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Commencement 6/5/98 - Kalil Memos (NEC & DPC)

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Thomas A. Kalil
05/20/98 10:44:14 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Melissa G. Green/OPD/EOP

cc: Sally Katzen/OPD/EOP, Jonathan A. Kaplan/OPD/EOP
Subject: MIT Commencement -- Important!


MIT-TT.M2 
MIT-R&D.M

There are 3 major policy ideas under consideration for the MIT Commencement address:

1. Technology Training for Teachers

2. Information & Communications R&D

3. Universal IT literacy

Attached are memos for 1 & 2.

Question:

* Does Gene want to edit these before I start circulating them? [I am going to ship them to Speech-writing to make sure these ideas aren't wildly off-base from a message perspective.]

* Does he want to talk to Jack before I show them to OMB?

* To Riley before I show it to Education?

Draft April 29, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR GENE SPERLING, MICHAEL WALDMAN, JOHN PODESTA, JEFF SMITH, BRUCE REED, JIM KOHLENBERGER

FROM: TOM KALIL

RE: MIT COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Summary: In our first meeting on the MIT speech, we decided to identify policy initiatives in three areas:

(1) Sustaining the Information Revolution by investing in R&D;

(2) Maximizing the benefits of the Information Revolution for all Americans;

(3) Dealing with some of the potential challenges of the Information Revolution (e.g. erosion of privacy, concentration)

This memo describes policy initiatives that the President could announce as part of the MIT Commencement address as part of the second "basket" -- namely, maximizing the benefits in areas such as:

1. Governance in the Information Age;
2. K-12 education;
3. Life-long learning;
4. Health care;
5. Improving the quality of life for people with disabilities;
6. Crisis management

These are just preliminary proposals to get people's reactions. Obviously, we would have to have an inter-agency process before moving forward with them -- particularly on anything that would cost money.

I am also seeing if there is something we can pull together for a "Universal Digital Library" initiative.

Overall themes

- We need to recognize that Information Technology is having a pervasive impact on our economy and our society, and that IT can be a powerful new tool for helping us meet many of our most important national goals (K-12 education; life-long learning; more efficient and responsive government; better, more affordable health care, etc.)

- But -- we should reject "technological determinism" -- summed up by the motto of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair -- "Science Finds, Industry Applies, Man Conforms" -- or the more recent assertion "Whatever can happen, will happen." Instead, our use of technology should be shaped by our values and aspirations -- "The best way to predict the future is to invent it."

- Although the private sector will lead in the development and diffusion of the information technology -- particularly the development of electronic commerce -- government can play an important role in promoting the broader social benefits of information technology, by:

  - Setting important goals that the country can rally behind (all classrooms connected to the Internet by the year 2000).

  - Funding research and development.

  - Eliminating out-dated laws and regulations that prevent IT from being fully utilized.

  - Making the government a better user of IT.

  - Supporting pilot projects to encourage experimentation. [Uses of new technology are not always predictable. Western Union stated that "This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us." Ken Olson, the founder of the Digital Equipment Corporation, concluded in 1977, "There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."]

1. Governance in the Information Age

A. Themes

Potential benefits of information technology

- Efficiency (more with less - reinventing government)
- Transparency/Openness (everyone - not just Washington insiders have information on legislation, proposals)
- Disclosure as a tool for public and private accountability (corporations reduce emissions when Toxic Release Inventory is publicly available)
- More rapid dissemination of innovation (President Clinton has said that every problem associated with education has been solved by somebody, somewhere - new tools make it possible for us to learn from each other)
- More opportunities for participation and interaction (e.g. commenting on government proposals)

B. Administration Record/Agenda

- Vice President's National Performance Review

C. Possible New Proposals

- Establish a date certain for requiring that all new federal government information be on-line
- Develop "digital laboratories of democracy" for sharing best ideas on policies such as community policing, welfare-to-work, quality child care.
- Fund "smart community" pilots. How can information technology enable better decision-making at local level -- e.g crime-mapping allows better targeting of police to high-crime neighborhoods.
- Establish a mechanism for people to comment on the issues raised by the President's speech.

2. **K-12 education**

A. **Themes**

- Technology, used creatively, can make a big difference in the way teachers teach and students learn. For example, in some classrooms in America -- teachers are using the Internet to communicate more frequently with parents (expanding parental involvement) and exchange lesson plans with each other. Students are able to take "virtual field trips," tap in to the Library of Congress to research a history paper, develop multimedia portfolios that they take with them from grade to grade, and learn about subjects in a more exciting, hands-on way (e.g. using remote telescope for astronomy, learning about the environment by collecting and sharing environmental data with students and scientists all over the world).

- To make the promise of technology a reality - we need to meet four goals:

  - Connect every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000
  - Access to modern, multimedia computers
  - Teachers that can use technology effectively
  - High quality educational software/content

- We need to make sure that all children have access to this technology - avoid further polarization of American society.

B. **Administration Record/Agenda**

- More than $700 million in budget for educational technology for FY99

- E-rate (discounts of 20 to 90 percent to connect schools and libraries to the Internet)

- Catalyst for voluntary activities (NetDay, TechCorps)

C. **Possible New Proposals**

- Although not "new" our proposals in the FY99 budget to train at least 1 teacher per
  school; and train all new teachers to use technology have not received a great deal of attention. If we could get some companies to join with us and leverage our budget proposal -- this could make news.

3. **Life-long learning**

A. **Themes**

- Returns from education are growing (up to 10 percent increase in wages for 1-year community college, many companies report that they can not find enough people with the skills they need, and the useful "half-life" of skills is shrinking.

- Many workers would like to upgrade their skills -- but find it difficult to attend classroom-based instruction. They may live in a rural area, or find it difficult to balance the competing demands of work and family. Allowing them to learn at a time, place and pace that is convenient for them will expand access to higher education and life-long learning.

B. **Administration Record/Agenda**

The President has requested:

- Legislation to waive the regulations in the Higher Education Act to permit "virtual universities" and other distance learning pilot projects -- include computers in the cost of attendance, etc.

- $30 million grant program to promote distance learning pilots - Learning Anytime Anywhere Partnerships.

C. **Possible New Proposals**

- Challenge a team of the best software companies, creative talent, and educators to develop high-quality software that will help lift Americans from low-wage jobs (e.g. GED equivalence, adult literacy, English as a Second Language).

4. **Health Care**

A. **Themes**

Information technology can:

- Improve the quality of care in underserved rural areas by giving them access to the best specialists in the country (telemedicine)
- Allow people to make better informed decisions (consumer health information, evaluation of managed health care plans)
- Allow people to stay at home with their family (monitoring - home health care)
- Reduce administrative costs and paperwork (electronic claims)

B. **Administration Record/Agenda**

- Connect all rural health care hospitals/clinics through Universal Service - beginning in 1998
- "One stop" access to health information through "HealthFinder" web site
- $140 million in grants to develop new information technologies for health care
- Proposal for privacy of medical records

C. **Possible New Proposals**

- Direct HHS to expand re-imbursement for telemedicine through HCFA
- Expand efforts to make quality information on health care plans available on the Internet

5. **Improving the Quality of Life for people with disabilities**

A. **Themes**

- Information technology could improve quality of life for people with disabilities and improve their ability to participate in the workforce -- if information systems are designed to be accessible for the 50 million Americans with disabilities

- If this is done -- it could mean a whole new universe of information and services is accessible. "Text-to-speech" technology could make all electronic information accessible to someone who is blind -- as opposed to just books on tape or Braille. Speech recognition technology could allow someone who can not use a keyboard to use a computer

- By making computers useful for people with disabilities -- we wind up improving performance for everyone -- just as curbcuts help families with strollers in addition to people with wheelchairs.

B. **Administration Record/Agenda**

- President signed Telecommunications Act of 1996 - which requires telecommunications companies to make telecom equipment accessible

- Administration has proposed strengthening the laws that require government agencies to purchase information technology that is accessible.

- Administration provided seed funding for Web Accessibility Initiative to make the World Wide Web accessible for people with disabilities (project is located at MIT)

C. **Possible New Proposals**

- Increase research and development in those areas that will make computers more accessible for people with disabilities (speech recognition, text-to-speech, recognition of gestures, etc.

- Train the next generation of engineers to design systems that are accessible (develop curriculum, etc.)

- Direct federal agencies to make the government's Web sites accessible.

6. Crisis Management

A. Themes

Information technology could dramatically improve the way we respond to natural and man-made disasters - saving thousands of lives and billions of dollars. Possible applications include:

- Wireless data networks for linking crisis field stations;
- Networks that discover and react to changes in available communications links;
- Software that helps crisis managers makes decisions based on incomplete information from sources with varying levels of quality and reliability;
- Modeling and simulation of manmade and natural disasters that are linked to real-time sensor data (e.g. better prediction of tornadoes, wildfires, etc.)
- Virtual "anchor desks" that allow crisis officials to use remote computers information, and human expertise.

B. Administration Record/Agenda

- Vice President has encouraged development of Global Disaster Information Network to better share information from intelligence community to the emergency management community.

C. Possible New Proposals

- Fund R&D and test-beds that will develop the technologies for better prediction and response to natural and man-made disasters (see above for examples).

Thomas L. Freedman
04/14/98 11:49:51 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Michael Waldman/WHO/EOP

cc: Mary L. Smith/OPD/EOP
Subject: Commencement Speech

My main thought is that the speech is not about technology. It is about reinforcing our values and goals, and how we can come closer to achieving our ideal world.

The idea of a computer in every home or the ability to access your government by the internet is not that compelling, most people probably have a mixed reaction to it in the abstract.

But the notion of creating a country where it is much easier to get an education, criminals are tracked comprehensively, medical expertise is distributed quickly to every hospital that needs it, and you can have your voice heard easily on what is happening in your neighborhood and in Washington, is compelling.

So I guess that means going at it as results, what it means for you, as opposed to do-dads. Make it clear that technology is a means, the speech is about the ends -- the goals and how we can better reach our dream for the nation. What do you think?

April 13, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

RE: MIT COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

I. Summary:

- We think that your June 5th MIT address might be an opportunity to give a major policy address on the Information Revolution and its implications for all Americans.

- This speech would differ from your July 1997 address on the Internet and global electronic commerce because it would focus more on the social dimensions of the Information Revolution -- and concrete steps that government, industry and academia can take to promote the **benefits and applications** of information technology that go beyond buying and selling on the Internet -- and address the problem of "**information haves and have-nots.**" The theme would be "Putting People First in the Information Age."

- The speech would spell out a three-part agenda:

  - Continuing to invest in the long-term research and development that will sustain the Information Revolution.

  - Promoting applications of information technology that benefit real people, and help prevent America from being divided into information "haves" and "have-nots."

  - Take steps to address the potential downsides of the Information Revolution -- such as an erosion of personal privacy, and create an initiative that would explore the ethical, legal, and social implications of the Information Revolution.

- Given the leadership role that the Vice President has played in these issues, we would want to work closely with him before presenting you with a final proposal.

II. Why focus on the Information Revolution?

We believe that focusing on the Information Revolution is appropriate because of (1) the rapid pace of change of the technology; (2) the expanding utilization of information technology by more and more Americans; and (3) its pervasive impact on virtually all aspects of our economic and social life. For example:

- Our ability to store, process, and transmit information is continuing to improve at exponential rates. The semiconductor industry is already developing the technology that will allow them to put billions of transistors on a single integrated circuit. Fiber optics technology will eventually allow us to transmit all of the phone traffic on Mother's Day on a single strand of fiber.

- The Internet, which connected 2,000 computers in 1985, now connects 30 million computers, and is continuing to double in size every year. Forty-two percent of all households now have personal computers.

- Satellite and wireless systems will soon provide users with "anytime, anywhere" communication.

III. What are some of the specific applications of information technology that can improve our quality of life?

Your speech might discuss steps we can take to promote the use of information technology in ways that will improve the quality of life for all Americans. Some examples are:

- **Life-long learning**: A growing number of working Americans would like to upgrade their skills but find it difficult to participate in traditional campus-based instruction. By allowing adults to learn at a time, place and pace that is convenient for them -- distance learning can make it easier for them to upgrade their skills and compete for the jobs that the New Economy is creating.

- **Empowering low income Americans**: Many applications of information technology could empower low income Americans, including:

  - Community Technology Centers that would make it easier for people without access to computers to acquire information technology skills.

  - The President's Educational Technology Initiative is designed to ensure that all schools -- not just wealthy schools -- have access to computers, the Internet, and teachers that can use technology effectively in the classroom.

- High-quality software for adult basic education (English as a Second Language, GED equivalence, adult literacy, remedial math) could help advance our Welfare-to-Work initiative.

- Public health networks that seek to increase childhood immunization rates in our inner cities by generating automatic reminders to doctors, parents, and school principals.

- "Neighborhood Early Warning Systems" that give advance warning when communities are headed for trouble (based on vacancies, loan delinquencies, etc.)

- **Curbcuts on the Information Superhighway**: Information technology can make it easier for more than 50 million Americans with disabilities to participate in the workplace and increase their independence -- but only if information technology is designed from the beginning to be usable by all Americans. For example, speech recognition technology can allow people with disabilities who can not use a keyboard to use a computer. By converting "text to speech" -- technology can dramatically increase the information that people who are blind or low vision have access to.

- **Health care**: Personal health information systems can allow people to make more informed decisions about their health care needs. Telemedicine can improve the quality of care in rural areas by giving patients access to the best specialists in the country.

- **Crisis management/public safety**: Improvements in supercomputer technology will increase our ability to predict tornadoes and other natural and man-made disasters, and respond to them once they have occurred.

- **Delivery of government services**: Information technology can make the government more responsive, user-friendly, and transparent. The use of information technology has been a cornerstone of the Vice-President's National Performance Review.

IV. Potential risks of the Information Revolution such as privacy

In recent years, Americans have become increasingly concerned about their privacy. In a recent Louis Harris poll, eight out of ten Americans surveyed agreed that "consumers have lost all control over how personal information about them is circulated and used by companies." Earlier this year, a three-part, front page *Washington Post* series highlighted a number of examples of the growing erosion of personal privacy, including sales by state governments of personal information.

Clearly, new technologies have made it easier to create, manipulate, store, transmit, and link digital personally identifiable information. People may disclose personal information about themselves as they travel, fill a prescription at the drug store, visit a Web site, call a 1-800 number, send an e-mail, use a credit card, or purchase groceries using a discount card. Information about these individual transactions may be bought and sold - and companies are now assembling giant "data warehouses" that contain electronic dossiers on the needs, lifestyles, and spending habits of millions of Americans.

These concerns are not just hypothetical. Beverly Dennis, a women in Massillion, Ohio, received a 12-page letter containing an intimately threatening sexual fantasy from a stranger who knew her birthday, the names of her favorite magazines, the fact that she was divorced, and the kind of soap she used in the shower. The letter was written by a convicted rapist serving time in a Texas state prison, who had been entering information for Metromail, a direct marketing firm with detailed databases on more than 90 percent of American households. Dennis' suit disclosed that Metromail had 900 pieces of information on her going back to 1987, including not only her income, marital status, hobbies, ailments, but whether she had dentures, the brands of antacid tablets she had taken, and how often she had used room deodorizers, sleeping aids, and hemorrhoid remedies.

The NEC and DPC are reviewing options to strengthen privacy protection, including: (1) meaningful industry self-regulation; (2) establishing a focal point for privacy issues within the federal government; and (3) initiatives or legislation that are designed to target specific aspects of the privacy problem (e.g. medical records, kids, companies that develop "electronic dossiers" on millions of Americans).

It may also make sense to establish an initiative that looks at the broader ethical, legal, and social implications of the Information Revolution. Currently, there is no equivalent in the information technology area of the ESLI (Ethical, Legal and Social Implications) Research Program of the National Human Genome Research Institute. ELSI supports basic and applied research that identifies and analyzes ethical, legal and social issues surrounding human genetics research, such as: discrimination in insurance and employment based on genetic information; when and how new genetic tests should be integrated into health care services; and informed consent in genetics research.

April 3, 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

THROUGH: JOHN PODESTA
SYLVIA MATHEWS

FROM: MICHAEL WALDMAN
STEPHANIE STREETT
ANN LEWIS
CRAIG SMITH
JENNIFER PALMIERI

SUBJECT: 1998 COMMENCEMENTS

At your request, we are forwarding to you proposed themes, locations and dates for the 1998 commencements. Commencement addresses provide a unique opportunity to highlight major new proposals, or discuss provocative subjects in depth. Each of the three recommended speeches would be independently newsworthy; taken together, they deal with America in the new century.

Where another commencement speaker has already been chosen, we have included that information.

I. AMERICA IN THE INFORMATION AGE

This would be a chance for you to talk in sweeping terms about our nation's response to the challenges of the Information Age -- the dynamic impact of new technologies, the new inequalities they can create, and their revolutionary, democratizing potential. This speech could announce a goal of a new national policy to put a computer in the home of every child -- and pledge to use regulatory, tax and other means to achieve that goal in years to come. It could also address issues ranging from computers in the classroom to antitrust to privacy. Finally, it could discuss new opportunities and threats beyond our borders as result of globalization and the spread of information technology.

Recommendation:

June 5, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Student Population: 9,774
NIH scientist David Hsu, last year's *Time* man-of-the-year, is scheduled to speak at the commencement. (We would recommend that both of you speak.)

II. NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

This year, you will be speaking to the U.S. Naval Academy on May 22. You will have returned two days before from your trip to Europe for the Summit of the Eight and the USEU Summit. The NSC recommends either of the following topics:

Defense Policy for the 21st Century. This commencement address would focus on bringing America's military into a new era, able to deal not only with traditional threats but also the new threats as well.

Meeting New Threats to America's Security: This commencement address would discuss our strategy for combating a nexus of new threats: the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons; high tech challenges to our critical infrastructure; and increasingly interconnected rogue states, terrorists, international criminals and drug traffickers.

III. IMMIGRATION AND NEW CITIZENSHIP IN THE 21st CENTURY

This commencement address would be an excellent opportunity to talk about the immigration and the requirements of citizenship in an era of increasing diversity. The United States is undergoing the third great wave of immigration; this speech would unambiguously declare that this is a good thing for America, helping to revitalize our cities and enrich our culture in the 21st Century. The speech would challenge all Americans -- native, naturalized, and newly arrived -- to live up to the requirements of citizenship, the common values and shared duties that are at the core of our civil society and civic culture.

Recommendation:

June 13, Portland State University, student population 10,000 -- 10% Asian, 3% Hispanic, 3% African-American. 44% of students are 25 years or older. Secretary Shalala is currently scheduled to speak.

IV. POSSIBLE EDUCATION SPEECH AT A CHARTER SCHOOL

We are also looking into the possibility of your speaking at the graduation exercises of a charter school. This probably would not be covered as a commencement speech, per se. Rather, would be an opportunity to do a message event about your education agenda.