot more baseball was played than it is today, and there may be a lot of reasons for that, but baseball is a great game. It, as someone once said, can be played by people that are not 7' tall or 7' wide. More like a lot of Americans. And I think the country has lost something as more kids do not play baseball.

In my adopted state of California, that state has not done a very good job of keeping kids in middle school active in sports and it's a shame. Nothing would make me any happier than to see a lot more kids playing Little League, Pony League baseball.

MR. LEY: Let's hold up on the numbers, Joe. I know what you want to say. Go ahead.

MR. MORGAN: Well, to answer his question a little further, baseball does have a program called RBI. But in my opinion, that is not sufficient, because when you look at what baseball has done in foreign countries -- they built academies in foreign countries to find athletes to play in major league baseball. Yet, we haven't tapped all the resources that we have in this country -- in the inner cities.

I'm often asked the question of why there are fewer African Americans in major league baseball now than there were 15 years ago percentage-wise. The answer is there are not any black scouts hired by major league teams; they're not any academies like basketball -- they have clinics in the inner cities to give these kids an opportunity to know that they're wanted. Baseball has not reached out to the African American in the inner cities in the last few years.

If they were to have more African American scouts, you would see more of the Willie Mayses come out of the inner city because people would feel like there is an opportunity for them. But major league baseball has

chosen to spend their money overseas -- they've built academies in a lot of different countries, and that's fine.

I think everyone should have the opportunity to play major league baseball. But I think there are resources here in this country that we have not tapped. I have personally dealt with Leonard Coleman, the National League President, sent him resumes of a lot of kids who have played minor league baseball, did not reach the major leagues, but want to stay in baseball. I sent him their resumes. Leonard Coleman sent those resumes out to a lot of the major league teams, with assurances that these kids were qualified to be major league scouts. Not one of those kids have ever been hired to be a major league scout. Therefore, we continue the same process. And my point is without more African Americans going into major league baseball, the talent pool for managers, coaches, executives -- which we have none -- you're not going to have that opportunity. We're not going to have that pool to choose from.

All the African Americans who have been given the opportunity in baseball have been very successful as far as management is concerned. Bob Watson won a world championship as the only African American general manager. Cito Gaston, all the managers who have been given opportunities have been successful. Yet, there has been a six-year interval period since they have hired another one before Jerry Manuel was hired.

So it's hard for me to say that major league baseball is doing a lot to help in the inner city when I look at what basketball has done and Nike in the inner city, and Michael Jordan and so forth and, of course, Jackie. But I just feel that baseball needs to do a little bit more. I still believe that baseball is America's game -- I still believe that. I mean, I still believe that still should be our sport. And I just think that we need to do a little bit more in the inner cities to give these kids an opportunity. And I think that needs to start with African American scouts. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: John, let me ask you this question -- I know you probably don't know the entire flow-chart -- do you have any African American scouts with the Padres?

MR. MOORES: You know, I do not know that.

MR. LEY: Honest answer, thank you.

MR. MOORES: But, you know, I'll tell you what, if we can get a Willie Mays, we'll have a serious talk about it when I get back. (Laughter.)

MR. LEY: Mr President?

THE PRESIDENT: I just wanted to follow up on something Joe said and something that the questioner said because he made a slightly different point. You know, we had one of the best World Series last year we've had in a month of Sundays. I mean, everybody loved the World Series -- it goes down to the last game, at the end of the game. And everybody was thrilled with the story of the young Cuban pitcher and how his mother finally got out of Cuba to come watch him pitch. And he's saying, but I've got a brother at home who's an even better pitcher than I am. And as strained as our relationships with Cuba are, it's virtually more likely that you can be a Cuban player in major league baseball than a Cuban American from Miami or New Jersey.

And so it's not just African Americans. You've got all these Hispanic Americans here who are in inner cities. (Applause.) And we now have got the very exciting Asian -- Japanese players in major league baseball. But America is full of Asian immigrants. And, the baseball folks who are here, I really think that we haven't answered it fully. The truth is that there are tens of thousands of kids in every state in this country who are not in any kind of athletic program unless they're in a football or basketball program.

Now, the mayor here and the former mayor, Mr. Lanier is also here, he started a program with thousands of inner city kids in soccer and golf programs. (Applause.) And it may be that -- I'm just saying that maybe one specific thing that could come out of this meeting is if we could actually bring baseball back to kids who aren't in the football or basketball programs, it might be a great gift to the future.

MR. LEY: It's certainly a question that has been out there for the last few years -- African American involvement in the major leagues. We'll get to that in just a second. We're dreadfully behind on breaks. We're going to take a break right now and continue in just a moment with our town meeting -- the President and our panel talking race in sports, whether we're running in place. (Applause.)

* * * * *

MR. LEY: And welcome back to Houston. We continue our conversation on race in sports, whether we are running in place.

Little role reversal here, Keyshawn, you don't want to answer a question, you'd like to ask one. Go ahead.

MR. JOHNSON: I want to ask a couple of powers that be -- the athletic director, the owner of the Padres, and Mr. Policy --like, when I'm done playing professional sports I want to know when you guys are going to put something together to -- not only do we put money in your pocket as players, but when it's all over and said and done, put us in a position to be the vice president of your team or in a power position to help other minorities out.

MR. POLICY: Well, if I may start, Keyshawn I might remind you that the teams put some money in your pocket, too. (Laughter and applause).

MR. JOHNSON: I remember putting the money in the pocket when I put all that money in the university's pocket -- now, I'm not getting the education part of it. But that for so many years, the education part goes out the window when you're done athletically. They say they're training your athletic skills for an education, but when we go back to these universities to try and get hired as athletic directors or head coaches or any power position, nine times out of 10 the door is slammed, and you're not given that opportunity. And that's the same way in professional football.

Even though you put dollars, millions of dollars, in our pockets, it wouldn't be there if the television rights weren't there and the money wasn't there for that. (Applause.) On top of that, I want to know why the owners -- we put this African American thing together to own a team, these new franchises coming up in the next few years. If an African American team, an African American group put this money together, would we get the opportunity to put the team in Los Angeles or put the team in Cleveland?

MR. POLICY: Your question -- or Houston -- (applause) -- they're waiting for their Oilers. (Applause.) Your question sets the stage for a pretty good analysis as to what's happening in the NFL today, and really, I think, that the President's initiative, and the country as a whole are going to be able to enjoy some victories that are going to be accomplished in the area of race relations and the area of the advancement of minorities -- not only to the head coaching ranks, Coach Green, but also to the front offices of the NFL, to the executive positions, to the vice president's desk and offices, and to other positions where decisions are made.

I think that what you're witnessing is an age of awakening. We sort of drifted off into a slumber when we felt that there was no overt racism -- everybody's heart was pure. When I look and see a candidate in front of me, I don't see a black candidate, a white candidate -- whoever is the most qualified is going to get the job and our hearts, our souls were comforted, and we've kind of gotten lazy.

But the alarm clock went off. The alarm clock's gone off, and we now realize that there is a lack of opportunity that's created by a flawed process. So we've got to correct the process, and we're doing it in the NFL. The Commissioner has taken a very, very strong stand, and I think he is going to be successful -- not only because he is committed to the changes that he wants to bring about, but because ownership is behind him a thousand percent.

And just like the President's initiative on race, the perfect time is now for the NFL to strike. We don't have a crisis within; we don't have a crisis without. We have labor peace. We have a very comfortable TV contract -- thank you very much. (Applause.) We have a situation at hand, where we're now able to look internally and deal with our infrastructure and, in effect, repair it, give back, as the President said, because the nation has been so good to the NFL. We're the number one passion of sports viewers in America. (Applause.)

Yes, Joe, even greater than baseball. (Laughter.) So let's not forget the good things that are happening. Positive things are occurring. We're having a meeting as you know, Denny, down in Florida in May. It's a first in the history of the NFL, where not only the owners and top executives are getting together, but we're bringing approximately 200 coaches -- not only head coaches, but coordinators and assistants. And for the first time, this pool of talent is going to mix, truly mix, with the decision-makers and create, Jackie, the kind of network you've been talking about.

So there's positive things happening, Mr. President. And I think the alarm went off -- we're up now, we're paying attention to it. To Keyshawn, I think you'll be playing for a lot of years, and apply for a job. (Laughter and applause).

MR. LEY: Let's go upstairs again to our balcony for another question. Your question upstairs, please.

Q Good evening to you, Mr. President, and other panel guests. My name is Dennis S. Brown, and my question would probably go to Keyshawn Johnson. I recently heard an NFL quarterback state that he got so excited after one game that he decided to go in and shower with the black guys. And then the question was asked, are you saying that blacks and whites don't even shower together. And he said, well, for the most part, no. My question is, is that true and if it is, what message is that sending?

MR. JOHNSON: I don't know what NFL quarterback that you heard, but, obviously, he's not educated to the fullest. Whoever it is that's out there, he's left out somewhere in the cold because we all shower together -- (laughter) -- you set me up. I mean, you know, for the most part, everybody mingles in the locker room. On every team, there's sections -- whether it's black, white, Hispanic, whatever it is -- individuals mix. You know, you especially mix in a locker room. Off the field, you do what you want to do, you be around whom you want to be around. But in terms of the New York Jets locker room -- and that's the only professional locker room I've been in -- there was nothing ever said around my locker room that had anything to do with race, other than jokingly statements. And we all understand that is jokingly. And sometimes that can offend certain individuals, but at the same time, we do know it is jokingly.

MR. LEY: All right, we were at this point supposed to be wrapping things up, but the President has graciously agreed to spend a little bit more time with us this evening, so we'll have a chance to ask some more and answer some more questions. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: That little boy --

MR. LEY: We're going to him.

Q My name is Jesse. I'm 13 years old, and I'm half Mexican American and half Irish. This question is for Mr. Morgan. I was wondering that since it's almost impossible to make it big in professional sports, I was wondering do you discourage minority youth in trying to achieve this goal in sports and instead, encourage them, more towards making their studies in school work? (Applause.)

MR. MORGAN: My answer is that both mix very well. You can play athletics, but you have to think about school, just like Keyshawn said. He got an education going to college; now he plays professional sports. After professional sports, he can use that education to further his lifestyle and to improve his lifestyle even. But I never discourage a kid from trying to chase his dream of being a major league baseball player or a professional athlete. But I think it's up to you -- the kid -- and the parents to make sure that they do their studying and get their education because education is far more important and will last longer than the claps you get for hitting the homerun or scoring a touchdown. (Applause.) But I never discourage a kid from trying to be a professional

athlete. I think they can go hand in hand. I'm very fortunate I was able to play professional baseball, but I also have a college degree. So you can do both.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, I think it's very important. You know, I get a little fed up hearing people say that it's very important for kids to get an education. Very few people in our society educate themselves for the sake of enrichment. They educate themselves for the sake of opportunity. And if we provide an opportunity, people will be educated. (Applause.) So it's not it's a little bit ridiculous. (Applause.)

People strive, blacks strive to be athletes because that's what they see. That's what that little Hispanic kid was saying up there when he indicated that you're not talking about me, I don't see me, I'm not going to go get an education if I don't see me. (Applause.) And I think it's very foolish and a lot of wasted time when we harp on people getting an education if we don't provide them with opportunity. We don't do that. I don't educate myself for anything that I can't make a dollar from. And that's what you do. (Applause.)

And I think that we've got to stop living this dream. These kids aren't stupid in the street. I mean, if you see -- if I have an opportunity to be the President of the United States, I'm going to go out and work to be the President of the United States. I know damn well I can't be the President of the United States -- (laughter) -- so I'm not going to do it. But I also will not work hard in school if I'm in a position where I cannot be a professor at a university, or I cannot be a basketball coach. So it is really fruitless for us to keep harping as if people aren't interested. They're interested in education, but we've got to have opportunity. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Okay. Let's get this question out here. Go ahead please.

Q Good evening, my name is Tiffany Singleton. I'm a 17-year-old senior at a high school in Houston. My question is for Mrs. Jackie Joyner-Kersey. Mrs. Kersey, I am a female African American honor student at my high school and oftentimes I'm burdened with the obligation to carry the expectations of both my race and my sex. As a female African American and sports star, do you ever -- and also as the only female upon the panel -- do you ever feel -- (applause) -- have you ever felt the obligation to carry the expectations of an African American and also as a female?

MS. JOYNER-KERSEY: Thanks for the question. For me, it's just as a person, I try to do my best. And I try to live up to my own expectations. I know what it is my family asks of me and what I try to do, but I've never tried to put myself in a pressured situation or try to do more than what I am. What you see is what you get. I don't try to be someone else and I don't try to live out someone else's dreams or be someone else. I go out there and do what I can do. I know the things that I'm capable of handling and I try not to put myself in a position where I can't handle certain things.

So, as a woman, yes, I try to work hard to make my dreams become a reality. These are the things that I worked for and these are the goals that I set for myself and now I'm going to find a way to attain those goals and make my dream become a reality. So I know I am in a position, but I also realize, too, that I want to be in a position where I can make a difference. And I want to make sure that, while I am the only woman here, I pray and hope that I do a good job so there will be other women, so other women can be here as well, and the doors will continue to open. (Applause.)

Q My name is Matt Sharp. I'm a junior at Elks Lake High School. Mr. President, as a young man about to enter college in the next few years, one of the things that's very important to me is scholarship opportunities. And I was wondering -- my question is, do you believe it is fair for minority athletes who have not necessarily done poorly academically, but average to poorly, and have relatively low SAT scores to be given scholarships over those white students that are not athletes who have excelled academically and have relatively high SAT scores?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me answer the question. I had a problem in California when they voted -- and California has been very good to me, but the people and I disagree with these things -- (laughter). California

voted to repeal their affirmative action admissions policy. And I made the argument that they would give a minority athlete a scholarship under the new system because of his or her athletic ability and have another member of a minority group who had higher grades and higher SAT scores, but no athletic ability couldn't get a scholarship. So it wasn't just a race issue.

Let me say what I think about that. First of all, I think college and universities have a right to have athletic programs and they have to recruit if they want to have them. The real issue is we should have a system in America, since we now know that it is necessary to have at least two years of education after high school if you want to have even a good job with a growing income for younger people, and it's better -- we have a vested interest of the nation in seeing that every young person like you gets to go to college. What I've tried to do is make sure that money would never be an obstacle to anyone, and that's really ultimately the way to resolve that. Every college and university has to make up its mind, do they want to have an athletic program; then they'll want to compete for the best athletes -- they're going to do that. But it should never, ever be at the expense of providing academic opportunities to people who are qualified.

Let me just say, since I've been in office, we passed a HOPE Scholarship, which gives everybody a \$1,500 tax credit for the first two years of college, tuition and tax credits for junior and senior year and graduate school. We've got more Pell Grants, more work-study positions, more national service positions -- we've got more opportunity. (Applause.) And, I think -- I'll say this -- for me, that's the answer. I don't think -- otherwise, a college simply can't have an athletic program or recruit its athletes.

My view is they ought to be able to recruit athletes, but they ought to give enough scholarships so that every young, gifted person who can get admitted to the school should be able to go without regard to the money that they or their families have. That's what I believe. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: We have to go. I've got to take a break. I answer to a higher master at this moment, so we're going to step aside for just a second and come back with our final moments of our town meeting live here in Houston. (Applause.)

* * * * *

MR. LEY: And our final moments. John Thompson, you wanted to continue the discussion, the question -- young man painted it as a zero sum game on scholarships of athletes versus scholarship for academics.

MR. THOMPSON: Well, first of all, I respect the young man an awful lot for asking the question because I think that's what these meeting are about. However, I think I need to bring to his attention that the athlete is not the only one that gets special preference. If your folks have a lot of money, you get special preference in university. (Applause.) If you are a son or daughter of an alumnus, you get special preference. So our society is about special preferences. The athlete markets his talent and that's what America is about. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: We've come to this point, the evening has flown by. We've even gone a little over time. Mr. President, we're just about -- with a few minutes left, I know you'd like to summarize your thoughts on this evening of what you've heard and what you may have learned tonight.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I feel better about my country than I did before we started. And I think all of you do, don't you? (Applause.)

I want to applaud the panelists for their candor and their honesty. I want to thank the members of the audience for the questions that were asked.

I want to say just two things. Number one, I think it's obvious that athletics in a way is leading America toward a more harmonious, united society, but we still have work to do -- in the coaching ranks, and the management, and the scouting and all of that. We ought to keep working on it.

The second thing I'd like to say is, I hope that everybody who's in an athletic program also learns good life skills to make good choices, good decisions; can take something out of the teamwork, the rules of things that you get from being in athletics so that if they play in high school but not in college that they're still better off and they're better citizens.

The same thing if they play in college, not in pros. The same thing when they finish their pro career. We didn't talk much about that tonight, but I think that's important -- that the lessons learned from athletics carry over into good citizenship, including attitudes about people of different races. If that happens, we're going to be a lot better off. (Applause.)

MR. LEY: Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. We appreciate your being here tonight and adding to this dialogue. Your race initiative has talked about a need for a national dialogue, and as we said, we had it for a period -- if only a brief period -- and I thank you, our panelists. Thanks to our audience for their questions, and thanks to everyone at home. The ESPN Town Meeting from Houston, whether we are running in place. (Applause.)

END 8:44 P.M. CDT

Message Sent To: _____

ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY: The President's Initiative On Race

"Today, I ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union.... That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America."

-- President Clinton, June 14, 1997

The President's Plan. The President is leading the nation in an effort to become One America in the 21st Century: a place where we respect others' differences and, at the same time, embrace the values that unite us. To achieve this goal, President Clinton has developed the following plan:

- 1) Continue To Develop Policy That Offers Opportunity To All Those Who Work For It.** Taking the recommendation of the President's Advisory Board, the primary focus of our policy actions will be to enhance educational and economic opportunity. A number of policy actions have been announced, including creating education empowerment zones, increasing quality teaching in underserved areas and stepping up enforcement to stop discrimination in housing.
- 2) Engage Americans In A Broad And Constructive Dialogue.** The President is encouraging communities across the country to engage in constructive dialogues on race. He is calling on them, not only to stand against discrimination, but also to build greater understanding across racial lines, and find resolutions to honest differences. From constructive dialogue, positive actions take root, like the Akron Coming Together Project.
- 3) Highlight Promising Practices That Are Working.** Community efforts are crucial to the success of the President's Initiative on Race. In communities throughout the country, people are working to bridge racial divides and to create equal opportunity for all. The Race Initiative staff is identifying and creating a compilation of these efforts, named "promising practices," so that others may participate in them or replicate them in their own communities, schools, businesses and religious organizations. These promising practices have been highlighted on the Website, at the President's Akron Town Meeting and Advisory Board Meetings.
- 4) Recruit Leaders.** The President is reaching out to leaders in several areas of American life with a special emphasis on recruiting youth, education, religious and business leaders. "One America" leaders are those people who take up the President's call by organizing efforts in their communities or professions. Through their leadership, the President's Initiative on Race will reach communities throughout the nation.
- 5) Focus On The Youth Of America.** The initiative has a special focus on youth. As our nation becomes more integrated in this era of global diversity, we need the active engagement of our nation's young people, because they will eventually lead this new America.
- 6) Advisory Board.** The President appointed a small, diverse group that will advise and assist him in outreach efforts and consultations with experts. They were chosen based on their outstanding leadership on this issue and their contributions to America's ongoing dialogue about race and reconciliation.
- 7) Deliver A Report from the President.** The President will issue a report in which he will: 1) present his vision of One America, including an assessment of the growing diversity of our nation; 2) reflect the work that has occurred during the initiative; and 3) provide recommendations and solutions that enable individuals, communities, businesses, public and private organizations and government at all levels to address difficult issues and build on our best possibilities.

(Talking Points as of January 22, 1998)

THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE ON RACE: Taking Action To Help Build One America

Summary of Major Events / Announcements.
As of January 22, 1998

DEVELOPING POLICY THAT OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO ALL THOSE WHO WORK FOR IT

- **New Civil Rights Enforcement:** On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, January 19, 1998, Vice President Gore addressed the congregation at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. The Vice President announced the Administration's proposal for the largest single increase in the enforcement of our civil rights laws in nearly two decades. Through new reforms and through heightened commitment to enforcement, the Administration will seek to prevent discrimination before it occurs, and punish those who do discriminate in employment, in education, in housing, in health care, in access for those with disabilities. The Clinton Administration's Fiscal Year 1999 balanced budget contains \$602 million for civil rights enforcement agencies and offices -- an increase of \$86 million, or more than 16 percent, over last year's funding.
- **Getting Good Teachers Into Underserved Areas.** In his speech to the NAACP on July 17, 1997, the President announced a \$350 million program to attract talented people of all backgrounds to teach at low-income schools across the nation and to dramatically improve the quality of training and preparation given to our future teachers. This new program will help bring nearly 35,000 outstanding new teachers into high-poverty schools in urban and rural areas over the next five years. The President proposed doing this by offering scholarships to those students preparing to become teachers who will teach in targeted communities for at least three years. This proposal responds to the nation's need for a diverse and excellent teaching force.
- **Creating "Education Opportunity Zones."** On December 3, 1997, at President Clinton's first Race Town Meeting, the President announced a program aimed at demonstrating comprehensive, coordinated and effective approaches to expanding opportunities for students in high-poverty school districts. These grants are coupled with a balanced approach that places increased responsibility for results on school administrators, educators and students themselves. High-poverty school districts will be eligible for additional Federal funding, *if* they (1) adopt tough reform measures -- like those adopted in Chicago -- that make administrators, principals, teachers and students truly accountable for success or failure, and (2) in time, show real improvement in student achievement.
- **Acting To Prevent Housing Discrimination.** At a meeting with his Advisory Board on September 30, 1997, President Clinton announced a plan to ensure better enforcement of existing laws preventing housing discrimination. Under the plan, HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo will double the number of civil rights enforcement actions by the year 2000 to respond to the increase in reported cases of serious fair-housing violations. Secretary Cuomo also committed \$15 million to 67 fair-housing centers around the country to assist in combating housing discrimination this year. Also, Secretary Cuomo now focuses on one race-based housing discrimination case each week and conducts a community forum that

focuses around each case.

- **Fighting Hate Crimes.** On November 10, 1997, the President and Attorney General Janet Reno hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Hate Crimes, which featured many experts and law enforcement officers from around the country. The President announced significant law enforcement and prevention initiatives to get tough on hate crimes.

ENGAGING AMERICANS IN A BROAD AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

- **Presidential Town Meetings.** On December 3, 1997, President Clinton led the first Race Town Meeting in Akron, Ohio to open up a national dialogue on race relations. This town meeting -- which brought together people with different viewpoints for a nationally-televised discussion of race relations -- was the first in a series of town meetings the President will be leading throughout the country over the coming months. In conjunction with the President's town meeting, there were more than ninety watch sites held throughout the nation by members of the Advisory Board, the President's Cabinet, and senior Administration officials. On Capitol Hill, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) sponsored a mini-town-hall for the D.C. area.
- **Conversations That Bring Us Together.** The Administration has launched a program that enlists Administration appointees, Advisory Board Members, Cabinet Members, and Race Initiative staff to host conversations in towns and cities throughout the nation. To date, there have been over 100 conversations in 31 cities in 19 states.
- **Presidential Meeting With Conservative Writers and Academics.** When President Clinton launched his Race Initiative, he called for a national dialogue that includes voices from a wide array of views. On December 19, President Clinton brought together a group of conservative thinkers -- including Ward Connerly, Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom, Linda Chavez and Elaine Chao -- to continue the national dialogue and listen to their opinions on race relations in America.

HIGHLIGHTING PROMISING PRACTICES THAT ARE WORKING TO BUILD ONE AMERICA

- **Highlighting Promising Practices On The White House Website.** One of the critical elements of the Race Initiative is that local communities are the source of some of the best ideas and successful programs. The Race Initiative is compiling and assessing information on "promising practices," which are examples of communities and organizations that have ideas and programs that are working to help bring people together as One America. The One America Website highlights 50 such promising practices, and the list continues to grow.
- **Making Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday A "Day On" Instead of A "Day Off."** President Clinton believes that coming together across racial lines to perform community service is a powerful means of bridging the gaps that too often divide Americans of different race and ethnicities. In his November 29, 1997 radio address, the President encouraged the American people to spend Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday volunteering for local community groups and announced that the Corporation for National Service awarded 73 grants to communities from Boston to Los Angeles to help make the day of service a resounding success. On January 19, the President, Vice President and Administration officials joined community leaders throughout the country in a day of service.
- **First Lady Highlights Boston "Team Harmony" Promising Practice.** To highlight successful community efforts, Mrs. Clinton visited Boston, Massachusetts on December 9, 1997 to highlight "Team Harmony," a program that brings together youth of different backgrounds. More than 8000 Boston youth participated in Mrs. Clinton's visit.

RECRUITING LEADERS TO HELP BUILD ONE AMERICA

- **Mobilizing Business Leaders.** On December 1, 1997, Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater and Advisory Board Member Robert Thomas held a meeting with 50 business leaders

in Miami, Florida. The business leaders shared best practices for fostering and managing diversity, highlighted the links between majority- and minority-owned firms and discussed strengthening ties between corporations and their communities. Among the business leaders was Wayne Huizenga, co-chairman of Republic Industries, who stated, "I'm here for the same reason a lot of other people are. I'm very concerned with the whole diversity issue and its importance to the workplace." On January 13, Labor Secretary Alexis Herman held a roundtable discussion in Phoenix, Arizona with business and labor leaders.

- **Partnering With Universities.** Nearly a quarter of America's colleges and universities have agreed to partner with the Race Initiative to encourage every college and university to conduct special programs focusing on race and other dimensions of diversity in American society. The combined membership of ACE and AACU represents over 2,100 colleges and universities across the nation.
- **Reaching Out To Religious Leaders.** Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook of the Advisory Board is leading the Race Initiative's efforts to organize the national faith community so that they too can play an integral part in the effort.

FOCUSING ON THE YOUTH OF AMERICA

- **Public Service Announcement Released.** On December 2, 1997, the President's Initiative on Race released a public service announcement developed in conjunction with the Leadership Conference on Education Fund and the Ad Council. The PSA challenges youth to become more active in eradicating racism and prejudice, and asks young people to let President Clinton know what they are doing to improve race relations in America.
- **Call To Action To Young Leaders.** On November 28, 1997, the President sent a letter to 25,000 high school senior class presidents, college and university class presidents, and other young leaders from national and local organizations. In this letter, President Clinton issued a call to action by asking these young people to each commit to participating in at least one project aimed at moving our country closer together. Hundreds of youth leaders from across the country have responded to the President's call. Many of these youth activities will be highlighted as promising practices on the One America Website at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/initiatives/oneamerica>.
- **Vice President Briefing With Youth Media.** On December 1, 1997, the Vice President hosted a briefing at the White House for youth-oriented and specialty media, such as *Vibe Magazine*, MTV and *Univision*. At the briefing, the Vice President spoke about the special emphasis the Race Initiative is placing on youth and activities underway to reach out to America's youth. The Vice President called on the media representatives to find ways to use their creative energies to reach young people on the subject of race.

(Accomplishments Document as of January 21, 1998)



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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New York, New York)

For Immediate Release
15, 1998

January

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE "WALL STREET PROJECT" CONFERENCE

World Trade Center
New York, New York

3:00 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very, very much, Reverend Jackson. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, Mr. Grasso and Mr. Jones, and all the other sponsors of this event for this historic day. I thank Secretary Herman for her leadership and for coming up here with me today, along with our SBA Administrator, Aida Alvarez. I don't know if Ambassador Richardson is in the audience, but I'll take a chance, because if he's here and I don't mention him I'll live with it from now on. (Laughter.) And because he cares deeply about these issues.

I also see Reverend Susan Cook, a member of our Race Advisory Board, here. I have many other friends here -- business people, the mayors and others. I thank the members of the New York congressional delegation for coming -- Congressman Rangel, Maloney, Owens, Manton and Representative-elect Meech (phonetic). (Applause.) And I thank Lt. Governor Ross and Comptroller McCall and Speaker Silver, and any other state officials who might be here, and Mr. Green and Mr. Vallone and any other city officials who are here.

Let me say that I've looked forward to this, but it occurs to me, on Martin Luther King's birthday, that the real danger we have here is that Reverend Jackson and I and all the others might be here preaching to the saved, that we all agree with what we're here to talk about. But there is still some merit in our being here in the hope that we can reach beyond those in this room in this very high place to those who are at work down below us today here in New York and throughout the country. Maybe we should have just let Santia (phonetic) sing to them. That would have persuaded them better than anything I could say.

It is true, Mr. Avot (phonetic), that I told Jesse that I knew this was a historic day because you've been to the White House a half-dozen times and never worn a tie. (Laughter.) So I know that we are on to something big here. (Laughter.)

Let me tell you -- this is not part of my remarks, but I want to emphasize on Martin Luther King's birthday, since we're here talking about expanding opportunities of American enterprise to all our citizens, what I did this morning before I came up here. This day is always one of my very favorite days as President. This was the day this year that I awarded the Presidential Medals of Freedom. And let me give you some -- I may not have every name down here, but I think this is interesting. If you just listen to the names, it will tell you something about your country.

Arnie Aronson, an 86-year-old Jewish American who founded -- co-founded the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights -- worked all the way with A. Philip Randolph in the '40s on civil rights. James Farmer, 87 years old -- (applause.)

Fred Korematsu, the Japanese American who refused to go quietly into the internment camp in World War II, and fought for years to have his conviction overturned -- (applause.)

Mario Obledo, former LULAC leader and one of the founders of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund. (Applause.) Justin Dart, the man who probably is more responsible for the Americans With Disabilities Act than any other single American citizen.

Mardy Murie, a 93-year-old conservationist who lives at the foot of the Grand Tetons in Wyoming, who has done so much to save the West. The distinguished American psychiatrist, Robert Coles, who probably has had more influence through his academic writings to promote equal opportunity for all children and the whole cause of citizen service than any other academic in America.

Frances Hesselbein, who saved the Girl Scouts when they were on the brink of distinction by diversifying the Girl Scouts and unifying them. Al Shanker of New York -- (applause.)

My wife said these were just ordinary American citizens, and I said, yes, ordinary American citizens like Brooke Astor and David Rockefeller -- I government them the Medal of Freedom today. (Laughter.) And I did it for a very important point that brings us to Wall Street -- they had other options. They didn't really have to go out and do good with their lives, but they did it anyway.

Wilma Mankiller, the first woman to be chief of the Cherokee Nation. (Applause.) Elliot Richardson, who holds more Cabinet positions than any other American citizen, a distinguished Republican who had a lot to do with saving our Constitution. (Applause.)

And there were others -- Admiral Zumwalt, and a couple of others. But I just give you these names to give you a feel for what America is really all about. All these incredibly different people from different walks of life who made our country what it is. And it's a better country. And when it was over today and everybody was filing out of the East Room at the White House, they were all thinking, gosh, these people are all so different, but they shared something special in their citizenship, in their service, in their devotion to the ideals of this country. And because they all played their roles, we are a much greater, bigger, better country. That's really what we're here to talk about today.

From the beginning this country was set on a mission by the founders -- and I quote -- "to form a more perfect union." It was a brilliant formulation of a national mission, because it recognized that our work would never be done and that there is no such thing as perfection, so that we would always have something new to do. And they wrote this Constitution for us that's full of good basic values, recognizing that it would always have to be applied to changing circumstances; and that if we kept the values and kept the mission in mind that we were always supposed to be forming a more perfect union, we might have a chance to do better than any other people had in human history. Over 220 years later, we're still here -- the longest lasting big democracy in the history of humanity.

A generation ago one man's words, wisdom, and work had a lot to do with leading us toward a more perfect union. Toward the end of his life, Martin Luther King embarked upon securing what he called the next frontier of freedom -- economic freedom. He reminded us that when we limit economic opportunities for some Americans, we limit the possibilities of all Americans.

We are here today because Wall Street has a critical role to play in fulfilling Dr. King's dream of opportunity for all Americans. Whether ensuring that companies on the Big Board draw on the talent and diversity of all of our people, or investing in communities long bypassed by capital but full of potential, businesses can and must help us to build the one America we all need for the 21st century.

That's what I want to talk about today. I have been working hard for five years so that three years from now, when I'm gone and a new century is here, we will have an America where the American Dream really is alive for everybody who is willing to work for it, where America is still the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity, where our people have been brought together across all the lines that divide us into one America.

If we are going to do that, we must bring all Americans into the winner's circle. We must bring more Americans into the winner's circle.

We know that this time is characterized by globalization and a revolution in science, technology and information. We know that these things have changed profoundly the way we live and work, the way we relate to each other, the way we relate to the rest of the world. We know that, for good or ill, the scope and pace of change are greater than ever before. We know that, for good or ill, we are more interdependent than ever before.

Martin Luther King said once that we are all caught in an inescapable web of mutuality, and he was preaching to the American people and reminding us that we had to reach across racial lines. Today, like it or not, around the world we are caught in an inescapable web of mutuality. We see it every day on Wall Street -- good or ill.

We now have all kinds of new challenges because of globalization in information and technology and science revolution. These are just a few of them. How do we get the benefits of new markets and technologies to people and places that aren't part of our economic growth? How do we maximize the impact of markets and still preserve the social contract? How do we give everybody who is willing to work a chance to get a job, to get an education, to have access to health care and own a home and save for retirement? How do we grow the economy and preserve the environment at a time when climate change looms as a big problem, but there are many other environmental problems as well?

How do we at home balance the demands of work and family when more and more people are in the work force but

raising children is still our most important job? How do we take advantage of all the diversity and opportunities for self-expression that are now out there in the world, and the pulling back of the Cold War, to promote community instead of chaos? Is the future of the world an American school district with kids from 180 different racial and ethnic groups, or is it the darkest days of Bosnia, Rwanda, Northern Ireland, the Middle East and you name it?

Is the future of the world the end of the nuclear threat and security for our children, or is it the rise of terrorists and organized criminals and narco traffickers carrying around small chemical and biological weapons? Will we build community or chaos? These are some of the big questions we face.

And here at home, if everything is changing, what happens to your government? What's our role? I have tried to fashion a new approach -- not an old style top-down bureaucracy that says we can handle all this, because, you know, in the global economy that's not true. But I have never been much in sympathy with the newly resurgent belief that government is the source of all of our problems.

My view is that we need a government that is committed to giving people the conditions and tools they need to meet their own challenges, to act as a partner and to act as a catalyst, consistent with what I think ought to be the guiding philosophy of every American -- a simple one -- opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all, our citizens.

The truth is our federal government today is smaller and less bureaucratic than it used to be, but it's also a lot more active than it has been in the recent past. Beginning in 1993 we moved to establish the conditions for a growing economy with a plan rooted in the realities of the global economy and respecting the role of for financial markets.

First, we restored fiscal discipline. When I took office in January of 1993 we were told that the deficit for this year was going to be \$357 billion. Instead, it is close to zero, and next year -- next month I will send to Congress the first balanced budget for the coming year we've had in a generation. (Applause.)

This is something that ought to unite Americans, progressives and conservatives alike. Conservatives ought to like it because it's not profligate; progressives ought to like it because it means we don't have to keep spending money paying interest on the debt, we can do more to invest in our people and our future. And most important, we all ought to like it because in the world in which we live, countries with irresponsible economic policies are punished in the global marketplace. They don't generate jobs, they don't lower unemployment and, therefore, they don't have the tax revenues they need to solve

their common problems.

The second thing we've tried to do is to argue to the American people that America must lead in the global economy. A third of our economic growth has come from expanded exports, and that relates to the point we're making here today. We have

to open markets, increase exports to make this new economy work for our people.

One of the things -- sometimes I get a little credit for being able to communicate, but one of the things that I have not been able to communicate very well to a lot of people is that we cannot grow at home unless we help others to grow abroad; that with 4 percent of the population and 20 percent of the income, we can't keep growing unless we can expand the frontiers of our activity. And, therefore, we ought to want our neighbors to do well by trading more with us because they help us to do well as they buy more of our products.

An increasingly interconnected world financial system has helped to create this kind of strong economic system -- the rising markets to which we have to export. But the international capital market is also a stern taskmaster, as we have seen in the last several weeks. When investor confidence flees, countries first have to put their own houses in order through serious and sustained economic reforms, just as we had to in 1993 so that we were serious about getting our economic house in order to get interest rates down, investment up, and to create jobs.

When severe instability sets in and threatens to spread, there is a vital role also, I believe, for international support to restore confidence, to provide breathing room. When countries are willing to help themselves, I think the United States ought to be a good neighbor and do its part to support that kind of endeavor.

Now, why should struggling Americans, Americans that are out here in New York City working hard to make ends meet, want their government to support efforts to restore growth in distant lands? I'll say again, because we have 4 percent of the population and 20 percent of the income, we've got to have those folks as customers if we're going to keep growing our income and if we ever hope to extend opportunity to people in places within our borders that have not yet participated in the economic recovery. In other words, there is this web of mutuality, and it actually pays dividends to be a good neighbor. That's why we've taken a leadership role in addressing the current turbulence in Asia and in strengthening the institutions of the international financial system.

But the third point I want to make, and the third

part of our economic strategy, is that we have done as much as we could, but we have to do more to invest in our own people to give them the tools they need to succeed and to widen the circle of opportunity. We've put in place the most significant investments in education in a generation -- 200,000 more children in Head Start; tens of thousands of volunteers in our schools teaching our elementary kids to read well, so that they don't go through school not being able to learn; hooking up classrooms and libraries to the Internet; lifting academic standards; opening the doors of college to everybody who will work for it, with the HOPE Scholarship and other initiatives. We've extended health care to 5 million more kids, helped young people to buy their first homes, done more to enable small business people and employees to save for their own pensions.

All that is working. That's why we've got over 13 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years. For the first time in the history of this country, over 64 percent of the adults are working. For the first time in the history of this country, over two-thirds of the American people are in their own homes. But it is not enough.

You and I know there are still people and places in this city and in this country that have simply not been touched by all this whirlwind of economic activity. And it is holding America back.

Every time the Federal Reserve Board meets, there is all this breathless anticipation -- will they have to raise interest rates, because the unemployment rate is the lowest in 24 years? How can we put off inflation and continue to grow? Well, the answer is twofold. One is, technology and open markets are good depressants against the traditional forces of inflation. But the other is, if you're moving into an area that hasn't enjoyed growth you can have growth without inflation because you're riding on a clean slate.

And if it's a good argument for America to sell more and invest more around the world, it's a good argument for America to sell more and invest more down the street.
(Applause.)

If it is true -- a number of members of the New York delegation have been very good in trying to help me pass the Caribbean Basin Initiative, because we want to be good neighbors. There are a lot of people from the Caribbean here in New York City. And one of the unintended consequences of our trade agreement with Canada and Mexico is that Mexico seemed to get a comparative benefit over the Caribbean countries, which we never intended to happen.

I keep telling people -- they say, oh, we can't

afford to do this in the Caribbean. We're going to invest in the Caribbean one way or the other -- we'll either pass the Caribbean Basin Initiative and we'll help to trade with them and help to grow their economy, or we'll invest in them indirectly. Americans will buy drugs from the South American narco traffickers, and then the narco traffickers will take our money and they will put it in the Caribbean so they will have a place to stop on their way to America. (Laughter.) We will do this one way or the other. (Laughter and applause.) I don't know about you, but I prefer the direct way. I think the old-fashioned way is better. (Laughter.)

You know, I talked to a guy the other day from Central America -- we were talking about one of the countries down there, and he said, it's unbelievable, the narco trafficker is down there building schools in nation Tax -- I don't want to embarrass them. I said, they're not building those schools, we are. (Laughter.) America consumes almost half the world's drugs. We give those guys the money; they make the investment; they get the credit. No politician would ever do that. (Laughter.) Elect your opponent by giving him the money, and let him give it to the electorate?

I mean, we're laughing -- this is serious business. If every one of those arguments you can think of works beyond our borders, it works within our borders. If it works down the road, across the water, it works down the street.

The unemployment rate in New York City is about 4 percent higher than the national average. The unemployment rate in the Nation's Capital is about 3 percent higher than the national average. And there are vast opportunities out there.

We just had a study published last week which said there are 365,000 jobs in computer-related areas that are going begging in America today and that it is a threat to our future economic growth. So you want to keep growing the economy and make this the longest peacetime expansion in history by a good long ways, keep reaching out to the rest of the world and do more to invest in America. Do more to trade with America. Do more to train America.

As far as I can tell, there are no other easy alternatives. And this is not only economic good sense, it's morally right. And that's why we're all here. That's the message we have to get out.

What's our role in that? What should the government

do specifically to close the opportunity gap? Well, first of all, I think it requires us to have, again I say, the right philosophy of government. My view is that the principal role of government is to provide the conditions and the tools to empower

people to solve their own problems, and then to work as a partner with state and local governments, the private sector, and community groups, and a catalyst to take ideas that work someplace and make sure they work every place. That's what I think we ought to be doing.

There is not enough government money in America to put everybody to work in New York City, much less in every city and every rural area that has been left behind. We have to create the conditions, the environment that will enable us to be good partners. And that's what we have tried to do. Pretty soon we'll have 125 empowerment zones and enterprise communities around America that basically say, if local communities -- government, business, and community leaders -- will pull together with a plan for revitalization, we will provide flexible funding and tax cuts to help make the plan work.

Has it worked everywhere? No. Has it worked some places? You bet it has. There are neighborhoods all over this country now that are much stronger because of those empowerment zones. In Detroit alone, the empowerment zone along with the stunning commitment of the automobile industry and the leadership of the mayor have helped to cut the unemployment rate in half in a city which some people thought once could not be saved. (Applause.)

We have created a network of what we call community development financial institutions -- the CDFIs in the jargon of the folks that deal with them. These are small community banks that can make loans in places and to people that ordinary commercial banks normally won't touch. So far, these banks have an extremely high repayment rate. And I might say, this is one case where we took something we were doing around the world, and said if it's good enough for American aid programs to finance these things around the world, why shouldn't we be doing this at home.

We've worked to dramatically strengthen the Community Reinvestment Act. The Community Reinvestment Act was passed in 1997, over 20 years ago. Eighty-five percent of the financial commitments made under the Community Reinvestment Act have been made in the last five years of our administration. I'm very proud of that. That's \$270 billion for our hardest-pressed communities. (Applause.)

We're helping cities to clean up and redevelop their brownfields, environmentally contaminated, otherwise attractive business sites. We've more than doubled the number of Small Business Administration loans to minority and women-owned businesses. We've tried to reinvent the Housing and Urban Development Department so that it stands for empowerment and opportunity. We're finding innovative ways to build more affordable housing. When families move into homes they call their own, they can transform communities.

I had a wonderful time in the Bronx the other day. Some of you remember the pictures that were in the newspaper. I went to that place that President Reagan said looked like London during the blitz. And it looks a neighborhood we'd all be proud to live in today. The local people did that. They had empowerment support from others, partnerships -- (applause). That's what we need everywhere in America. (Applause.)

But we have to do more, and so do you. In 1999 these are some of the things -- but not all, I've got to save a little bit for the State of the Union -- (laughter) -- some of the things that we intend to do. The balanced budget in 1999 will contain the most significant new community development and economic empowerment initiatives in years. It will expand the

number of empowerment zones. It will increase funding for the community development financial institutions by 50 percent. It will expand eligibility for the low-income housing credit to create between 150,000 and 180,000 new rental units. It will help families with good histories of paying their rent to move into homes of their own.

I've asked Secretary Cuomo to do more with the private sector to also increase access to capital, create jobs, and fuel entrepreneurs, and I'll have more to say about that in the days ahead. But New York can be proud of him. He's doing a good job.

I also want to say that Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley and I have worked on a special project, which I hope will work, and I hope some of you will help us make work. When I read that we had 365,000 computer-related jobs going begging in America, that some people said this is threatening our growth. When I read another article in our local paper back in Washington -- New York is probably the only city I can come to and say Washington has a local paper -- (laughter) -- but anyway I read an article which said that there was a dramatic employment shortage -- not unemployment problem, employment shortage -- in all the suburban countries surrounding Washington and that we had something like 25,000 computer-related jobs going begging in the Washington, D.C., area.

And I look at an 8 percent unemployment rate in our city; in some neighborhoods it's much higher. I asked Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley to come up with a program -- we've never done this before -- they've set aside millions of dollars to train people only to do these kind of jobs and to try to focus them in the areas where they can be hired. (Applause.)

So I would like to ask you to look around New York. How many jobs are going begging here today? Can people be trained for them? Even if people in the inner cities don't have

enough education to them, are there people in lower-level jobs now who could be trained for those, opening up those jobs for the people in the inner-city? Shouldn't there be a plan to do that here? (Applause.) And shouldn't there be a plan everywhere. And if so, call Secretary Herman and we'll participate.

A lot of you have done a lot or you wouldn't be here today. But we have got to do more. We have got to do more. One study estimates that inner-city residents control \$85 billion in purchasing power. That's more than the entire retail market in Mexico. Thirty percent of their demands for retail goods goes unmet. Shall I say that again? Thirty percent of their demand for retail goods goes unmet. We need more investment in those areas of high employment. Even in areas of high unemployment, most people are working. And a lot of people are working hard and being good citizens, and paying their taxes, and obeying the law against odds that some of us could not stand up to. (Applause.) So I think we need to think about that.

We need more businesses to form partnerships with neighborhood schools. Major Owens and I were talking on the way up here. If you want all of our kids to have a good education, then those of us who believe in the public schools have to be for high standards, for flexibility, for accountability and for involvement by people that can help to save these kids. (Applause.) And you need to be involved in it. (Applause.)

We need businesses committed to make sure welfare reform succeeds. We've reduced welfare roles by 3.8 million. But the easy work has been done. The people that are left on the welfare roles are people by and large who came from very difficult backgrounds; many of them came from abusive home backgrounds; many of them don't have a lot of education. We have training funds, we have child care funds. The mechanisms are in place, but somebody's got to believe in them and give them a chance.

We need you to help us in all these ways. We have to bring the world of the gleaming office tower and the dark shadow together because the people who live in both places are all Americans and because we need each other. We need each other. We've got to develop the skills and potential of our people. We have to dramatically increase capital investment. We have to continue to build public-private partnerships. We have to open the doors of the executive suites, the sales floors and the factories to talented people of all backgrounds. If we want our best people sitting in the boards rooms, our savviest clerks minding the stores, our hardest workers on the assembly lines, we've got to somehow have the talents of all of our people.

And we know from study after study after study that there are smart people, there are people who can organize, there

are people who can lead, there are people who can innovate, there are people who can create in areas in America where there is no economic activity. Very often they wind up showing their leadership in less constructive ways. But they need to have an alternative. You can lead in creating that alternative.

We're going to do everything we can to put more on the table, to be a better partner, to give you more options, to support the city, to support the state, to support the private sector, to support the community groups. But you know as well as I do, just as no government can follow irresponsible policies and stand up against the winds of the global marketplace, no government alone can bring opportunity to the people and the places that have been left behind. We'll do our part, but you have to do yours.

I thank Reverend Jackson for his insight, that he has said for years and years and years -- you are missing a market here. This is America's opportunity to close the opportunity gap. Let's seize it.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

3:34 P.M. EST

Message Sent To: _____

ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY: THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE ON RACE

"Today, I ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union....That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America."

-- President Clinton, June 14, 1997

The President's Plan. The President is leading the nation in an effort to become One America in the 21st Century: a place where we respect others' differences and, at the same time, embrace the values that unite us. To achieve this goal, President Clinton has developed the following plan:

- 1) Continue To Develop Policy That Offers Opportunity To All Those Who Work For It.** Taking the recommendation of the President's Advisory Board, the primary focus of our policy actions will be to enhance educational and economic opportunity. A number of policy actions have been announced, including creating education empowerment zones, increasing quality teaching in underserved areas and stepping up enforcement to stop discrimination in housing.
- 2) Engage Americans In A Broad And Constructive Dialogue.** The President is encouraging communities across the country to engage in constructive dialogues on race. He is calling on them, not only to stand against discrimination, but also to build greater understanding across racial lines, and to find resolutions to honest differences and even celebrate honest arguments. From constructive dialogue, positive actions develop, like the Akron Coming Together Project.
- 3) Highlight Promising Practices That Are Working.** Community efforts are crucial to the success of the President's Initiative on Race. In communities throughout the country, people are working to bridge racial divides and to create equal opportunity for all. The Race Initiative staff is identifying and creating a compilation of these efforts, named "Promising Practices," so that others may participate in them or replicate them in their own communities, schools, businesses, and religious organizations. These Promising Practices have been highlighted on the Website, at the President's Akron Town Meeting and advisory board meetings.
- 4) Recruit Leaders.** The President is reaching out to leaders in several areas of American life with a special emphasis on recruiting youth, education, religious and business leaders. One America leaders are those people who take up the President's call by organizing efforts in their communities or professions. Through their leadership...
- 5) Focus On The Youth Of America.** The initiative has a special focus on youth. As our nation becomes more integrated in this era of global diversity, we need our nation's young people, because they have grown up in, are inheriting, and will eventually lead the new America whose variety and vitality we see rising on history's horizon.
- 6) Deliver A Report from the President.** The President will issue a report in which he will: 1) present his vision of One America, including an assessment of the growing diversity of our nation; 2) reflect the work that has occurred during the initiative; and 3) provide recommendations and solutions that enable individuals, communities, businesses, public and private organizations and government at all levels to address difficult issues and build on our best possibilities.

As of January 13, 1998

THE PRESIDENT'S INITIATIVE ON RACE: Taking Action To Help Build One America

SUMMARY OF MAJOR EVENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS. AS OF JANUARY 13, 1998
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DEVELOPING POLICY THAT OFFERS OPPORTUNITY TO ALL THOSE WHO WORK FOR IT

- **Getting Good Teachers Into Underserved Areas.** In his speech to the NAACP on July 17, 1997, President Clinton announced a \$350 million program to attract talented people of all backgrounds to teach at low-income schools across the nation and to dramatically improve the quality of training and preparation given to our future teachers. This new program will help bring nearly 35,000 outstanding new teachers into high-poverty schools in urban and rural areas over the next five years. The President proposed doing this by offering scholarships to those students preparing to become teachers who will teach in targeted communities for at least three years. This proposal responds to the nation's need for a diverse and excellent teaching force.
- **Creating "Education Opportunity Zones."** On December 3, 1997, at President Clinton's first Race Town Meeting, President Clinton announced a competitive challenge grants program aimed at demonstrating comprehensive, coordinated and effective approaches to expanding opportunities for students in high-poverty urban and rural school districts. These grants are coupled with a balanced approach to increased responsibility for results for schools, educators and students themselves. High-poverty school districts will be eligible for additional Federal funding *if* (1) they adopt tough reform measures -- like those adopted in Chicago -- that make administrators, principals, teachers and students truly accountable for success or failure, and (2) in time, show real improvements in student achievement.
- **Acting To Prevent Housing Discrimination.** At a meeting with his Advisory Board on September 30, 1997, President Clinton announced a plan to ensure better enforcement of existing laws preventing housing discrimination. Under the plan, HUD Secretary Andrew Cuomo HUD will double the number of civil rights enforcement actions by the year 2000, and committed \$15 million to sixty-seven fair-housing centers around the country to assist in combating housing discrimination this year. Also, Secretary Cuomo now focuses on a case a week by creating a community forum around each case.
- **Fighting Hate Crimes.** On November 10, 1997, the President and Attorney General Janet Reno hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Hate Crimes, which featured many experts and law enforcement officers from around the country. The President announced significant law enforcement and prevention initiatives to get tough on hate crimes.

ENGAGING AMERICANS IN A BROAD AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

- **Presidential Town Meetings.** On December 3, 1997, President Clinton led the first Race Town Meeting in Akron, Ohio, to open up a national dialogue on race relations. This town meeting -- which brought together people with different viewpoints for a nationally-televised discussion of race relations -- was the first in a series of town meetings the President will be leading throughout the country over the coming months. In conjunction with the President's town meeting, there were more than ninety watch sites held throughout the nation by members of the Advisory Board, the President's Cabinet Members, and senior Administration officials. On Capitol Hill, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Congressman Tom Davis (R-VA) sponsored a mini-town-hall for the D.C. area.

- **Conversations That Bring Us Together.** The Administration has launched group conversations on race throughout the nation. To date, the Race Initiative Board Members, Members of the President's Cabinet, and senior Administration officials have led approximately 100 conversations to date in 31 cities in 19 states.

- **Presidential Meeting With Conservative Writers and Academics.** When President Clinton launched his race initiative, he called for a national dialogue with wide, varying perspectives. On December 19, President Clinton brought together a group of conservative thinkers - including Ward Connerly, Abigail and Stephan Thernstrom, Linda Chavez and Elaine Chao - to continue the national dialogue and get their opinions on race relations in America.

HIGHLIGHTING PROMISING PRACTICES THAT ARE WORKING TO BUILD ONE AMERICA

- **Highlighting Promising Practices On The White House Website.** One of the foundations of the Race Initiative is that local communities are the source of some of the best ideas. Promising Practices provide examples of communities and organizations that have ideas that are working to help bring people together as One America. The Race Initiative Web Site highlights 50 such promising practices.

- **Making Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday A "Day On" Instead of A "Day Off."** President Clinton believes that coming together across racial lines to do community service is a powerful practice that helps bridge the gaps that divide us. In his November 29, 1997 radio address, the President encouraged the American people to spend Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday volunteering for local community groups and announced that the Corporation for National Service awarded 73 grants to communities from Boston to Los Angeles to help make the day of service a resounding success. On January 19, the President, Vice President and Administration officials will join community leaders throughout the country in a day of service.

- **First Lady Highlights Boston "Team Harmony" Promising Practice.** In an effort to highlight what some communities are doing, Mrs. Clinton visited Boston, MA on December 9, 1997 to highlight "Team Harmony," a program that brings together youth of different backgrounds. More than 8000 Boston youth participated in Mrs. Clinton's visit.

RECRUITING LEADERS TO HELP BUILD ONE AMERICA

- **Mobilizing Business Leaders.** On December 1, 1997, Robert Thomas, a member of the President's Race Advisory Board, joined Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater in a meeting with fifty business leaders in Miami, Florida. The business leaders shared best practices for fostering diversity, highlighted the links between majority and minority-owned firms and discussed strengthening ties between corporations and their communities. Among the business leaders was Wayne Huizenga, co-chairman of Republic Industries, who stated, "I'm here for the same reason a lot of other people are. I'm very concerned with the whole diversity issue and its importance to the workplace." On January 13, Secretary Herman will hold a roundtable discussion in Phoenix, Arizona with business and labor leaders from the southwest.

- **Partnering With Universities.** Nearly a quarter of America's colleges and universities have agreed to partner with the Race Initiative to encourage every college and university to conduct special programs focusing on race and other dimensions of diversity in American society. The combined membership of ACE and AACU represents over 2,100 colleges and universities across the nation.

- **Reaching Out To Religious Leaders.** Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook of the Advisory Board is working on organizing the faith community so that they can be an integral part of the effort as well.

FOCUSING ON THE YOUTH OF AMERICA

- **Public Service Announcement Released.** On December 2, 1997, the President's Initiative on Race released a public service announcement developed in conjunction with the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Ad Council. The PSA challenges youth to become more active in eradicating racism and prejudice, and asks young people to let President Clinton know what they are doing to improve race relations in America.
- **Call To Action To Young Leaders.** On November 28, 1997, the President sent a letter to 25,000 high school senior class presidents, college and university class presidents, and other young leaders from national and local organizations. In this letter, President Clinton issued a call to action, asking these young people to each commit to participating in at least one project aimed at moving our country closer together. Hundreds of youth leaders from across the country have responded to the President's call. Many of these youth activities will be highlighted as promising practices on the Website.
- **Vice President Briefing With Youth Media.** On December 1, 1997, the Vice President hosted a briefing at the White House for youth-oriented media, such as *Vibe Magazine* and *MTV*. At the briefing, the Vice President spoke about the special emphasis the Initiative is placing on youth and the ways being used to reach out to America's youth. The Vice President called on the media representatives to find ways to use their creative energies to reach young people on the subject of race.

"Today, we face a different choice: will we become not two, but many Americas, separate, unequal and isolated? Or will we draw strength from all our people and our ancient faith in the quality of human dignity, to become the world's first truly multi-racial democracy. That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America...I grew up in the shadows of a divided America, but I have seen glimpses of one America...That is the America you must make."

-- President Clinton, Jun 14, 1997

"In the end, more than anything else, our world leadership grows out of the power of our example here at home, out of our ability to remain strong as one America...We are the world's most diverse democracy, and the world looks to us to show that it is possible to live and advance together across those kinds of differences...Building one America is our most important mission...money cannot buy it. Power cannot compel it. Technology cannot create it. It can only come from the human spirit."

-- President Clinton, February 4, 1997

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

For Immediate Release

July 17, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NAACP NATIONAL CONVENTION

David Lawrence Convention Center
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

11:45 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. First, let me thank all of you for that warm welcome and for what you do. I thank Myrlie Evers Williams for the wonderful comments she made and for the distinguished service she has performed as your chair. (Applause.) And I thank your President of the United NAACP. (Applause.) That was pretty good, Madam Mistress of Ceremonies, you did a good job. (Laughter.)

Let me say that when Kweisi called me and told me he was going to leave the Congress to become President of the NAACP, I had very mixed feelings. I felt a little bereft. I don't like it when a great member of Congress leaves. But I thought it was higher calling and my instinct it was -- it would be a good thing for him and for our country. And I think it has certainly proved to be. And I thank him for that. (Applause.)

Of the many things that I have to be grateful for, I thank you for the extraordinary effort you've made to bring young people into the NAACP. I think that is a great, great thing. (Applause.)

I'm glad to be joined here by the Mayor of Pittsburgh, my good friend, Tom Murphy. And I'm glad to see all the board members. I have many friends on this board. Bishop Graves is my bishop. And if they let me go home, I'll be in his jurisdiction again. (Applause.) And I know that -- I've been looking for them out of my eye, but I know there must be a delegation from Arkansas here -- Dale Charles and the others. Where are you? Where are my people from home there? Thank you very much. (Applause.)

I want to thank you for honoring a number of the people that you have honored here. And I'm especially grateful for your giving meritorious service awards to two members of my Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Fogelman and Admiral Kramek -- the Commandant of the Coast Guard. Thank you for that. (Applause.)

I know you have undergone some losses. And our grief goes out to you in the untimely death of the President of the Maryland Chapter, Mr. Norment, who was killed shortly before this convention. I thank you for honoring Dr. Betty Shabazz, a wonderful, remarkable woman. And I thank you for the resolution you passed just a few moments ago for Aaron Henry, who was a long-time personal friend of mine and a very great man. (Applause.)

I am joined today by a distinguished array of people from the

administration -- the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman -- (applause). I know you know them. The Chairman of our Advisory Board on Race Relations and our Executive Director, Dr. John Hope Franklin and Judy Winston -- they're here. (Applause.)

And there are a number of other people from the White House here. I'd just like to ask all the people from the administration who are here to stand up and be recognized, including -- I see Chris Edley, who is helping us at the Advisory Board who is now a professor at Harvard. He doesn't fool with us mere mortals anymore. And Terry Edmonds, my speechwriter; Maria Echaveste; Minyon Moore, Ben Johnson, Sylvia Matthews -- there are a lot of people here from the administration. You all stand up and be recognized here. Look at all of them. (Applause.)

Anything good I do, they had a hand in; the mistakes are mine. (Laughter.)

I am honored to be here to add my voice to yours in discussing what we have to do to prepare our people for this new century. Since 1993 I have worked hard to build one America on a simple formula: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans prepared to continue to lead the world toward peace and freedom and prosperity. Much has been done, but much remains to be done.

I believe, especially as it relates to bringing us together, the keys are education, economic empowerment, and racial reconciliation. It is fitting that the NAACP has made education the focus of this conference because you have always emphasized the importance of education.

That was true in 1909 when you issued a mighty call for America to do its -- and I quote -- "elementary duty" in preparing African Americans through education for the best exercise of citizenship. It was true in 1954 when Thurgood Marshall and the Legal Defense Fund led the successful fight to end segregation in the schools. It is true today when we know that more than ever, knowledge is power, and the struggle in education today involves two things that are inextricably bound -- a fight for equal opportunity and a fight for educational excellence. (Applause.)

Each generation must embrace its won battle in the ongoing struggle for equal rights. A generation ago, it was simply a fight to open the schoolhouse door that united Americans of every race and background. Today, though much segregation remains, the schoolhouse doors are open. Yet behind too many doors too little learning is taking place. (Applause.)

Therefore, the struggle for excellence for all must be our great mission. We must demand high standards of every student; our schools and teachers must meet world-class standards. But we must demand that every child be given the opportunity to meet those standards. Every child must have a chance to succeed in this new economy. We must not replace the tyranny of segregation with the tyranny of low expectations. (Applause.)

We know that in this new world we're moving into so quickly, new technologies and the globalization of information and communications, and the economy, will require of all us new skills. We know already from what has been happening in the last 20 years that those that have the skills to succeed will do so in

this new economy. They will thrive. And those who lack the skills will not.

We know that we can never make real our ideal of one America unless every American of every background has access to the world's best schools, the world's best teachers, the world's best education. This means first, not only high standards, but high expectations and high levels of accountability of students and parents, schools and teachers and communities.

Second, we know that we can't have high standards and high expectations unless all our students have the tools they must have to meet the standards and master the basics. If we do this, all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

When I came to Washington, the old Title I program called for watered-down curricula and watered-down standards and tests. We ended that, thanks to Secretary Riley. Now the new Title I says, we're going to have the same high standards for all of our children. We're not going to sell any of them short just because they're poor. (Applause.)

In the State of the Union address, I called for national standards for the basics -- not federal government standards, but national standards -- of what every child must know to do well in the world of the 21st century beginning with reading and math. English is, after all, the same in the Bronx as it is in Appalachia. Mathematics is the same in Portland, Oregon and Tampa, Florida.

And by 1999, I believe strongly that we should give every 4th grader an examination in reading to see whether these standards are being met, and every 8th grader an examination in math just to make sure the standards are being met. This is not a normal exam that you grade on the bell curve; this is an exam where you say, here's what everybody ought to know to do well in the world and to be able to go on in school. Everyone should be able to get over this bar. And these exams should never be used to hold children back, but to lift them up. And if they are not meeting the standards, the school must change until they can. (Applause.)

We don't do anyone any favors by not holding them to high standards. Often when we see people in difficult circumstances, we feel compassion for them, and we should. But when this compassion leads to expecting less of their children, that is a mistake, for it sells their future down the drain. I am tired of being told that children cannot succeed because of the difficulties of their circumstances. All we do is consign them to staying in the same circumstances. It is wrong. (Applause.)

We now have fresh evidence, by the way, that our children can succeed. For years and years and years, we have been told that Americans always lagged behind the rest of the world on any test that fairly measures our competence and knowledge and achievement of our children against children in other countries. And for many years it was true, not the least because we were unwilling to hold ourselves to high standards. Hiding behind the cherished value of local control of our schools, which I support, we pretended that there were no national standards. But for more than a decade now, people of goodwill all over this country in all kinds of circumstances have been working to improve our schools.

This year, on the international math and science tests, given

to 4th- and 8th-graders, for the very first time our 4th graders scored well above the international average, near the top. And it was a representative sample by race, by region, and income. The children can learn. The children can learn. (Applause.)

Now, that's the good news. The challenging news is that the 8th graders still scored below the international average. And you know why, don't you? Because when these children start to reach adolescence, then all the problems of their circumstances, plus what goes on in everybody's life when they reach adolescence, reach a collision point. And we have not yet mastered how to take children in the most difficult circumstances through adolescence and keep them learning and keep their schools working.

But you look at those 4th grade test scores. Don't tell me that children can't learn because they are children of color, they are children from poor neighborhoods, they are children with only the mother at home taking care of them. We can do this. But we have to believe we can do it, and, more importantly, we have to believe they can do it. (Applause.) And then we have to understand that it is our responsibility -- not theirs, ours -- to make sure they do it. (Applause.)

So I ask you to work with us. No one has all the answers. The NAACP has always had high expectations for America. When we were living through the worst of the civil rights movement, you had high expectations for white people. You knew we could do better. (Laughter and applause.) You knew we could do better. This is a high expectations organization.

You had high expectations for yourselves, which is why you have revived the NAACP and you're riding higher than ever. (Applause.) Do you seriously believe we would be where we are today, with this chair and this president and this board and this crowd and all these young people here, if you had had no expectations, no dream, no discipline, no drive? Of course not. You got here because you worked for it, because you had a dream, and because you expected things of yourselves. (Applause.)

It is no different in this education business. We know it's going to be hard, and we know we have to do it together. But it is a solemn duty we owe to our young people. The children will follow the lead of their parents and of the people in the community who may not be their parents but do have a responsibility for them. My wife was right about that -- it does take a village to raise a child. (Applause.)

We do have to do more to give all our students the tools they need. We know, for example, that many of our urban schools and our rural schools in really poor areas are succeeding. We know that every city can actually point to some schools where committed teachers and other staff members, working with parents, manage to inspire and equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed.

For example, Hansberry Elementary School in the Bronx has made a remarkable turnaround. It was once shut down by the Board of Education, it was doing such a poor job. But when it reopened with a renewed commitment to excellence, the percentage of students passing the New York State Math Skills Test went from 47 to 82 percent. The New Visions Charter School in Minneapolis is known as the reading school. This public school has helped students who formerly struggled to make 12 to 18 months of progress in reading each year, and is

training teachers now in other Minnesota schools to do the same thing.

These schools are just two of hundreds of examples that show us that, given proper support, all our children can learn despite the extra hardships they carry with them to school. We have to answer the question, if it can happen somewhere, why isn't it happening everywhere? And we have to provide the answer. (Applause.)

Because we know that far too many schools are not servicing our children well and too many children from our inner cities and poor rural areas are graduating without the skills they need. And I say again, that is not their failure; that is our failure. Along with demanding more of our students, we must hold schools and teachers and parents and communities to higher standards. We must have a bold and a national effort to improve schools that serve predominantly minority, inner city and rural areas.

First, we have to make sure these kids do have the help they need to meet the standards. And that means, in the beginning, that every parent and every community leader must join the teachers. That's why we're mobilizing a million volunteer tutors to make sure that by the beginning of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language may be, will be able to read independently by the 3rd grade. If you can't read, you can't learn the rest of what you need to know. (Applause.)

The second thing we have to do is make sure that every school has good, well-qualified, well-trained teachers. (Applause.) Our nation faces a very significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire -- listen to this -- over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will bring more students than ever into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Just over the next five years, we must hire 350,000 teachers in high-poverty urban and rural schools.

Now, for years, the government worked to reduce the shortage of doctors in many urban and under-served rural areas by offering scholarships to students who agreed to work in those communities. When I was Governor of Arkansas, I don't know how many rural communities we had that were literally saved by physicians who were serving there because they had their way to medical school paid in return for their commitment to go out to poor areas and tend to people who would never have had a doctor otherwise.

Today, I am announcing a similar initiative, to help recruit and prepare teachers to serve in urban and rural communities. (Applause.) Next month, as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, I will forward to the Congress a proposal for a new national effort to attract quality teachers to high-poverty communities by offering scholarships for those will commit to teach in those communities for at least three years. (Applause.)

We will have a special emphasis on recruiting minorities into teaching because while a third of our students our minority, only 13 percent of their teachers are. We need a diverse and an excellent teaching force. (Applause.)

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs so that those who go into teacher are better

prepared to teach their students. We know students in distressed areas, who need the best teachers, often have teachers who have had the least preparation. For example, right now, 71 percent of students taking physical science courses like chemistry and physics, and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who do not even have a college minor in their field.

So our proposal will focus not only on training future teachers well, it will also improve the quality of teaching in those schools now, through partnerships between the schools and the teacher training institutions.

And finally, there is a national board for certifying professional teachers as master teachers. In our budget -- there are only a few hundred of these teachers now, and they are infectious in the enthusiasm and skills they breed in the schools where they teach. Many states are offering them higher salaries. Our budget contains enough money to have 100,000 of these master teachers so that every single school in America will have one, including every poor school in America. We cannot stop until we have given the best teachers the opportunity to teach the children who need them the most. (Applause.)

Third, let me say I believe that charter schools can be an important tool for improving education, especially for children having difficulties in traditional public schools. Charter schools give parents and local communities the flexibility to create performance-based schools -- open to everyone, and they work. Our budget has enough funds to create 3,000 of these schools by the year 2001. They're open to all; they offer excellence and accountability; they can infect the atmosphere of an entire school district and help other public schools to perform better, by offering parents and community residents the chance to take matters into their own hands and to be held accountable for the results.

I am pleased that Rosa Parks, who taught us a lot about dignity and equality, is now working to open a charter school in Detroit. And I urge you to consider doing so in your communities. If you believe it will help the Department of Education will help you. (Applause.)

Fourth, I think we have to commit to rebuilding rundown schools. Many of them are located in our central cities. (Applause.) When I was in Philadelphia the other day, at a beautiful old school building, the superintendent of schools told me that the average age -- the average age -- of the physical facilities in the Philadelphia school system was 65 years. Now, a lot of these old buildings were very well built and will stand up a long time, but they have to be rehabilitated if they're going to be serviceable.

I have been to school districts -- there are school buildings in Washington, D.C. where two floors are open and a whole floor has to be closed because they are literally not inhabitable. This is wrong. Forty percent of the school buildings need major repair or replacement today. My tax plan includes tax credits to finance the rehabilitation and construction of schools in distressed neighborhoods. Students cannot be expected to learn in buildings that are falling down, in serious disrepair or painfully overcrowded. (Applause.)

Fifth, we have to recognize that all this new technology, which seems so far beyond the reach of a lot of ordinary citizens, actually gives us a chance to jump-start quality and opportunity in our poorest districts. I have challenged every school and library in the nation to be connecting all this classrooms to the Information Superhighway by the year 2000. We have got a plan working with the private sector, headed by the Vice President, to put the computers in the classrooms, to get the educational software out there, to train the teachers. The Federal Communications Commission has offered steep discounts and rates for hooking on to the Internet for schools and libraries so that all of our children can do it.

If we do this right, for the first time in the history of this country, the children in the poorest school districts will have access to the same information, in the same way, at the same time as the children in the wealthiest school districts in America. And that's what ought to be the rule. (Applause.)

The last thing I want to say is that we've got to send our children to schools that are safe and drug-free. (Applause.) There are still a lot of children who do not learn every day because they are afraid. And if you think of the times in your life when you have been afraid, it was hard to think about anything else. We must take the fear out of our schools. It is unacceptable to have children falling behind because of that.

We fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our classrooms. We supported parents and communities who wanted to have things like school uniform programs, tougher truancy programs, who wanted to have curfew programs -- things that they thought would improve the safety of our students lives. But the bottom line is this: We can have equal opportunity and excellence in education, we can have it only if we are determined to have both. We will not have one without the other. (Applause.)

And lastly, let me say, in addition to that, if you look at what this modern economy requires, we must open the doors of college education to every single American by the year 2000. (Applause.) We must make at least two years of college as universal by the time the century turns as a high school diploma is today. (Applause.) We must do that.

If you look at the high school graduation rates for African Americans, it's very encouraging to see how much they have increased. There is not much difference now in the high school graduation rates between African Americans and the white majority in America. There is a world of difference in the college completion rates. We have got to do more.

Our budget has the biggest increase in Pell Grants in 20 years and provides tax credits in a way that would make the first two years of college opportunity literally open to everyone. We have got to keep going until we push more and more and more of our minority children into higher education. First, finish high school; then at least get two years more of college so that you can compete and get a decent income with prospects for growth and opportunity in the years ahead. That must be our shared objective. (Applause.)

Now, let me just briefly say, in addition to education, I think there are two other things we have to focus on if we're going to get

where we want to go. The first is economics. We have got to rebuild the economic life of our inner cities and our poorest rural areas. They are the biggest economic opportunity today for the rest of America. Unemployment in this country is at a 25-year low -- 23-year low. When you hear that the unemployment is 5 percent, don't be fooled -- that's a national rate. We've got 10 states with unemployment rates below 3.5 percent. And there are that many people just moving around all the time. If you get around 3 percent, it's almost functionally zero, because people are just moving around in their lives.

But you know as well as I do, there are cities or their a neighborhoods within cities that still have double-digit unemployment. There are poor rural counties that still have double-digit unemployment. There are people who are employed but grossly underemployed, who are working part-time just because that's all they can do. There are places where people get up and go to work every day, but they're always going somewhere else to work because there are no businesses in their neighborhoods.

Now, that is a huge opportunity. We have development funds in the United States with countries that used to be communist countries because we want to help build a private sector economy. We have got to move in our thinking from the idea that our inner cities and our poor rural areas should have their future dependent primarily on government payments, to saying, no, no, they're entitled to the same range of economic opportunities as all other American communities. (Applause.)

We've got to have a private sector, job-related, investment-related, business-related strategy to bring economic opportunity to the young people who live in these areas. It is not true that these folks don't want to work. Most of them are working like crazy. They're working like crazy. (Applause.) Last year, for every entry-level job that opened up in St. Louis, Missouri, there were nine applicants -- nine for every job that opened up.

Now, if we can't do something to revitalize the economy of our poorer areas when we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 23 years and business is out there looking for new opportunities to invest, when can we do it? We have to do it now.

What should we be doing? We've been working on this since 1993, to try to create the environment in which people would wish to invest and give people a chance -- empowerment zones, enterprise communities, community banks that loan money to people who live in the neighborhood to start small businesses, cleaning up the environment of our cities so people will feel free to invest and they won't worry about somebody coming along and suing them because we've already cleaned up the problems, giving tax relief to our lowest-income working people through the Earned Income Tax Credit, strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act so that more banks would invest money in the inner cities, opening up housing opportunities.

I heard you say that before -- if you want the schools to be integrated, we've got to have middle class housing with poor people's housing in the cities again. We have to have housing back in the cities where people are living together and working together. (Applause.)

A real serious strategy to move people from welfare to work, and a serious strategy to do something about crime,

because people won't invest money if they don't think that they're going to be safe in their business operations. Now, we've been working on that. When I spoke to the mayors in San Francisco, I said, here's what we're going to do for the next four years. We want to double the number of empowerment zones and enterprise communities. We want to double the number of these community banks to make loans in the inner cities. We want to clean up the Brownfields of these cities so that nobody refuses to invest because the environmental problems are out there. We want to clean up 500 of the worst toxic waste dumps. Who's going to put a plant next to a toxic dump? We want to do this so that people can get investment.

We want to pass a juvenile crime bill that will be modeled on what Boston has done, where not a single child has been killed with a handgun in over a year and a half now -- almost two years in Boston -- not one. (Applause.) And I'll tell you something -- just for the record, because we're going to debate this all year -- yes, they're tougher on gangs and guns, but they also give kids something to say yes to. They have probation officers and police officers who get in the car at night and make house calls to homes of children who are in trouble. (Applause.) And just like a doctor making house calls, you can always find a patient there. They have 70 percent compliance with probation orders in Boston -- 70 percent -- unheard of. Give our kids something to say yes to. So we've got to do that.

We have to do something about homeownership, as I said. We have to do something about public health -- more basic services, do more to fight HIV and AIDS, include millions more children with health insurance.

All these things we intend to do, but you have to help us. The NAACP has always done a good job of involving business leaders of both parties in your endeavors. But we need to go back to the business community and say, now is the time. I will do everything I possibly can to create the environment in which people can invest and work.

Creative mayors have ideas about how to do this. But if we can't do it now with the national unemployment rate at five percent, when can we do it? It is America's best opportunity for continued growth. If we had this many consumers in a nation 50 miles out in the Gulf of Mexico, we would be pouring money into it, and investment money. I say to you, our cities and our rural counties, where there is unemployment and underemployment, is our next big avenue of growth. And we have to get together and make sure it gets done. (Applause.)

The last thing I want to say is, economics, education; thirdly, racial reconciliation. Look at the world. You pick up the newspaper any given day and you find people killing each other halfway around the world because of their racial and ethnic and religious differences. The Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi. The Catholics and the Protestants in Ireland. My people still argue over what happened 600 years ago. The Muslims, the Croats, the Serbs in Bosnia. The Jews and the Arabs in the Middle East. And here we are with our long history of black-white issues rooted in slavery, with the appropriation of a lot of Mexican Americans after the war with Mexico into our country, and then with wave upon wave, upon wave of immigrants.

Now, in a global economy, in a global society where we're being closer together, it is a huge asset for us that we have people from everywhere else. We just announced an initiative on Africa, on promoting economic development in Africa. (Applause.) And there was a lot of excitement about it. And we had a lot of Republican congressmen interested in it because they think we can make a lot of money there. (Laughter.) I don't mean that in a bad way. I mean several African countries grew at seven percent or greater last year and are doing the same thing again this year. And more than half the countries on the continent are democracies.

Now, we can all understand that. But why are we in a good position to do well there? Because of you. Because of you. Why are we in good position to unite all of Latin America with us in a common economic group early in the next century? Because of the Hispanic Americans, all the Latinos. Why are we in a good position to avoid having Asia become a separate economic block and a destabilizing force in the world? In no small measure because of all Asian Americans in this country. Why do we have some hope of being a major force for peace in the Middle East? Because of all the Jewish Americans here and the increasingly active and constructive Arab American community here.

In other words, it's a good deal that there are so many of us who are so different from each other. This is a good deal, not a bad deal. This is a good thing -- (applause) -- if we can find a way not only to respect and tolerate, but to celebrate our differences, and still say, but the most important thing is I'm an American. I'm bound together, I'm part of this country, I believe in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, and I have an equal chance. (Applause.)

Now, that's what Dr. Franklin and Judy Winston and all the people who are working with me over the next year, that's what we're trying to figure out how to do. And we know we have to do certain things that are government policy, but we also know that this is an affair of the mind and the heart, as well.

First, the law. The law makes a difference. We've had a Community Reinvestment Act requiring banks to invest money in our under-invested areas on the books for 20 years. But since I became President and we said we were serious about it, of all the 20 years' investment, 70 percent of it has been done since 1993. The law matters. The law matters. (Applause.)

We have to enforce the civil rights laws. I hope you will help me to secure the confirmation of my nominee to be the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. (Applause.) For 23 years, this son of Chinese immigrants has worked for the cause of equal opportunity; for many years as a lawyer of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. I thank you for your support of him, but I ask you now to stay with him and let's make sure he will be confirmed. (Applause.)

And then I ask you to continue to work with Dr. Franklin and Judy Winston and our advisory panel. We have to do this together. For this whole century, the NAACP has been a moral beacon, reminding us that in the end we have to become an integrated society, or one America. (Applause.) That's going to be more important than ever before.

Today, the only state in America without a majority

race is Hawaii, but within five years there will be no majority race in California, our biggest state, with 13 percent of our population. In Detroit -- Wayne County, Michigan, which we used to think of as the great melting pot of white ethnics and black folks from the South that couldn't make a living on the farm anymore that went to find a job in the car plants -- there are now more than 145 different racial and ethnic groups in that county -- in Detroit. We are changing very rapidly. And we have not given much thought -- not only to how we're going to heal our old wounds and meet our old challenges, but how we're going to become one America in the 21st century. We need your help.

In September, I'm going home to Little Rock to observe the 40th anniversary of the integration of Little Rock Central High School. (Applause.) When those nine black children were escorted by armed troops on their first day of school, there were a lot of people who were afraid to stand up for them. But the local NAACP, led by my friend Daisy Bates, stood up for them. (Applause.)

Today, every time we take a stand that advances the cause of equal opportunity and excellence in education, every time we do something that really gives economic empowerment to the dispossessed, every time we further the cause of reconciliation among all our races, we are honoring the spirit of Daisy Bates, we are honoring the legacy of the NAACP.

We have to join hands with all of our children to walk into this era, with excellence in education, with real economic opportunity, with an unshakable commitment to one America that leaves no one behind.

I came here to offer you my hand and to thank you for your work and to challenge you for the days ahead. Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

12:25 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 31, 1997

REMARKS OF THE FIRST LADY
AT JOYCE MCCARTAN MEMORIAL LECTUREUniversity of Ulster
Belfast, Northern Ireland

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you very much, Chancellor. I am delighted to be here at this university. I want to thank the university for this invitation, Robert Hanna, Professor Sir Trevor Smith, Pro Vice Chancellor, and Provost Ann Tate. And I'm especially pleased that I could be joined today by the United States Ambassador to the Court of St. James Philip Lader, U.S. Counsel General Kathleen Stevens, and Senator George Mitchell, who is here in the room with us.

I want to welcome all of you because I feel so very welcome here, but particularly, a special welcome to the family, friends and associates of Joyce McCartan who have joined us today.

It is a great personal pleasure and honor for me to be back in Northern Ireland and to reunite with some of the courageous women and men I first met when I came here two years ago with my husband. The sights and sounds and emotions of that visit, the lighting of the Christmas Tree outside City Hall, our walk from Guild Hall Square to Shipquay Street, Protestants and Catholics working side by side at the Mackey Metal Plant -- all of that and so much more hold special places in my husband's heart and in my own.

And I will always treasure my visit to Ye Olde Lamplighter on Lower Ormeau Road, for it was there that I shared a cup of tea with Joyce McCartan and her colleagues. It is, therefore, a signal honor to give this, first of a series of lectures dedicated

Harold
Judson

Carl Wick

in her memory, and in recognition of the important role women have played, are playing and will play in building peace.

I am very delighted that the university, with the support of corporate sponsorship from Cable Tel, will honor Joyce McCartan's work even further by establishing bursaries to assist women who are studying conflict resolution and community reconciliation.

This is a hopeful moment, as it was two years ago. But it is even more promising now. For the first time in more than 25 years, leaders of Northern Ireland's Catholic and Protestant communities are meeting, and the world is watching to see whether they will be able to end a generation of senseless killing and forge a lasting peace.

When the people want peace, it is the obligation of political leaders to find the common ground where it can thrive. That requires compromise and reconciliation. That involves postponing or even giving up one's cherished ideals in the belief that others will do the same to end the conflict and build a better future.

All sides must compromise and seek this common ground in the weeks and months ahead. The United States will continue to do its part to support the peace process, and my husband remains

personally committed to this effort and to those who take risks for peace.

Joyce McCartan was one of those risk-takers. I want to pay tribute to her and to the men and women on both sides of the border and the community divide who have worked so hard in recent years to bring about reconciliation in the wake of this bitter conflict. We would never have arrived at this hopeful moment without the countless acts of courage and faith of people like the woman we honor today.

I have many memories of my visit, and I even have a souvenir. I have the teapot. (Laughter and applause.) As you can see, it is a rather ordinary, stainless steel teapot, one easily found in many Belfast kitchens. But as I told Joyce during our conversation, this teapot was so much better at keeping the tea hot from the ones I had back in the White House. So she gave it to me as

a present.

I use this teapot every day in my private kitchen on the second floor of the White House. And whenever I look at it, I am reminded of Joyce's ability to warm hearts, to keep alive hope for a better world and a better time, despite tragedy after heart-breaking tragedy.

As we sipped our tea together, the women told me how they had worked over the years, how both Catholic and Protestant, they had realized so much more united than divided them. While they may have attended different churches on Sunday, seven days a week they all said a silent prayer for the safe return of a child from school or a husband from an errand in town. Seven days a week their families struggled with the same deep-rooted causes of the violence -- the terrors of sectarianism, the burdens of poverty, the shackles of limited education, the despair of unemployment.

And while they may have held different views of the past, they had learned that together they could build a better present and hope for an even brighter future, by promoting understanding, saving lives, preserving families, nurturing hope, and defying history. Because, in the end, for them and for so many other women across Northern Ireland, love of family ran deeper than calls to hatred.

I had never met Joyce before we gathered together, but I had seen her compassion, courage and commitment in many other eyes -- her yearning for a more peaceful and democratic world resonates through the ages and stretches across the globe. Mothers, wives, daughters, ordinary citizens -- their insistent voices for peace raised sometimes in a roar, but more often in a whispered prayer, have inspired women and entire societies around the world to build more open, just, democratic and peaceful communities. This chorus of courageous voices can be heard today from Belfast to Bosnia, wherever women are working to end the violence and begin the healing.

Although I have been privileged to travel widely and meet many of the world's leaders, I often find that it is in small groups, sitting around a kitchen table, sipping tea with women like Joyce, sharing concerns and talking about our families, where I've learned the most valuable lessons. And one of those lessons is that an extraordinary power is unleashed when women reach out to their neighbors and find common ground -- when they begin to lift themselves up, and by doing so, lift up their families, their

neighbors, and their communities.

I know that Joyce liked to call herself a family feminist because saving families was a the root of all her efforts. This is a brilliant term, and one that I have quoted throughout the globe, because it captures the very important idea that when women are empowered to make the most of their own potential, then their families will thrive, and when families thrive, communities and nations thrive as well. Women who are acting to protect and strengthen their families are playing a central role in the building and sustaining of peace and democracy around the world.

Now, often when we talk about democracy, or when classes and lectures are held about it, we talk about our highest ideals -- freedom of religion, freedom of association, freedom of speech and of the press, freedom to participate fully in the civic and political life of one's country. But democracy is also about ensuring equal access to quality education, health care, jobs and credit. Democracy is about respecting human dignity and allowing people the opportunity to take responsibility for composing their own lives that will allow them to live up to their God-given promise.

What we've learned over the years is that these lofty ideals can be made real only through the everyday efforts of ordinary citizens. Yes, we need laws and a system of justice to uphold them, but democracy is nurtured and sustained in the hearts of people, in the principles they honor, in the way they live their daily lives and how they treat their fellow citizens, in the lessons they teach their children before they tuck them into bed at night.

One of the great observers of America democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville, wrote about what it was that he though made American democracy work. He talked about the way men and women felt they could participate in making their own lives better, how they formed associations, how they worked for some common good. And he referred to the habits of the heart that are necessary for any democracy to flourish. It is these habits of the heart that must be nurtured, and that countless, unheralded women around the world are quietly doing so every day.

I have tried in my travels to shine a spotlight on their achievements because I stand in awe of women like Joyce McCartan --women who through their own personal tragedies find the strength to go on, but more than that, to reach out and try to prevent the conditions from occurring that caused them such heartbreak. Women,

like so many of you here who have endured the loss of loved ones -- fathers, brothers, husbands, sons and others -- to the Troubles, but have refused to give in to bitterness or to dwell in the past.

You have been working through community organizations, such as the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition to break the cycle of hatred and save other people's fathers, brothers, husbands and sons. Your efforts to share grief across sectarian lines have blossomed into dynamic alliances to end poverty and the causes of violence. And you have helped to lay a solid foundation for permanent peace.

I want you to know that you should never feel alone in your efforts. You are part of a powerful movement of family feminists, working to strengthen democracy across the globe. Your partners are everywhere. They're the women in South Africa who lost loved ones and were victimized by apartheid. But they have been willing to participate in the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and to find in their hearts the capacity for forgiveness of those who did violence to them -- because what does freedom mean if people remain imprisoned by their own bitterness?

They are women who are starting small community banks in poor rural villages or inner city neighborhoods from Chile to Chicago -- because what does freedom mean if people don't have the opportunity and the income to help them gain independence and self-sufficiency?

They are women in countries like Pakistan who have agitated against domestic violence -- because what does freedom mean if a woman is afraid to sleep in her own home or protect her children because of a violent husband?

They are women in Zimbabwe and Bolivia who are running rural health clinics and are working in the inner cities to immunize children and provide services -- because what does freedom mean if families are denied access to basic health care, and women are denied the right to plan their own families?

They are the women in Romania and Estonia who are leading voter education projects -- because what does freedom mean if people do not know how to exercise their right to choose their own leaders?

They are women from the Philippines to Paraguay who are campaigning for the rights of girls to receive the same education as

their brothers -- because what does freedom mean if women do not gain the skills and knowledge to make the most of their God-given gifts?

Women are not only critical to advancing peace and freedom, they are redefining the very notion of what we mean by a democratic society. Democracy cannot flourish if women are not full partners in the social, economic, political and civic lives of their communities and nations. Societies will only address the issues closest to the hearts of women when women themselves claim their rights as citizens.

That message has come to life in my own country. Suddenly, the debates about politics and our future are not only about defense or diplomacy. They are also about how to balance work and family, about improving public schools, about keeping health insurance after leaving a job or sending a child off to college for an education.

These issues have become central to our political life because thousands of American women have become organized and demanded changes, and insisted that our democracy respond to their concerns. They've helped all Americans understand that strengthening families and cherishing children are not just women's issues, but issues of vital importance to everyone concerned about our common future.

Now, there were some observers who were perplexed that during the last presidential campaign, these kitchen table issues had become so important. They, in fact, derided the phenomenon as the feminization of politics. I prefer to think of it as the humanization of politics -- because how we raise our children, care for our sick, train our workers will determine the strength and prosperity of all our people in the days to come. And how we learn to live together across religious, ethnic and racial lines will determine the peace and security of our children's lives.

That's why I believe encouraging more women's voices to be heard is important for the overall effort that many of you are making to assure that your children, your grandchildren, these young people in this audience will be able to live out their lives in a peaceful, secure Northern Ireland. It is important that these women's issues that affect our deepest concerns as human beings are part of the political debate.

Most women, like Joyce McCartan, don't become involved

in politics because they have any grand philosophy about how they intend to strengthen democracy. Instead, they see how politics -- especially politics practiced by those who are engendering conflict between people -- are hurting their families. They get fed up with the posturing; they get fed up with the speech making. When jobs are scarce and hope is in very short supply, they take matters into their own hands. They decide, as Joyce memorably said, "You can't fry flags in a pan." And they get to work on setting things right.

I am told that years ago, Joyce borrowed a couple of cows from a farmer and led a group of women to City Hall to protest the removal of free school milk for children. Another time, she attended a city council meeting and refused to leave until they discussed an increase in the bus fare. And while she had to be carried out of that meeting, she eventually forced the council to hear her grievance and convinced them to introduce a lower fare for children. It is the stuff of life. It is those issues we talk about around our kitchen tables that help to develop those habits of the heart that sustain democracy.

I thought often about the Troubles here as I have thought about Joyce McCartan and the women I met as I have fixed myself a pot of tea. I don't know whether a Catholic or a Protestant made this teapot. I don't know whether a Catholic or a Protestant sold this teapot. I only know that this teapot serves me very well. And this teapot stands for all those conversations around those thousands of kitchen tables where mothers and fathers look at one another with despair because they cannot imagine that the future will be any better for their children. But this teapot also is on the kitchen table where mothers and fathers look at one another and say, we have to do better. We cannot permit this to go on. We have to take a stand for our children.

There is no room for illusion in the difficulty that confronts the peace process. The President and all of us who support you in this effort know how difficult it will be to overcome the past when the wounds still seem so raw. But the children deserve all the work, all the prayers, all the strength, courage and commitment that can be brought to bear.

There will be more bumps on the road. There will be those who would rather smash the teapot than to fill it with piping hot tea to sit down to have a conversation. And the women and the

men who believe, as Joyce McCartan believed with all her heart, that there is a better way, who saw as she sat around so many kitchen tables talking across the division that everyone was concerned about the same issues deep down, that we all worried about our lives, our relationships, our jobs, our education, our children, our health -- she understood that if we could just get enough people around some great kitchen table, where they'd have to sit down and look at one another honestly, share their fears, their hopes, their dreams, that we could make progress.

Well, now, finally, we have men and women around a table. I hope they have lots of tea. I hope that they are not only talking about all of the difficult political issues, but in quiet asides, sharing some of what is in their heart with one another. And as they do so, I hope the faces of so many women and men who have given all they could give over the years to bring this moment to pass, will be seen in the mind's eye.

Joyce McCartan deserves as her real legacy that the peace process move forward. She and all the brave women who, for more than 20 years, marched, begged, prayed, cried, shouted that they wanted peace deserve to be heard.

It is no longer in Joyce's hands. The burden has been passed to others. And I hope and I pray that those to whom it has been entrusted will pick up that burden and carry it forward. Joyce's work is done. But to honor her memory, we should all press forward with her work -- to build peace here and around the world.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

[Text Version]

One America

Initiative Announcement

The President's Initiative on Race

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT AT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO COMMENCEMENT

Rimac Field
University of California at San Diego
San Diego, California

10:47 A.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you. Well, ladies and gentlemen, the first thing I would like to say is that Coleen spoke so well -- (laughter) -- and she said everything I meant to say -- (laughter) that I could do us all a great favor by simply associating myself with her remarks and sitting down. (Applause.)

I would also like to thank Dr. Anagnostopoulos for reminding us of the infamous capacity of faculty members to be contrary with one another. (Laughter.) Until he said it, I hadn't realized that probably 90 percent of the Congress once were on university faculties. (Laughter.)

Let me say to Chancellor Dynes and President Atkinson, to the distinguished regents and faculty members, to the students and their families and friends who are here today, I'm honored to be joined by a number of people who reflect the kind of America that Coleen Sabatini called for: Senator Barbara Boxer and Senator Dan Akaka from Hawaii; your Congressman, Bob Filner; Congresswoman Maxine Waters, the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus; Congresswoman Patsy Mink; Congressman Jim Clyburn; Congressman John Lewis, a great hero of the civil rights movement; Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald; Congressman Carlos Romero-Barcelo from Puerto Rico; your Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis; the Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater; of Labor, Alexis Herman; of Veterans Affairs, Jesse Brown; of Education, Dick Riley; our distinguished Ambassador to the United Nations Bill Richardson; our distinguished Administrator of the Small Business Administration, Aida Alvarez, the first American of Puerto Rican descent ever to be in a Presidential Cabinet.

I would like to ask them all to stand along with the members of the White House staff who are here, including Thurgood Marshall Jr. whose father has a college named for him at this great university. Would you please stand? (Applause.)

And I can't help but noting that there's another person here that deserves some special recognition -- the University of California at San Diego Class of 1977 -- a

Filipino-American woman that became the youngest Captain of the Navy and my personal physician, Dr. Connie Mariano. Where is she? (Applause.)

I want to thank you for offering our nation a shining example of excellence rooted in the many backgrounds that make up this great land. You have blazed new paths in science and technology, explored the new horizons of the Pacific Rim and Latin America. This is a great university for the 21st century.

Today we celebrate your achievements at a truly golden moment for America. The Cold War is over and freedom is now ascendant around the globe, with more than half of the people in this

old world living under governments of their own choosing for the very first time.

Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and the strongest in the world. Our culture, our science, our technology promise unimagined advances and exciting new careers. Our social problems, from crime to poverty, are finally bending to our efforts.

Of course, there are still challenges for you out there. Beyond our borders, we must battle terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the prospect of new diseases and environmental disaster.

Here at home, we must ensure that every child has the chance you have had to develop your God-given capacities. We cannot wait for them to get in trouble to notice them.

We must continue to fight the scourge of gangs and crime and drugs. We must prepare for the retirement of the baby boom generation so that we can reduce that child poverty rate that Coleen talked about. We must harness the forces of science and technology for the public good, the entire American public.

But I believe the greatest challenge we face, among all those that Coleen talked about, is also our greatest opportunity. Of all the questions of discrimination and prejudice that still exist in our society, the most perplexing one is the oldest, and in some ways today, the newest: the problem of race. Can we fulfill the promise of America by embracing all our citizens of all races, not just at a university where people have the benefit of enlightened teachers and the time to think and grow and get to know each other within the daily life of every American community. In short, can we become one America in the 21st century?

I know, and I've said before, that money cannot buy this goal, power cannot compel it, technology cannot create it. This is something that can come only from the human spirit -- the spirit we saw when the choir of many races sang as a gospel choir.

Today, the state of Hawaii, which has a Senator and a Congresswoman present here, has no majority racial or ethnic group. It is a wonderful place of exuberance and friendship and patriotism. Within the next three years, here in California no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of the state's population. Already, five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. At this campus, 12 Nobel prize winners have taught or studied from nine different countries. A half-century from now, when your own grandchildren are in college, there will be no majority race in America.

Now, we know what we will look like, but what will we be like? Can we be one America respecting, even celebrating, our differences, but embracing even more what we have in common? Can we define what it means to be an American, not just in terms of the hyphen showing our ethnic origins but in terms of our primary allegiance to the values America stands for and values we really live by. Our hearts long to answer yes, but our history reminds us that it will be hard. The ideals that bind us together are as old as our nation, but so are the forces that pull us apart. Our founders sought to form a more perfect union; the

humility and hope of that phrase is the story of America and it is our mission today.

Consider this: We were born with a Declaration of Independence which asserted that we were all created equal and a Constitution that enshrined slavery. We fought a bloody civil war to abolish slavery and preserve the union, but we remained a house divided and unequal by law for another century. We advanced across the continent in the name of freedom, yet in so doing we pushed Native Americans off their land, often crushing their culture and their livelihood. Our Statue of Liberty welcomes poor, tired, huddled masses of immigrants to our borders, but each new wave has felt the sting of discrimination.

In World War II, Japanese Americans fought valiantly for freedom in Europe, taking great casualties, while at home their families were herded into internment camps. The famed Tuskegee Airmen lost none of the bombers they guarded during the war, but their African American heritage cost them a lot of rights when they came back home in peace.

Though minorities have more opportunities than ever today, we still see evidence of bigotry -- from the desecration of houses of worship, whether they be churches, synagogues or mosques, to demeaning talk in corporate suites. There is still much work to be done by you, members of the class of 1997. But those who say we cannot transform the problem of prejudice into the promise of unity forget how far we have come, and I cannot believe they have ever seen a crowd like you. (Applause.)

When I look at you, it is almost impossible for me even to remember my own life. I grew up in the high drama of the Cold War, in the patriotic South. Black and white southerners alike wore our nation's uniform in defense of freedom against communism. They fought and died together, from Korea to Vietnam. But back home, I went to segregated schools, swam in segregated public pools, sat in all-white sections at the movies, and traveled through small towns in my state that still marked restrooms and water fountains "white" and "colored."

By the grace of God I had a grandfather with just a grade school education but the heart of a true American, who taught me that it was wrong. And by the grace of God, there were brave African Americans like Congressman John Lewis, who risked their lives time and time again to make it right. And there were white Americans like Congressman Bob Filner, a freedom rider on the bus with John Lewis, in the long, noble struggle for civil rights, who knew that it was a struggle to free white people, too.

To be sure, there is old, unfinished business between black and white Americans, but the classic American dilemma has now become many dilemmas of race and ethnicity. We see it in the tension between black and Hispanic customers and their Korean or Arab grocers; in a resurgent anti-Semitism even on some college campuses; in a hostility toward new immigrants from Asia to the Middle East to the former communist countries to Latin America and the Caribbean --even those whose hard work and strong families have brought them success in the American Way.

We see a disturbing tendency to wrongly attribute to entire groups, including the white majority, the objectionable conduct of a few members. If a black American commits a crime, condemn the act -- but remember that most African Americans are hard-working, law-abiding citizens. If a Latino gang member deals drugs, condemn the act -- but remember the vast majority of Hispanics are responsible citizens who also deplore the scourge of drugs in our life. If white teenagers beat a young African American boy almost to death just because of his race, for God's sakes condemn the act -- but remember the overwhelming majority of white people will find it just as hateful. If an Asian merchant discriminates against her customers of another minority group, call her on it -- but remember, too, that many, many Asians have borne the burden or prejudice and do not want anyone else to feel it.

Remember too, in spite of the persistence of prejudice, we are more integrated than ever.

More of us share neighborhoods and work and school and social activities, religious life, even love and marriage across racial lines than ever before. More of us enjoy each other's company and distinctive cultures than ever before. And more than ever, we understand the benefits of our racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity in a global society, where networks of commerce and communications draw us closer and bring rich rewards to those who truly understand life beyond their nation's borders.

With just a twentieth of the world's population, but a fifth of the world's income, we in America simply have to sell to the other 95 percent of the world's consumers just to maintain our standard of living. Because we are drawn from every culture on earth, we are uniquely positioned to do it. Beyond commerce, the diverse backgrounds and talents of our citizens can help America to light the globe, showing nations deeply divided by race, religion and tribe that there is a better way.

Finally, as you have shown us today, our diversity will enrich our lives in non-material ways -- deepening our understanding of human nature and human differences, making our communities more exciting, more enjoyable, more meaningful. That is why I have come here today to ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union.

Now, when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven to it by some emergency or social cataclysm, now is the time we should learn together, talk together and act together to build one America. (Applause.)

Let me say that I know that for many white Americans, this conversation may seem to exclude them or threaten them. That must not be so. I believe white Americans have just as much to gain as anybody else from being a part of this endeavor -- much to gain from an America where we finally take responsibility for all our children so that they, at last, can be judged as Martin Luther King hoped, "Not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." (Applause.)

What is it that we must do? For four and a half years now, I have worked to prepare America for the 21st century with a strategy of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and an American community of all our citizens. To succeed in each of these areas, we must deal with the realities and the perceptions affecting all racial groups in America.

First, we must continue to expand opportunity. Full participation in our strong and growing economy is the best antidote to envy, despair and racism. We must press forward to move millions more from poverty and welfare to work; to bring the spark of enterprise to inner cities; to redouble our efforts to reach those rural communities prosperity has passed by. And most important of all, we simply must give our young people the finest education in the world.

There are no children who, because of their ethnic or racial background, who cannot meet the highest academic standards if we set them and measure our students against them, if we give them well-trained teachers and well-equipped classrooms, and if we continue to support reasoned reforms to achieve excellence, like the charter school movement. (Applause.)

At a time when college education means stability, a good job, a passport to the middle class, we must open the doors of college to all Americans and we must make at least two years of college as universal at the dawn of the next century as a high school diploma is today.

In our efforts to extend economic and educational opportunity to all our citizens, we must consider the role of affirmative action. I know affirmative action has not been perfect in America -- that's why two years ago we began an effort to fix the things that are wrong with it -- but when used in the right way, it has worked. (Applause.)

It has given us a whole generation of professionals in fields that used to be exclusive clubs -- where people like me got the benefit of 100 percent affirmative action. There are now more women-owned businesses than ever before. There are more African American, Latino and Asian American lawyers and judges, scientists and engineers, accountants and executives than ever before.

But the best example of successful affirmative action is our military. Our armed forces are diverse from top to bottom -- perhaps the most integrated institution in our society and certainly the most integrated military in the world. And, more important, no one questions that they are the best in the world. So much for the argument that excellence and diversity do not go hand in hand. (Applause.)

There are those who argue that scores on standardized tests should be the sole measure of qualification for admissions to colleges and universities. But many would not apply the same standard to the children of alumni or those with athletic ability. (Applause.)

I believe a student body that reflects the excellence and the diversity of the people we will live and work with has independent educational value. Look around this crowd today. Don't you think you have learned a lot more than you would have if everybody sitting around you looked just like you? I think you have. (Applause.)

And beyond the educational value to you, it has a public interest because you will learn to live and work in the world you will live in better. When young people sit side by side with people of many different backgrounds, they do learn something that they can take out into the world. And they will be more effective citizens.

Many affirmative action students excel. They work hard, they achieve, they go out and serve the communities that need them for their expertise and role model. If you close the door on them, we will weaken our greatest universities and it will be more difficult to build the society we need in the 21st century. (Applause.)

Let me say, I know that the people of California voted to repeal affirmative action without any ill motive. The vast majority of them simply did it with a conviction that discrimination and isolation are no longer barriers to achievement. But consider the results. Minority enrollments in law school and other graduate programs are plummeting for the first time in decades. Assuming the same will likely happen in undergraduate education. We must not resegregate higher education or leave it to the private universities to do the public's work. (Applause.)

At the very time when we need to do a better job of living and learning together, we should not stop trying to equalize economic opportunity. To those who oppose affirmative action, I ask you to come up with an alternative. I would embrace it if I could find a better way. And to those of us who still support it, I say we should continue to stand for it, we should reach out to those who disagree or are uncertain and talk about the practical impact of these issues, and we should never be thought unwilling to work with those who disagree with us to find new ways to lift people up and bring people together. (Applause.)

Beyond opportunity, we must demand responsibility from every American. Our strength as a society depends upon both -- upon people taking responsibility for themselves and their families, teaching their children good values, working hard and obeying the law, and giving back to those around us. The new economy offers fewer guarantees, more risks, and more rewards. It calls upon all of us to take even greater responsibility for our education than ever before.

In the current economic boom, only one racial or ethnic group in America has actually experienced a decline in income -- Hispanic Americans. One big reason is that Hispanic

high school drop-out rates are well above -- indeed, far above -- those of whites and blacks. Some of the drop-outs actually reflect a strong commitment to work. We admire the legendary willingness to take the hard job at long hours for low pay. In the old economy, that was a responsible thing to do. But in the new economy, where education is the key, responsibility means staying in school. (Applause.)

No responsibility is more fundamental than obeying the law. It is not racist to insist that every American do so. The fight against crime and drugs is a fight for the freedom of all our people, including those -- perhaps especially those -- minorities living in our poorest neighborhoods. But respect for the law must run both ways. The shocking difference in perceptions of the fairness of our criminal justice system grows out of the real experiences that too many minorities have had with law enforcement officers. Part of the answer is to have all our citizens respect the law, but the basic rule must be that the law must respect all our citizens. (Applause.)

And that applies, too, to the enforcement of our civil rights laws. For example, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has a huge backlog of cases with discrimination claims -- though we have reduced it by 25 percent over the last four years. We can do not much better without more resources. It is imperative that Congress -- especially those members who say they're for civil rights but against affirmative action -- at least give us the money necessary to enforce the law of the land and do it soon. (Applause.)

Our third imperative is perhaps the most difficult of all. We must build one American community based on respect for one another and our shared values. We must begin with a candid conversation on the state of race relations today and the implications of Americans of so many different races living and working together as we approach a new century. We must be honest with each other. We have talked at each other and about each other for a long time. It's high time we all began talking with each other.

Over the coming year I want to lead the American people in a great and unprecedented conversation about race. In community efforts from Lima, Ohio, to Billings, Montana, in remarkable experiments in cross-racial communications like the uniquely named ERACISM, I have seen what Americans can do if they let down their guards and reach out their hands.

I have asked one of America's greatest scholars, Dr. John Hope Franklin, to chair an advisory panel of seven distinguished Americans to help me in this endeavor. He will be joined by former Governors Thomas Kean of New Jersey and William Winter of Mississippi, both great champions of civil rights; by Linda Chavez-Thompson, the Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO; by Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook, a minister from the Bronx and former White House Fellow; by Angela Oh, an attorney and Los Angeles community leader; and Robert Thompson, the CEO of Nissan U.S.A. -- distinguished leaders, leaders in their community.

I want this panel to help educate Americans about the facts surrounding issues of race, to promote a dialogue in every community of the land to confront and work through these issues, to recruit and encourage leadership at all levels to help breach racial divides, and to find, develop and recommend how to implement concrete solutions to our problems -- solutions that will involve all of us in government, business, communities, and as individual citizens.

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As I said at the President's Summit on Service in Philadelphia, in our new era such acts of

service are basic acts of citizenship. Government must play its role, but much of the work must be done by the American people as citizen service. The very effort will strengthen us and bring us closer together.

In short, I want America to capture the feel and the spirit that you have given to all of us today. I'd like to ask the board to stand and be recognized. I want you to look at them, and I want you to feel free to talk to them over the next year or so. Dr. Franklin and members of the board. (Applause.)

Honest dialogue will not be easy at first. We'll all have to get past defensiveness and fear and political correctness and other barriers to honesty. Emotions may be rubbed raw, but we must begin.

What do I really hope we will achieve as a country? If we do nothing more than talk, it will be interesting but it won't be enough. If we do nothing more than propose disconnected acts of policy, it would be helpful, but it won't be enough.

But if ten years from now people can look back and see that this year of honest dialogue and concerted action helped to lift the heavy burden of race from our children's future, we will have given a precious gift to America.

I ask you all to remember just for a moment, as we have come through the difficult trial on the Oklahoma City bombing, remember that terrible day when we saw and wept for Americans and forgot for a moment that there were a lot of them from different races than we are.

Remember the many faces and races of the Americans who did not sleep and put their lives at risk to engage in the rescue, the helping and the healing. Remember how you have seen things like that in the natural disasters here in California. That is the face of the real America. That is the face I have seen over and over again. That is the America, somehow, some way we have to make real in daily American life. (Applause.)

Members of the graduating class, you will have a greater opportunity to live your dreams than any generation in our history, if we can make of our many different strands, one America -- a nation at peace with itself bound together by shared values and aspirations and opportunities and real respect for our differences.

I am a Scotch-Irish Southern Baptist, and I'm proud of it. But my life has been immeasurably enriched by the power of the Torah, the beauty of the Koran, the piercing wisdom of the religions of East and South Asia -- all embraced by my fellow Americans. I have felt indescribable joy and peace in black and Pentecostal churches. I have come to love the intensity and selflessness of my Hispanic fellow Americans toward la familia. As a Southerner, I grew up on country music and county fairs and I still like them. (Laughter.) But I have also reveled in the festivals and the food, the music and the art and the culture of Native Americans and Americans from every region in the world.

In each land I have visited as your President, I have felt more at home because some of their people have found a home in America. For two centuries, wave upon wave of immigrants have come to our shores to build a new life drawn by the promise of freedom and a fair chance. Whatever else they found, even bigotry and violence, most of them never gave up on America. Even African American, the first of whom we brought here in chains, never gave up on America.

It is up to you to prove that their abiding faith was well-placed. Living in islands of isolation -- some splendid and some sordid -- is not the American way. Basing our self-esteem on the ability to look down on others is not the American way. Being satisfied if we have what we want and heedless of others who don't even have what they need and deserve is not the

American way. We have torn down the barriers in our laws. Now we must break down the barriers in our lives, our minds and our hearts.

More than 30 years ago, at the high tide of the civil rights movement, the Kerner Commission said we were becoming two Americas, one white, one black, separate and unequal. Today, we face a different choice: will we become not two, but many Americas, separate, unequal and isolated? Or will we draw strength from all our people and our ancient faith in the quality of human dignity, to become the world's first truly multi-racial democracy. That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America.

Class of 1997, I grew up in the shadows of a divided America, but I have seen glimpses of one America. You have shown me one today. That is the America you must make. It begins with your dreams, so dream large, live your dreams, challenge your parents and teach your children well.

God bless you and good luck.

Back to One America

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Diego, California)

For Immediate Release

June 14, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO COMMENCEMENT

Rimac Field
University of California at San Diego
San Diego, California

10:47 A.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you. Well, ladies and gentlemen, the first thing I would like to say is that Coleen spoke so well -- (laughter) -- and she said everything I meant to say -- (laughter) that I could do us all a great favor by simply associating myself with her remarks and sitting down. (Applause.)

I would also like to thank Dr. Anagnostopoulos for reminding us of the infamous capacity of faculty members to be contrary with one another. (Laughter.) Until he said it, I hadn't realized that probably 90 percent of the Congress once were on university faculties. (Laughter.)

Let me say to Chancellor Dynes and President Atkinson, to the distinguished regents and faculty members, to the students and their families and friends who are here today, I'm honored to be joined by a number of people who reflect the kind of America that Coleen Sabatini called for: Senator Barbara Boxer and Senator Dan Akaka from Hawaii; your Congressman, Bob Filner; Congresswoman Maxine Waters, the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus; Congresswoman Patsy Mink; Congressman Jim Clyburn; Congressman John Lewis, a great hero of the civil rights movement; Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald; Congressman Carlos Romero-Barcelo from Puerto Rico; your Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis; the Secretary of Transportation Rodney Slater; of Labor, Alexis Herman; of Veterans Affairs, Jesse Brown; of Education, Dick Riley; our distinguished Ambassador to the

United Nations Bill Richardson; our distinguished Administrator of the Small Business Administration, Aida Alvarez, the first American of Puerto Rican descent ever to be in a Presidential Cabinet.

I would like to ask them all to stand along with the members of the White House staff who are here, including Thurgood Marshall Jr. whose father has a college named for him at this great university. Would you please stand? (Applause.)

And I can't help but noting that there's another person here that deserves some special recognition -- the University of California at San Diego Class of 1977 -- a Filipino-American woman that became the youngest Captain of the Navy and my personal physician, Dr. Connie Mariano. Where is she? (Applause.)

I want to thank you for offering our nation a shining example of excellence rooted in the many backgrounds that make up this great land. You have blazed new paths in science and technology, explored the new horizons of the Pacific Rim and Latin America. This is a great university for the 21st century.

Today we celebrate your achievements at a truly golden moment for America. The Cold War is over and freedom is now ascendant around the globe, with more than half of the people in this old world living under governments of their own choosing for the very first time.

Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and the strongest in the world. Our culture, our science, our technology promise unimagined advances and exciting new careers. Our social problems, from crime to poverty, are finally bending to our efforts.

Of course, there are still challenges for you out there. Beyond our borders, we must battle terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the prospect of new diseases and environmental disaster.

Here at home, we must ensure that every child has the chance you have had to develop your God-given capacities. We cannot wait for them to get in trouble to notice them.

We must continue to fight the scourge of gangs and crime and drugs. We must prepare for the retirement of the baby boom generation so that we can reduce that child poverty rate that Coleen talked about. We must harness the forces of science and technology for the public good, the entire American public.

But I believe the greatest challenge we face, among all those that Coleen talked about, is also our greatest opportunity. Of all the questions of discrimination and prejudice that still exist in our society, the most perplexing one is the oldest, and in some ways

today, the newest: the problem of race. Can we fulfill the promise of America by embracing all our citizens of all races, not just at a university where people have the benefit of enlightened teachers and the time to think and grow and get to know each other within the daily life of every American community. In short, can we become one America in the 21st century?

I know, and I've said before, that money cannot buy this goal, power cannot compel it, technology cannot create it. This is something that can come only from the human spirit -- the spirit we saw when the choir of many races sang as a gospel choir.

Today, the state of Hawaii, which has a Senator and a Congresswoman present here, has no majority racial or ethnic group. It is a wonderful place of exuberance and friendship and patriotism. Within the next three years, here in California no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of the state's population. Already, five of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. At this campus, 12 Nobel prize winners have taught or studied from nine different countries. A half-century from now, when your own grandchildren are in college, there will be no majority race in America.

Now, we know what we will look like, but what will we be like? Can we be one America respecting, even celebrating, our differences, but embracing even more what we have in common? Can we define what it means to be an American, not just in terms of the hyphen showing our ethnic origins but in terms of our primary allegiance to the values America stands for and values we really live by. Our hearts long to answer yes, but our history reminds us that it will be hard. The ideals that bind us together are as old as our nation, but so are the forces that pull us apart. Our founders sought to form a more perfect union; the humility and hope of that phrase is the story of America and it is our mission today.

Consider this: We were born with a Declaration of Independence which asserted that we were all created equal and a Constitution that enshrined slavery. We fought a bloody civil war to abolish slavery and preserve the union, but we remained a house divided and unequal by law for another century. We advanced across the continent in the name of freedom, yet in so doing we pushed Native Americans off their land, often crushing their culture and their livelihood. Our Statue of Liberty welcomes poor, tired, huddled masses of immigrants to our borders, but each new wave has felt the sting of discrimination.

In World War II, Japanese Americans fought valiantly for freedom in Europe, taking great casualties, while at home their families were herded into internment camps. The famed Tuskegee Airmen lost none of the bombers they guarded during the war, but their African American heritage cost them a lot of rights when they

came back home in peace.

Though minorities have more opportunities than ever today, we still see evidence of bigotry -- from the desecration of houses of worship, whether they be churches, synagogues or mosques, to demeaning talk in corporate suites. There is still much work to be done by you, members of the class of 1997. But those who say we cannot transform the problem of prejudice into the promise of unity forget how far we have come, and I cannot believe they have ever seen a crowd like you. (Applause.)

When I look at you, it is almost impossible for me even to remember my own life. I grew up in the high drama of the Cold War, in the patriotic South. Black and white southerners alike wore our nation's uniform in defense of freedom against communism. They fought and died together, from Korea to Vietnam. But back home, I went to segregated schools, swam in segregated public pools, sat in all-white sections at the movies, and traveled through small towns in my state that still marked restrooms and water fountains "white" and "colored."

By the grace of God I had a grandfather with just a grade school education but the heart of a true American, who taught me that it was wrong. And by the grace of God, there were brave African Americans like Congressman John Lewis, who risked their lives time and time again to make it right. And there were white Americans like Congressman Bob Filner, a freedom rider on the bus with John Lewis, in the long, noble struggle for civil rights, who knew that it was a struggle to free white people, too.

To be sure, there is old, unfinished business between black and white Americans, but the classic American dilemma has now become many dilemmas of race and ethnicity. We see it in the tension between black and Hispanic customers and their Korean or Arab grocers; in a resurgent anti-Semitism even on some college campuses; in a hostility toward new immigrants from Asia to the Middle East to the former communist countries to Latin America and the Caribbean --even those whose hard work and strong families have brought them success in the American Way.

We see a disturbing tendency to wrongly attribute to entire groups, including the white majority, the objectionable conduct of a few members. If a black American commits a crime, condemn the act -- but remember that most African Americans are hard-working, law-abiding citizens. If a Latino gang member deals drugs, condemn the act -- but remember the vast majority of Hispanics are responsible citizens who also deplore the scourge of drugs in our life. If white teenagers beat a young African American boy almost to death just because of his race, for God's sakes condemn the act -- but remember the overwhelming majority of white people will find it just as hateful. If an Asian merchant discriminates against her

customers of another minority group, call her on it -- but remember, too, that many, many Asians have borne the burden or prejudice and do not want anyone else to feel it.

Remember too, in spite of the persistence of prejudice, we are more integrated than ever. More of us share neighborhoods and work and school and social activities, religious life, even love and marriage across racial lines than ever before. More of us enjoy each other's company and distinctive cultures than ever before. And more than ever, we understand the benefits of our racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity in a global society, where networks of commerce and communications draw us closer and bring rich rewards to those who truly understand life beyond their nation's borders.

With just a twentieth of the world's population, but a fifth of the world's income, we in America simply have to sell to the other 95 percent of the world's consumers just to maintain our standard of living. Because we are drawn from every culture on earth, we are uniquely positioned to do it. Beyond commerce, the diverse backgrounds and talents of our citizens can help America to light the globe, showing nations deeply divided by race, religion and tribe that there is a better way.

Finally, as you have shown us today, our diversity will enrich our lives in non-material ways -- deepening our understanding of human nature and human differences, making our communities more exciting, more enjoyable, more meaningful. That is why I have come here today to ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union.

Now, when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven to it by some emergency or social cataclysm, now is the time we should learn together, talk together and act together to build one America. (Applause.)

Let me say that I know that for many white Americans, this conversation may seem to exclude them or threaten them. That must not be so. I believe white Americans have just as much to gain as anybody else from being a part of this endeavor -- much to gain from an America where we finally take responsibility for all our children so that they, at last, can be judged as Martin Luther King hoped, "Not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." (Applause.)

What is it that we must do? For four and a half years now, I have worked to prepare America for the 21st century with a strategy of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and an American community of all our citizens. To succeed in each of these areas, we must deal with the realities and the perceptions affecting all racial groups in America.

First, we must continue to expand opportunity. Full participation in our strong and growing economy is the best antidote to envy, despair and racism. We must press forward to move millions more from poverty and welfare to work; to bring the spark of enterprise to inner cities; to redouble our efforts to reach those rural communities prosperity has passed by. And most important of all, we simply must give our young people the finest education in the world.

There are no children who, because of their ethnic or racial background, who cannot meet the highest academic standards if we set them and measure our students against them, if we give them well-trained teachers and well-equipped classrooms, and if we continue to support reasoned reforms to achieve excellence, like the charter school movement. (Applause.)

At a time when college education means stability, a good job, a passport to the middle class, we must open the doors of college to all Americans and we must make at least two years of college as universal at the dawn of the next century as a high school diploma is today.

In our efforts to extend economic and educational opportunity to all our citizens, we must consider the role of affirmative action. I know affirmative action has not been perfect in America -- that's why two years ago we began an effort to fix the things that are wrong with it -- but when used in the right way, it has worked. (Applause.)

It has given us a whole generation of professionals in fields that used to be exclusive clubs -- where people like me got the benefit of 100 percent affirmative action. There are now more women-owned businesses than ever before. There are more African American, Latino and Asian American lawyers and judges, scientists and engineers, accountants and executives than ever before.

But the best example of successful affirmative action is our military. Our armed forces are diverse from top to bottom -- perhaps the most integrated institution in our society and certainly the most integrated military in the world. And, more important, no one questions that they are the best in the world. So much for the argument that excellence and diversity do not go hand in hand. (Applause.)

There are those who argue that scores on standardized tests should be the sole measure of qualification for admissions to colleges and universities. But many would not apply the same standard to the children of alumni or those with athletic ability. (Applause.)

I believe a student body that reflects the excellence and the diversity of the people we will live and work with has independent educational value. Look around this crowd today. Don't you think you have learned a lot more than you would have if everybody sitting around you looked just like you? I think you have. (Applause.)

And beyond the educational value to you, it has a public interest because you will learn to live and work in the world you will live in better. When young people sit side by side with people of many different backgrounds, they do learn something that they can take out into the world. And they will be more effective citizens.

Many affirmative action students excel. They work hard, they achieve, they go out and serve the communities that need them for their expertise and role model. If you close the door on them, we will weaken our greatest universities and it will be more difficult to build the society we need in the 21st century. (Applause.)

Let me say, I know that the people of California voted to repeal affirmative action without any ill motive. The vast majority of them simply did it with a conviction that discrimination and isolation are no longer barriers to achievement. But consider the results. Minority enrollments in law school and other graduate programs are plummeting for the first time in decades. Assuming the same will likely happen in undergraduate education. We must not resegment higher education or leave it to the private universities to do the public's work. (Applause.)

At the very time when we need to do a better job of living and learning together, we should not stop trying to equalize economic opportunity. To those who oppose affirmative action, I ask you to come up with an alternative. I would embrace it if I could find a better way. And to those of us who still support it, I say we should continue to stand for it, we should reach out to those who disagree or are uncertain and talk about the practical impact of these issues, and we should never be thought unwilling to work with those who disagree with us to find new ways to lift people up and bring people together. (Applause.)

Beyond opportunity, we must demand responsibility from every American. Our strength as a society depends upon both -- upon people taking responsibility for themselves and their families, teaching their children good values, working hard and obeying the law, and giving back to those around us. The new economy offers fewer guarantees, more risks, and more rewards. It calls upon all of us to take even greater responsibility for our education than ever before.

In the current economic boom, only one racial or ethnic

group in America has actually experienced a decline in income -- Hispanic Americans. One big reason is that Hispanic high school drop-out rates are well above -- indeed, far above -- those of whites and blacks. Some of the drop-outs actually reflect a strong commitment to work. We admire the legendary willingness to take the hard job at long hours for low pay. In the old economy, that was a responsible thing to do. But in the new economy, where education is the key, responsibility means staying in school. (Applause.)

No responsibility is more fundamental than obeying the law. It is not racist to insist that every American do so. The fight against crime and drugs is a fight for the freedom of all our people, including those -- perhaps especially those -- minorities living in our poorest neighborhoods. But respect for the law must run both ways. The shocking difference in perceptions of the fairness of our criminal justice system grows out of the real experiences that too many minorities have had with law enforcement officers. Part of the answer is to have all our citizens respect the law, but the basic rule must be that the law must respect all our citizens. (Applause.)

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God bless you and good luck.

END

11:23 A.M. (L)