

FOIA MARKER

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Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records

Subgroup/Office of Origin: Speechwriting

Series/Staff Member: Jeff Shesol

Subseries:

OA/ID Number: 21461

FolderID:

Folder Title:

Carleton [College] Commencement 6/10/00

Stack:

S

Row:

91

Section:

6

Shelf:

10

Position:

3

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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001. note	Handwritten. Commencement Meeting. (4 pages)	06/05/2000	P5
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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Speechwriting
Jeff Shesol
OA/Box Number: 21461

FOLDER TITLE:

Carleton [College] Commencement 6/10/00

2006-0467-F

vz1317

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
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- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Call Paulson/Push

- WSP
- CDFIS / CRA

Current efforts

- Admin (etc, etc.)
- City (Darey) - K-K (colide?) college → RTU quote? ⇒ catalyst + anchor
- Push (4-part plan - initiated?)
- Jackson (met on 10/13)

PRESERVATION PHOTOCOPY

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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PRICE
REED

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

The True Bird

see to establish
- PPTs called for variety of things:

1) Ask DOT - states use UI for pd. leave

Now -> final rule for st. leg.
(MA on verge of passing)
(Anne Sullivan on UI)

larger pt.

FMLA - great - changes lives -
but too many said afraid to take
adv. - 1st fed. ins. critical...

- we and encourage states to do this

- still strengthen UI

- DPH pt - early part of UI
(Warn st. or NY had it... then
applied it nationwide)

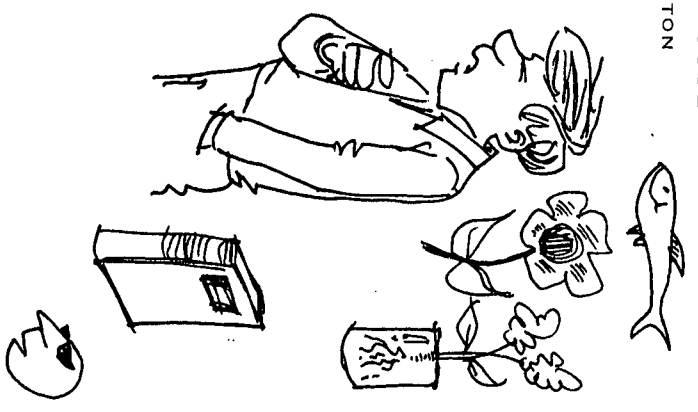
panels to Churchill + another
prog. era

2) Juvenile Policy
CHIPs

- can we get done? by admin action?
also st. to use surplus CHIP funds for parents

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Part of similar
streaming?
willpower



POTUS

Oral office 6/9

Direct loan - save students/colleges

one of maj. adv.

how many people took

5m in prog.

save avg over \$1500

~~\$86~~ overall for students
~~\$56~~ for colleges
1,200 colleges

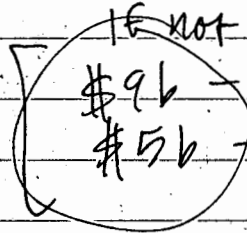
Lifetime

- is Carleton in it?

If not, don't put heat on them

broader

total



int. rate + fee savings
since founding prog. 1993

efforts to improve quality of pub ed?

Avg. student over life of loan?

paint picture

5% incm contingent

GS: take more credit for competition

* brought down costs for everybody, fees, students at

* flexibility in diff. times

to switch to incm contingency

Carleton + other places

but more important

* # HPE scholarship 10m?

* adequately describe diff b/w this + LL

more than 10m HOPE and LL
↳ workers

Goal:

1993 created

than wd take mid-man out

so students cd borrow easier, save fees, more repay options
over 120 schools now

Just as important → new comp → ↓ fees + int. rates for
students in trad. student loan prog like those of you here
at Carleton

Draft 6/1/00 6:00pm

**OUTLINE FOR PROPOSED
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT
CARLETON COLLEGE
NORTHFIELD, MN
June 10, 2000**

- Introduction
 - Acknowledgments and local color
- Third Way Framework
 - One of things most grateful for is opportunity to put to rest argument that you can't strengthen the economy and protect the environment
- Accomplishments
 - Economic successes
 - Environmental successes
 - Clean air, clean water, oceans
 - Land
 - Everglades, etc.
 - Previous Monument, Park designations
 - VP's Hanford announcement yesterday
- **Deliverable**: New Monument designations
- Greatest challenge of 21st century: Global Warming
 - Define the problem
 - **Deliverable**: discuss National Assessment of Climate Change (USGCRP)
 - Great optimism that we have the technology to meet this challenge
 - The big choice:
 - Technology-based, proactive approach to energy and energy efficiency or short-sighted, stop-gap approach: dependency on foreign oil, drilling in environmentally sensitive areas
 - The choice is clear
 - Our agenda meets the challenge of global warming with new technology.
 - Power
 - Examples, including renewables, including biomass fuels
 - Transportation
 - Examples, including PNGV
 - Homes
 - Technology examples, including fuel cells, etc.
 - Unfortunately, some in Congress are wedding to old industrial-age approach
 - Appropriations
 - Riders
 - Special interest over the public interest
- Conclusion TK

Draft 6/5/00 1:45pm
Shesol/ Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT
CARLETON COLLEGE
NORTHFIELD, MN
June 10, 2000**

Thank you, President Lewis. And congratulations to the Class of 2000. This is a very proud day for you, your parents, siblings, grandparents, and friends. I am proud that you have given me an opportunity to share it with you.

For years, I've been hearing about what a wonderful place this is from friends and staff members who had the pleasure of studying here for four years. They tell me that from the moment you step foot on this beautiful campus, "you are a part of Carleton and Carleton is a part of you." They tell me that Carleton is my kind of school: A school that celebrates the great value of diversity, fosters community service, and nurtures environmental awareness. A school that exemplifies "excellence without elitism." A school where the President of the college gets to sing like Elvis.

President Lewis, I want you to know I've seen a bootleg copy of your performance of "Hound Dog." Now, I love Elvis. Elvis was a nickname of mine. And you, sir, made one fine Elvis. In fact, you did such a fine job that a few students and I pitched in to get an award for you. It may not seem like a whole lot, but they tell me it has sentimental value. [*President produces the bust of Schiller.*] Of course, Schiller was no Elvis. But the students assured me that you'd like it.

Draft 06/06/00 5:00pm

OUTLINE
CARLETON COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ON
A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT FOR WORKING AMERICANS
June 10, 2000

Introduction

- Graduating at great moment in history
- Overall accomplishments

How do we make most of this moment?

- Opportunity, community, responsibility
- Today, talk about expanding opportunity

New notion of opportunity/ new social contract for working Americans

Third Way frame

- Then and now
- Role of government

Accomplishments/ Agenda

- SOTU/ budget
 - EITC
 - Minimum wage
 - Child care tax credit
 - Health care: CHIP expansion
 - Education: college opportunity, lifelong learning

Deliverables

- Paid leave
- Fatherhood
- Welfare to work

Conclusion

- HHH or RFK quote

*Alan
12/00
07/16*

CS.

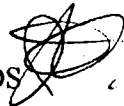
COPY

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
June 8, 2000



SP1536

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: J. TERRY EDMONDS 
JEFF SHESOL
LOWELL WEISS

CC: JOHN PODESTA
KAREN TRAMONTANO

SUBJECT: CARLETON COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

Attached is a draft of your Saturday commencement address at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. As you know, the subject of this speech is the growing importance of higher education and the steps we are taking to expand college opportunity.

This draft reflects the input of Bruce Reed, Gene Sperling, Karen Tramontano, Loretta Ucelli, Sid Blumenthal, and Tom Freedman.

We will make final revisions based upon your comments on this draft, and from our prep session with you Friday afternoon.

Thank you.

Shesol/ Weiss

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ON EXPANDING COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY
CARLETON COLLEGE
NORTHFIELD, MN

June 10, 2000

Thank you, President Lewis. And congratulations to the Class of 2000. This is a very proud day for you, your parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends. I am grateful that you have given me an opportunity to share it with you.

Acknowledge: Carleton trustees and faculty members, including your long-time colleague Sen. Paul Wellstone; student speakers Faisal Mohyuddin [*FIE-zil moe-ha-DEEN*], Sachin Patel [*SATCH-in pa-TEL*], and Katie Beebe [*BEE-bee*]; honorary degree recipients Bruno Nettl and George Dixon; Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk; Mayor Bill Rossmann and the community of Northfield.

For years, I've been hearing what a wonderful place this is from friends who had the pleasure of studying here – people like my advisor Tom Freedman, Class of '85, and his classmate, John Harris of *The Washington Post*. They tell me that from the moment you set foot on this beautiful campus, “you are a part of Carleton and Carleton is a part of you.” [*unofficial motto of the school*] They tell me Carleton is my kind of school: A school that celebrates diversity, that nurtures creativity, that fosters a lifelong commitment to community service.

A school whose students and faculty exemplify "excellence without elitism." A school where the President of the college gets to sing like Elvis.

I want to thank the graduates for such a generous welcome for my final commencement speech as President. I am proud to be the first sitting President to come to Carleton. And I'm proud to be – and I believe history will record this – the first sitting President to have his portrait painted on the water tower. Now, I heard it wasn't the greatest likeness in the world, but I don't think that was any reason to paint it over.

And you know, I don't usually accept gifts, but a group of students absolutely insisted that I take home a souvenir of my stay. I think it's just great. What do you think?

[Reveal "Bust of Schiller."]

I appreciate it. I really do. But I don't think this looks like me, either.

You are graduating at a remarkable moment in history. The year 2000 will be fixed in memory not only because the world has turned a very important calendar page, but because America has entered an era of unparalleled promise. We begin the 21st century with more than 22 million new jobs. We have the lowest unemployment rates in more than 30 years; the lowest poverty rates in 20 years; the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record; and the longest period of economic growth in our entire history.

Never before has America experienced this kind of sustained prosperity. And never before has any nation had the opportunity and responsibility we now have to shape a world that is more peaceful, secure, and free. I think it is worth noting that today is the one-year anniversary of the day when Serbian troops – accepting NATO’s terms – began their withdrawal from Kosovo. Today, troops from 39 nations – including 5,500 Americans – are working to bring Kosovo back to life. The sound of gunfire has been replaced by the sound of jackhammers – as roads, homes, and schools are rebuilt. Almost a million refugees have returned home. And this fall, the people of Kosovo will go to the polls to vote in the first democratic elections in Kosovo’s history. America’s men and women in uniform not only won the war. Today, they are helping secure the peace.

Here at home, the world you’re about to enter is changing dramatically. The American pulse is quickening. The flow of ideas and information is picking up. Technologies that scarcely existed when you first entered school are now driving the new, and truly global, economy. It is a powerful, sweeping transformation – the scope of which we have only begun to comprehend.

This changing world belongs to you. Not just because you’re young, but because your education at Carleton has endowed you with exactly the right skills to succeed: the curiosity to embrace new ideas, the creativity to imagine a more-perfect world, and the confidence to build it, step by step.

Your college years have been a blessing. Of course, for many Americans, an education and an experience like yours remain little more than a dream. And that is what I am here to talk about today – our obligation, at this moment of great promise, to give all students the chance to fulfill their God-given potential... to give all Americans the ability to thrive in this dynamic new economy... to fulfill, at long last, our Founders’ vision of opportunity for all.

Two centuries ago, at our nation's founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the Industrial Age, the Progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational education, a new emphasis on science and reason. Today, we know that it means something more. It means higher education or lifelong learning for every American. It means mastering new tools and technologies. It means the ability to think broadly, adjust quickly, to seize the potential of this Information Age.

Today, a college education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor's degree will grow more than twice as fast as jobs that don't. The three fastest growing occupations require at least a bachelor's degree and pay much better than average. America can't afford to leave any students behind simply because they can't afford to pay for college.

I came from a family in which no one had ever attended college. And yet, from the time I was a child, my mother, my grandmother, and my stepfather told me I was going to college. And I believed them. I remember the day I was accepted to Georgetown. The school gave me a \$500 scholarship. Simply put, it made it possible for me to go. And if I hadn't, there's no way I'd be standing here today.

When I became President, I had no greater priority than giving every hard-working student the same chance that was given to me. That means our children must start school ready to learn and graduate ready to succeed. So we have dramatically expanded and improved the quality of early-childhood education, preschool, and after-school. We have insisted on higher standards, greater accountability, and extra help so children can reach those higher standards.

We have invested in public school choice, in attracting talented new teachers, in reducing class sizes, in connecting all our schools to the Internet.

And, from the very start, we have worked to open the doors of college to every American. In fact, we have more than doubled college aid – something that was long overdue. I know that many of you have benefited from that assistance; President Lewis tells me that more than half of you have reached this day due not only to your parents' and your own hard work but to scholarships, grants, and loans.

In just seven years, we expanded Pell grants by more than 40 percent. We rewrote the student loan program to increase competition, to give aid directly to students, to make it cheaper to get the aid you need. And we're now enabling graduates to pay off their loans as a percentage of their income – because no students should ever have to drop out of school for fear that they can't repay their loans.

We expanded the federal work-study program, to help a million students a year work their way through school. We created AmeriCorps, which has given 150,000 young people the chance to earn money for college while they serve their communities. We gave families across America the ability to put their savings in new Education IRAs, to help them save for college, tax-free.

We created the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first twelve. We launched a Lifetime Learning tax credit, which helps families pay for the last two years of college, for graduate school, or for job training. In 1998 alone, nearly 5 million Americans used these tax credits to open the doors of college, to open new doors of opportunity.

Across America, more and more students are taking advantage of these new opportunities. Today, I am releasing a new report that makes this clear. The study shows that in the past seven years, America has achieved the greatest expansion of college opportunity since the G.I. Bill, 50 years ago. As student aid has increased, so has college attendance, to record levels. Fully two-thirds of high-school graduates go straight to college, an all-time high. And for the first time in history, a majority of young African-Americans are enrolling in higher education. America is on the right track.

The report also documents the growing value of a college education. The earnings gap between those who have a bachelor's degree and those who don't is growing dramatically. Over the course of a career, a person with a bachelor's degree will earn \$600,000 more, on average, than a person with only a high school degree. The return on a college investment is nearly double the stock market's historical rate of return.

This report is full of good news. But it also shows that we can do better. Even with the new forms of financial aid – and even though the rise in tuition costs have slowed over the past few years – the vast majority of families are still feeling stretched. After all, over the past twenty years, the cost of college has quadrupled. I know many parents here today have taken second mortgages, or second jobs, to pay those tuition bills.

So to build on the success of our HOPE scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits, I have proposed a landmark \$30 billion college opportunity tax cut that will benefit millions of middle-class families. It will allow them to deduct up to \$10,000 in tuition costs, providing as much as \$2,800 in much-needed tax relief.

This will make a big difference for many of the families here today who have younger children. We need Congress to act – and to act this year – to pass this tax cut into law.

But I didn't create HOPE Scholarships, or propose College Opportunity tax cuts, simply because they are crucial for our families. In the Information Age, we know that investing in intellectual capital is just as important as investing in industrial capital. We give tax relief today to businesses that invest in new plants and equipment. We ought to give tax relief to families that invest in their children's potential.

This is the right kind of tax cut for America – it is, like the others I have proposed, a targeted tax cut. It preserves our fiscal discipline today and lays the groundwork for future growth. Last year, I had to veto a big, across-the-board tax cut that did neither of these things. In fact, the tax plan I vetoed would have squeezed out our investments in education, undermined our progress, and risked our prosperity. This year, I hope the Congress will work with me to pass the right kind of tax cuts – right for our families and right for our future. And, at the same time, I'm going to insist that Congress send me a budget that invests more in our schools, while demanding more of them; that gives more of our young people a chance to serve with AmeriCorps; that reduces class size and gives all our students safe and modern schools.

There are two other things we must do this year. First, as we help more Americans go to college, we must also help more Americans stay in college. Today, nearly 40 percent of all college students drop out before they earn a degree. I have called on Congress to fund new College Completion Challenge Grants. These grants would provide pre-freshman summer programs and support services for students who might never make it to graduation day – who might never put on the cap and gown to take those proud strides across the stage, as you're about to do.

Second, we must make sure all students, especially those from our hardest-pressed families, can find the college doors we've worked so hard to open. In many communities – even here in this beautiful college town – there are young people who grow up not knowing how important, and how possible, college really is. Maybe no one's pushing them to take algebra and other classes important for college. Maybe they don't know how to secure scholarships, grants, and loans. That is why I have asked Congress to work with us to expand our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives, so that we can reach out to these students – as early as 6th grade – and instill in them high hopes that they can go to college and the high expectations that they will succeed.

Taken together, these steps will provide students with the support they need; families with the college relief they need; our economy with the skilled workforce we need; and our nation with active, informed citizens. Now, some people question whether we can achieve all these goals. They are the same people who said, seven years ago, that we couldn't boost investment in education while balancing our budget. In fact, we've done both – restoring fiscal discipline while doubling our investment in education and training. So I believe we can get it done – and Congress should get it done this year.

A hundred years from now, the Carleton Class of 2100 will sit in these seats, will look up at this podium, and perhaps a future President will reflect back on this remarkable age. Let us hope that he – or she – can say that the first steps we took in this century were the right steps... that we made the most of this moment of promise.

To the first graduating class of the 21st century, I offer my congratulations – for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached and even surpassed. You and your parents should be very proud – and very confident as you venture forth from this campus.

But to make the very most of the opportunities you have been given, you must rise to your responsibility – the responsibility of empowering others. As the years pass, your work will be judged, and you will judge yourselves, on the lives you touch – on the ways, large and small, that you give back. If you embrace this responsibility, if you turn your opportunities into opportunities for others, then you will not only be leaders in the arts and sciences, in business and industry. You will be the leaders of our nation. Good luck. May “Carleton always be with you.” And may God bless you all.

###

9/8/00

Pat Young:

Attached are some items that were forwarded to the President.
We have never received the original back from the POTUS.

Yours to handle.

Carol Cleveland



IntroSpect

ORM

SCANNING INSERT SHEET

REMAINDER OF CASE NOT SCANNED

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
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Two centuries ago, at our nation's founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the Industrial Age, the Progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational education, a new emphasis on science and reason. Today, we know that it means something more. It means more than 12 years of education for every American. It means mastering new tools and technologies. It means the ability to think broadly, adjust quickly, to continue learning for a lifetime.

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And, from the very start, we have worked to open the doors of college to every American. In fact, we have more than doubled college aid – something that was long overdue.

In 1993, we created the Direct Student Loan program that has taken out the middle man and saved America's students \$9 billion in just seven years. Students can now borrow more easily and pay back their loans as a percentage of their income – reducing the chances that students will drop out of school for fear they cannot repay their loans ... increasing the chances they'll take the proud strides across the stage you're about to take. More than 1,200 colleges now participate in the Direct Loan Program. And even at schools that don't, students benefit from the increased competition the program has sparked in the traditional loan market – bringing down fees and interest rates for all students.

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We created the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, to make the first two years of college as universal as high school. To help families afford the last two years of college – as well as graduate school and job training – we also launched a Lifetime Learning tax cut, providing a 20% credit against tuition and fees. This year alone, we expect that well over 10 million Americans will use HOPE Scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits to open the doors of college, to open new doors of opportunity.

In the past seven years, America has achieved the greatest expansion of college opportunity since the G.I. Bill, 50 years ago. Today, I am releasing a new report that makes this clear. As student aid has increased, so has college attendance, to record levels. Fully two-thirds of high-school graduates go straight to college, an all-time high. And for the first time in history, a majority of young African-Americans is enrolling in higher education.

The report also documents the growing value of a college education. The earnings gap between those who have a bachelor's degree and those who don't is growing dramatically. Over the course of a career, a person with a bachelor's degree will earn \$600,000 more, on average, than a person with only a high school degree. The return on a college investment is now nearly double the stock market's historical rate of return.

This report is full of good news. But it also shows that we can do better. Even with the new forms of financial aid – and even though the rise in tuition costs has slowed over the past few years – the majority of families are still feeling stretched. Over the past twenty years, the cost of college has quadrupled. I know many parents here today have taken second mortgages, or second jobs, to pay those tuition bills.

So to build on the success of our HOPE scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits, I have proposed a landmark \$30 billion college opportunity tax cut that will benefit millions of middle-class families. It will allow them to deduct up to \$10,000 in tuition costs, providing as much as \$2,800 in much-needed tax relief. We need Congress to pass this tax cut into law. Because in the Information Age, investing in intellectual capital is every bit as important as investing in industrial capital.

There is something else we must do this year. We must make sure all students, especially those from our hardest-pressed families, can find the college doors we've worked so hard to open. In many communities – even here in this beautiful college town – there are young people who grow up unaware of how important, and how possible, college really is. Maybe no one's pushing them to take algebra and other classes important for college. Maybe they don't know how to secure scholarships, grants, and loans. I have asked Congress to work with us to expand our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives, so that we can reach out to these students – as early as 6th grade – and instill in them high hopes that they can go to college and the high expectations that they will succeed when they get there.

If we do these things – and if Congress works with me to pass a budget that invests more in our public schools and demands more from them – we can provide students with the support they need; families with the relief they need; our economy with the skilled workforce we need; and our nation with active, informed citizens. Now, some people question whether we can reach all these goals. They are the same people who said, seven years ago, that we couldn't boost investment in education while balancing our budget. In fact, we've done both – restoring fiscal discipline while doubling our investment in education and training. So I believe we can get it done – and Congress should get it done this year.

A hundred years from now, the Carleton Class of 2100 will sit in these seats, will look up at this podium, and perhaps a future President will reflect on this remarkable age. Let us hope that he – or she – can say that the first steps we took in this century were the right steps... that we made the most of this moment of promise.

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Draft 06/09/00 8:10pm

Shesol/ Weiss

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CARLETON COLLEGE
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Acknowledge: Carleton trustees and faculty members, including your long-time colleague Sen. Paul Wellstone; student speakers Faisal Mohyuddin [*FASS-il moe-ya-DEEN*], Sachin Patel [*sa-CHEEN pah-TELL*], and Katie Beebe [*BEE-bee*]; honorary degree recipients Bruno Nettl and George Dixon; Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk; Mayor Bill Rossman and the community of Northfield.

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I want to thank the graduates for such a generous welcome. I am proud to be the first sitting President to come to Carleton. And I'm proud to be the first sitting President to have his portrait painted on a water tower. Now, I heard it wasn't the greatest likeness in the world, but I don't think that was any reason to paint it over.

And you know, I don't usually accept gifts, but a group of students absolutely insisted that I take home a souvenir of my stay. I think it's just great. What do you think?

[Reveal "Bust of Schiller."]

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Technologies that scarcely existed when you first entered school are now driving the new, and truly global, economy. It is a powerful, sweeping transformation – the scope of which we have only begun to comprehend.

This changing world belongs to you. Not just because you're young, but because your education at Carleton has endowed you with exactly the right skills to succeed: the curiosity to embrace new ideas, the creativity to imagine a more-perfect world, and the confidence to build it, step by step.

Your college years have been a blessing. Of course, for many Americans, an education and an experience like yours remain little more than a dream.

And that is what I am here to talk about today – our obligation, at this moment of great promise, to give all students the chance to reach their God-given potential... to fulfill, at long last, our Founders' vision of opportunity for all.

Two centuries ago, at our nation's founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the Industrial Age, the Progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational education, a new emphasis on science and reason.

Today, we know that it means something more. It means more than 12 years of education for every American. It means mastering new tools and technologies. It means the ability to think broadly, adjust quickly, to continue learning for a lifetime.

Today, a college education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor's degree will grow more than twice as fast as jobs that don't. The three fastest growing occupations require at least a bachelor's degree and pay much better than average. America can't afford to leave any students behind simply because they can't afford to pay for college.

I came from a family in which no one had ever attended college. And yet, from the time I was a child, my mother, my grandmother, and my stepfather told me I was going to college. And I believed them. I remember the day I was accepted to Georgetown. The school gave me a \$500 scholarship. Simply put, it made it possible for me to go. And if I hadn't, there's no way I'd be standing here today.

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I want to thank the graduates for such a generous welcome for my final commencement speech as President. I am proud to be the first sitting President to come to Carleton. And I'm proud to be – and I believe history will record this – the first sitting President to have his portrait painted on the water tower. Now, I heard it wasn't the greatest likeness in the world, but I don't think that was any reason to paint it over.

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Two centuries ago, at our nation’s founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the Industrial Age, the Progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational education, a new emphasis on science and reason. Today, we know that it means something more. It means higher education or lifelong learning for every American. It means mastering new tools and technologies. It means the ability to think broadly, adjust quickly, to seize the potential of this Information Age.

Today, a college education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree will grow more than twice as fast as jobs that don’t. The three fastest growing occupations require at least a bachelor’s degree and pay much better than average. America can’t afford to leave any students behind simply because they can’t afford to pay for college.

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And, from the very start, we have worked to open the doors of college to every American. In fact, we have more than doubled college aid – something that was long overdue. I know that many of you have benefited from that assistance; President Lewis tells me that more than half of you have reached this day due not only to your parents' and your own hard work but to scholarships, grants, and loans. 6090

In just seven years, we expanded Pell grants by more than 40 percent. We rewrote the student loan program to increase competition, to give aid directly to students, to make it cheaper to get the aid you need. And we're now enabling graduates to pay off their loans as a percentage of their income – because no students should ever have to drop out of school for fear that they can't repay their loans.

We expanded the federal work-study program, to help a million students a year work their way through school. We created AmeriCorps, which has given 150,000 young people the chance to earn money for college while they serve their communities. We gave families across America the ability to put their savings in new Education IRAs, to help them save for college, tax-free.

We created the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first twelve. We launched a Lifetime Learning tax credit, which helps families pay for the last two years of college, for graduate school, or for job training. In 1998 alone, nearly 5 million Americans used these tax credits to open the doors of college, to open new doors of opportunity.

Across America, more and more students are taking advantage of these new opportunities. Today, I am releasing a new report that makes this clear. The study shows that in the past seven years, America has achieved the greatest expansion of college opportunity since the G.I. Bill, 50 years ago. As student aid has increased, so has college attendance, to record levels. Fully two-thirds of high-school graduates go straight to college, an all-time high. And for the first time in history, a majority of young African-Americans are enrolling in higher education. America is on the right track.

The report also documents the growing value of a college education. The earnings gap between those who have a bachelor's degree and those who don't is growing dramatically. Over the course of a career, a person with a bachelor's degree will earn \$600,000 more, on average, than a person with only a high school degree. The return on a college investment is nearly double the stock market's historical rate of return.

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much as \$2,800 in much-needed tax relief. This will make a big difference for many of the families here today who have younger children. We need Congress to act – and to act this year – to pass this tax cut into law.

But I didn't create HOPE Scholarships, or propose College Opportunity tax cuts, ~~simply~~ ^{only} because they are crucial for our families. In the Information Age, we know that investing in intellectual capital is just as important as investing in industrial capital. We give tax relief today to businesses that invest in new plants and equipment. We ought to give tax relief to families that invest in their children's potential.

This is the right kind of tax cut for America – it is, like the others I have proposed, a targeted tax cut. It preserves our fiscal discipline today and lays the groundwork for future growth. Last year, I had to veto a big, across-the-board tax cut that did neither of these things. In fact, the tax plan I vetoed would have squeezed out our investments in education, undermined our progress, and risked our prosperity. This year, I hope the Congress will work with me to pass the right kind of tax cuts – right for our families and right for our future. And, at the same time, I'm going to insist that Congress send me a budget that invests more in our schools, while demanding more of them; that gives more of our young people a chance to serve with AmeriCorps; that reduces class size and gives all our students safe and modern schools.

There are two other things we must do this year. First, as we help more Americans go to college, we must also help more Americans stay in college. Today, nearly 40 percent of all college students drop out before they earn a degree. I have called on Congress to fund new College Completion Challenge Grants. These grants would provide pre-freshman summer programs and support services for students who might never make it to graduation day – who might never put on the cap and gown to take those proud strides across the stage, as you're about to do.

Second, we must make sure all students, especially those from our hardest-pressed families, can find the college doors we've worked so hard to open. In many communities – even here in this beautiful college town – there are young people who grow up not knowing how important, and how possible, college really is. Maybe no one's pushing them to take algebra and other classes important for college. Maybe they don't know how to secure scholarships, grants, and loans. That is why I have asked Congress to work with us to expand our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives, so that we can reach out to these students – as early as 6th grade – and instill in them high hopes that they can go to college and the high expectations that they will succeed.

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Never before has America experienced this kind of sustained prosperity. And never before has any nation had the opportunity ~~and responsibility~~ we now have to shape a world that is more peaceful, ~~secure~~ and free. I think it is worth noting that today is the one-year anniversary of the

day when Serbian troops – accepting NATO’s terms – began their withdrawal from Kosovo. Today, troops from 39 nations – including 5,500 Americans – are working to bring Kosovo back to life. ~~The sound of gunfire has been replaced by the sound of jackhammers – as roads, homes, and schools are rebuilt.~~ Almost a million refugees have returned home. And this fall, the people of Kosovo will go to the polls to vote in the first democratic elections in Kosovo’s history. America’s men and women in uniform not only won the war. Today, they are helping secure the peace.

Here at home, the world you’re about to enter is changing dramatically. The American pulse is quickening. The flow of ideas and information is picking up. Technologies that scarcely existed when you first entered school are now driving the new, and truly global, economy. It is a powerful, sweeping transformation – the scope of which we have only begun to comprehend.

This changing world belongs to you. Not just because you’re young, but because your education at Carleton has endowed you with exactly the right skills to succeed: the curiosity to embrace new ideas, the creativity to imagine a more-perfect world, and the confidence to build it, step by step.

Your college years have been a blessing. Of course, for many Americans, an education and an experience like yours remain little more than a dream. And that is what I am here to talk about today – our obligation, at this moment of great promise, to give all students the chance to fulfill their God-given potential... to give all Americans the ability to thrive in this dynamic new economy... to fulfill, at long last, our Founders’ vision of opportunity for all.

Two centuries ago, at our nation’s founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the Industrial Age, the Progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational education, a new emphasis on science and reason. Today, we know that it means something more. It means higher education ~~or lifelong learning~~ for every American. It means mastering new tools and technologies. It means the ability to think broadly, adjust quickly, to seize the potential of this Information Age.

Today, a college education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor’s degree will grow more than twice as fast as jobs that don’t. The three fastest growing occupations require at least a bachelor’s degree and pay much better than average. America can’t afford to leave any students behind simply because they can’t afford to pay for college.

I came from a family in which no one had ever attended college. And yet, from the time I was a child, my mother, my grandmother, and my stepfather told me I was going to college. And I believed them. I remember the day I was accepted to Georgetown. The school gave me a \$500 scholarship. Simply put, it made it possible for me to go. And if I hadn’t, there’s no way I’d be standing here today.

When I became President, I had no greater priority than giving every hard-working student the same chance that was given to me. That means our children must start school ready to learn and graduate ready to succeed. So we have dramatically expanded and improved the quality of early-childhood education, preschool, and after-school. We have insisted on higher standards, greater accountability, and extra help so children can reach those higher standards. We have invested in public school choice, in attracting talented new teachers, in reducing class sizes, in connecting all our schools to the Internet.

And, from the very start, we have worked to open the doors of college to every American. In fact, we have more than doubled college aid – something that was long overdue. I know that a large majority of you have benefited from scholarships, grants, and loans.

In 1993, we created the Direct Student Loan program that has taken the middle man out and saved America's students \$9 billion in just the past seven years. Students can now borrow more easily and pay back their loans as a percentage of their income – reducing the chances that students will drop out of school for fear they cannot repay their loans ... increasing the chances they'll make it to graduation day and take the proud strides across the stage you're about to take. More than 1,200 colleges now participate in the Direct Loan Program. And even at schools that don't, students benefit from the increased competition the program has sparked in the traditional loan market – bringing down fees and interest rates for all students, *everywhere*.

In just seven years, we expanded Pell grants by more than 40 percent. We expanded the federal work-study program, to help a million students a year work their way through school. We created AmeriCorps, which has given 150,000 young people the chance to earn money for college while they serve their communities. We gave families across America the ability to put their savings in new Education IRAs, to help them save for college, tax-free.

We created the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, to make the first two years of college as universal as high school. To help families afford the last two years of college – as well as graduate school and job training – we also launched a Lifetime Learning tax cut, providing a 20% credit against tuition and fees. This year alone, we expect that well over 10 million Americans will use HOPE Scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits to open the doors of college, to open new doors of opportunity.

Across America, more and more students are taking advantage of these new opportunities. Today, I am releasing a new report that makes this clear. The study shows that in the past seven years, America has achieved the greatest expansion of college opportunity since the G.I. Bill, 50 years ago. As student aid has increased, so has college attendance, to record levels. Fully two-thirds of high-school graduates go straight to college, an all-time high. And for the first time in history, a majority of young African-Americans is enrolling in higher education. America is on the right track.

1.

The report also documents the growing value of a college education. The earnings gap between those who have a bachelor's degree and those who don't is growing dramatically. Over the course of a career, a person with a bachelor's degree will earn \$600,000 more, on average, than a person with only a high school degree. The return on a college investment is nearly double the stock market's historical rate of return. *how?*

This report is full of good news. But it also shows that we can do better. Even with the new forms of financial aid – and even though the rise in tuition costs ~~have~~ ^{has} slowed over the past few years – the ~~vast~~ majority of families are still feeling stretched. ~~After all,~~ ^{over} the past twenty years, the cost of college has quadrupled. I know many parents here today have taken second mortgages, or second jobs, to pay those tuition bills.

So to build on the success of our HOPE scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits, I have proposed a landmark \$30 billion college opportunity tax cut that will benefit millions of

middle-class families. It will allow them to deduct up to \$10,000 in tuition costs, providing as much as \$2,800 in much-needed tax relief. This will make a big difference for many of the families here today who have younger children. We need Congress to pass this tax cut into law. Because in the Information Age, investing in intellectual capital is every bit as important as investing in industrial capital.

There is something else we must do this year. We must make sure all students, especially those from our hardest-pressed families, can find the college doors we've worked so hard to open. In many communities – even here in this beautiful college town – there are young people who grow up ~~not knowing~~ ^{unaware} how important, and how possible, college really is. Maybe no one's pushing them to take algebra and other classes important for college. Maybe they don't know how to secure scholarships, grants, and loans. ~~That is why~~ I have asked Congress to work with us to expand our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives, so that we can reach out to these students – as early as 6th grade – and instill in them high hopes that they can go to college and the high expectations that ~~they will~~ ^{they'll} succeed ~~when they get there.~~

If we do these things – and if Congress works with me to pass a budget that invests more in our schools and demands more from them – we can provide students with the support they need; families with the relief they need; our economy with the skilled workforce we need; and our nation with active, informed citizens. Now, some people question whether we can reach all these goals. They are the same people who said, seven years ago, that we couldn't boost investment in education while balancing our budget. In fact, we've done both – restoring fiscal discipline while doubling our investment in education and training. So I believe we can get it done – and Congress should get it done this year.

A hundred years from now, the Carleton Class of 2100 will sit in these seats, will look up at this podium, and perhaps a future President will reflect ~~back~~ on this remarkable age. Let us hope that he – or she – can say that the first steps we took in this century were the right steps... that we made the most of this moment of promise.

To the first graduating class of the 21st century, I offer my congratulations – for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached and even surpassed. You and your parents should be very proud – and very confident as you venture forth from this campus.

But to make the very most of the opportunities you have been given, you must rise to your responsibility, ~~the responsibility of empowering others.~~ As the years pass, your work will be judged, and you will judge yourselves, on the lives you touch – on the ways, large and small, that you give back. If you embrace this responsibility, if you turn your opportunities into opportunities for others, then you will not only be leaders in the arts and sciences, in business and industry. You will be the leaders of our nation. Good luck. May "Carleton always be with you." And may God bless you all.

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Draft 06/08/00 10:45pm

Shesol/ Weiss

In 1993, fed govt gave
\$25b grants, loans, tx incentives
— folders, # is twice that much

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ON EXPANDING COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY
CARLETON COLLEGE
NORTHFIELD, MN

June 10, 2000

Thank you, President Lewis. And congratulations to the Class of 2000. This is a very proud day for you, your parents, grandparents, siblings, and friends. I am grateful that you have given me an opportunity to share it with you.

Acknowledge: Carleton trustees and faculty members, including your long-time colleague Sen. Paul Wellstone; student speakers Faisal Mohyuddin [*FIE-zil moe-ha-DEEN*], Sachin Patel [*SATCH-in pa-TEL*], and Katie Beebe [*BEE-bee*]; honorary degree recipients Bruno Nettl and George Dixon; Lt. Gov. Mae Schunk; Mayor Bill Rossmann and the community of Northfield.

For years, I've been hearing what a wonderful place this is from friends who had the pleasure of studying here – people like my advisor Tom Freedman, Class of '85, and his classmate, John Harris of *The Washington Post*. They tell me that from the moment you set foot on this beautiful campus, “you are a part of Carleton and Carleton is a part of you.” [*unofficial motto of the school*] They tell me Carleton is my kind of school: A school that celebrates diversity, that nurtures creativity, that fosters a lifelong commitment to community service.

A school whose students and faculty exemplify "excellence without elitism." A school where the President of the college gets to sing like Elvis.

I want to thank the graduates for such a generous welcome for my final commencement speech as President. I am proud to be the first sitting President to come to Carleton. And I'm proud to be – and I believe history will record this – the first sitting President to have his portrait painted on the water tower. Now, I heard it wasn't the greatest likeness in the world, but I don't think that was any reason to paint it over.

And you know, I don't usually accept gifts, but a group of students absolutely insisted that I take home a souvenir of my stay. I think it's just great. What do you think?

[Reveal "Bust of Schiller."]

I appreciate it. I really do. But I don't think this looks like me, either.

You are graduating at a remarkable moment in history. The year 2000 will be fixed in memory not only because the world has turned a very important calendar page, but because America has entered an era of unparalleled promise. We begin the 21st century with more than 22 million new jobs. We have the lowest unemployment rates in more than 30 years; the lowest poverty rates in 20 years; the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record; and the longest period of economic growth in our entire history.

Never before has America experienced this kind of sustained prosperity. And never before has any nation had the opportunity and responsibility we now have to shape a world that is more peaceful, secure, and free. I think it is worth noting that today is the one-year anniversary of the day when Serbian troops – accepting NATO’s terms – began their withdrawal from Kosovo. Today, troops from 39 nations – including 5,500 Americans – are working to bring Kosovo back to life. The sound of gunfire has been replaced by the sound of jackhammers – as roads, homes, and schools are rebuilt. Almost a million refugees have returned home. And this fall, the people of Kosovo will go to the polls to vote in the first democratic elections in Kosovo’s history. America’s men and women in uniform not only won the war. Today, they are helping secure the peace.

Here at home, the world you’re about to enter is changing dramatically. The American pulse is quickening. The flow of ideas and information is picking up. Technologies that scarcely existed when you first entered school are now driving the new, and truly global, economy. It is a powerful, sweeping transformation – the scope of which we have only begun to comprehend.

This changing world belongs to you. Not just because you’re young, but because your education at Carleton has endowed you with exactly the right skills to succeed: the curiosity to embrace new ideas, the creativity to imagine a more-perfect world, and the confidence to build it, step by step.

Your college years have been a blessing. Of course, for many Americans, an education and an experience like yours remain little more than a dream. And that is what I am here to talk about today – our obligation, at this moment of great promise, to give all students the chance to fulfill their God-given potential... to give all Americans the ability to thrive in this dynamic new economy... to fulfill, at long last, our Founders’ vision of opportunity for all.

Two centuries ago, at our nation's founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. In the Industrial Age, the Progressives saw that it meant something different. It meant a high school education, a vocational education, a new emphasis on science and reason. Today, we know that it means something more. It means higher education or lifelong learning for every American. It means mastering new tools and technologies. It means the ability to think broadly, adjust quickly, to seize the potential of this Information Age.

Today, a college education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor's degree will grow more than twice as fast as jobs that don't. The three fastest growing occupations require at least a bachelor's degree and pay much better than average. America can't afford to leave any students behind simply because they can't afford to pay for college.

I came from a family in which no one had ever attended college. And yet, from the time I was a child, my mother, my grandmother, and my stepfather told me I was going to college. And I believed them. I remember the day I was accepted to Georgetown. The school gave me a \$500 scholarship. Simply put, it made it possible for me to go. And if I hadn't, there's no way I'd be standing here today.

When I became President, I had no greater priority than giving every hard-working student the same chance that was given to me. That means our children must start school ready to learn and graduate ready to succeed. So we have dramatically expanded and improved the quality of early-childhood education, preschool, and after-school. We have insisted on higher standards, greater accountability, and extra help so children can reach those higher standards.

We have invested in public school choice, in attracting talented new teachers, in reducing class sizes, in connecting all our schools to the Internet.

And, from the very start, we have worked to open the doors of college to every American. In fact, we have more than doubled college aid – something that was long overdue. I know that many of you have benefited from ^{two} that assistance; ~~President Lewis tells me that more than half of you have reached this day due not only to your parents' and your own hard work but to~~ scholarships, grants, and loans. 2.

In just seven years, we expanded Pell grants by more than 40 percent. We rewrote the student loan program to increase competition, to give aid directly to students, to make it cheaper to get the aid you need. And we're now enabling graduates to pay off their loans as a percentage of their income – because no students should ever have to drop out of school for fear that they can't repay their loans.

We expanded the federal work-study program, to help a million students a year work their way through school. We created AmeriCorps, which has given 150,000 young people the chance to earn money for college while they serve their communities. We gave families across America the ability to put their savings in new Education IRAs, to help them save for college, tax-free.

We created the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first twelve. We launched a Lifetime Learning tax credit, which helps families pay for the last two years of college, for graduate school, or for job training. In 1998 alone, nearly 5 million Americans used these tax credits to open the doors of college, to open new doors of opportunity.

Across America, more and more students are taking advantage of these new opportunities. Today, I am releasing a new report that makes this clear. The study shows that in the past seven years, America has achieved the greatest expansion of college opportunity since the G.I. Bill, 50 years ago. As student aid has increased, so has college attendance, to record levels. Fully two-thirds of high-school graduates go straight to college, an all-time high. And for the first time in history, a majority of young African-Americans are enrolling in higher education. America is on the right track.

The report also documents the growing value of a college education. The earnings gap between those who have a bachelor's degree and those who don't is growing dramatically. Over the course of a career, a person with a bachelor's degree will earn \$600,000 more, on average, than than a person with only a high school degree. The return on a college investment is nearly double the stock market's historical rate of return.

Too many are starting but not completing. + we need to pass Coll.

This report is full of good news. But it also shows that we can do better. Even with the new forms of financial aid – and even though the rise in tuition costs have slowed over the past few years – the vast majority of families are still feeling stretched. After all, over the past twenty years, the cost of college has quadrupled. I know many parents here today have taken second mortgages, or second jobs, to pay those tuition bills.

Comp. Grants to address that.

So to build on the success of our HOPE scholarships and Lifetime Learning tax credits, I have proposed a landmark \$30 billion college opportunity tax cut that will benefit millions of middle-class families. It will allow them to deduct up to \$10,000 in tuition costs, providing as much as \$2,800 in much-needed tax relief.

This will make a big difference for many of the families here today who have younger children. We need Congress to act – and to act this year – to pass this tax cut into law.

But I didn't create HOPE Scholarships, or propose College Opportunity tax cuts, simply because they are crucial for our families. In the Information Age, we know that investing in intellectual capital is just as important as investing in industrial capital. We give tax relief today to businesses that invest in new plants and equipment. We ought to give tax relief to families that invest in their children's potential.

This is the right kind of tax cut for America – it is, like the others I have proposed, a targeted tax cut. It preserves our fiscal discipline today and lays the groundwork for future growth. Last year, I had to veto a big, across-the-board tax cut that did neither of these things. In fact, the tax plan I vetoed would have squeezed out our investments in education, undermined our progress, and risked our prosperity. This year, I hope the Congress will work with me to pass the right kind of tax cuts – right for our families and right for our future. And, at the same time, I'm going to insist that Congress send me a budget that invests more in our schools, while demanding more of them; that gives more of our young people a chance to serve with AmeriCorps; that reduces class size and gives all our students safe and modern schools.

See prev pgs.

There are two other things we must do this year. First, as we help more Americans go to college, we must also help more Americans stay in college. Today, nearly 40 percent of all college students drop out before they earn a degree. I have called on Congress to fund new College Completion Challenge Grants: These grants would provide pre-freshman summer programs and support services for students who might never make it to graduation day – who might never put on the cap and gown to take those proud strides across the stage, as you're about to do.

Second, we must make sure all students, especially those from our hardest-pressed families, can find the college doors we've worked so hard to open. In many communities – even here in this beautiful college town – there are young people who grow up not knowing how important, and how possible, college really is. Maybe no one's pushing them to take algebra and other classes important for college. Maybe they don't know how to secure scholarships, grants, and loans. That is why I have asked Congress to work with us to expand our GEAR UP and TRIO initiatives, so that we can reach out to these students – as early as 6th grade – and instill in them high hopes that they can go to college and the high expectations that they will succeed.

Taken together, these steps will provide students with the support they need; families with the college relief they need; our economy with the skilled workforce we need; and our nation with active, informed citizens. Now, some people question whether we can achieve all these goals. They are the same people who said, seven years ago, that we couldn't boost investment in education while balancing our budget. In fact, we've done both – restoring fiscal discipline while doubling our investment in education and training. So I believe we can get it done – and Congress should get it done this year.

A hundred years from now, the Carleton Class of 2100 will sit in these seats, will look up at this podium, and perhaps a future President will reflect back on this remarkable age. Let us hope that he – or she – can say that the first steps we took in this century were the right steps... that we made the most of this moment of promise.

To the first graduating class of the 21st century, I offer my congratulations – for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached and even surpassed. You and your parents should be very proud – and very confident as you venture forth from this campus.

But to make the very most of the opportunities you have been given, you must rise to your responsibility – the responsibility of empowering others. As the years pass, your work will be judged, and you will judge yourselves, on the lives you touch – on the ways, large and small, that you give back. If you embrace this responsibility, if you turn your opportunities into opportunities for others, then you will not only be leaders in the arts and sciences, in business and industry. You will be the leaders of our nation. Good luck. May “Carleton always be with you.” And may God bless you all.

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Draft 6/7/00 8:00pm
Shesol/ Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS ON EXPANDING COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY
CARLETON COLLEGE
NORTHFIELD, MN
June 10, 2000**

Thank you, President Lewis. And congratulations to the Class of 2000. This is a very proud day for you, your parents, siblings, grandparents, and friends. I am grateful that you have given me an opportunity to share it with you.

Acknowledge: student speakers Faisal Mohyuddin [FOSS-il mow-you-DEEN] and Sachin Patel [*When I was running for President in 1996, my opponent said he was "the most optimistic man in America." With all due respect to Senator Dole, I think it's clear to everyone here that he wasn't even close.*]

For years, I've been hearing about what a wonderful place this is from friends and staff members who had the pleasure of studying here for four years – people like Tom Freedman, Class of 'TK. They tell me that from the moment you step foot on this beautiful campus, "you are a part of Carleton and Carleton is a part of you." They tell me that Carleton is my kind of school: A school that celebrates the great value of diversity, fosters a spirit of community service, and nurtures environmental awareness. A school whose students and faculty exemplify "excellence without elitism." A school where the President of the college gets to sing like Elvis.

If only they'd let the President of the United States do the same.

I want to thank the graduates for such a generous welcome. You know, I don't usually accept gifts, but a group of students absolutely insisted that I take home a souvenir of my stay. I think it's just great. What do you think?

[*Reveal "Bust of Schiller."*]

I appreciate it. But frankly, I don't think it looks a bit like me.

You are graduating at a remarkable moment in history. Your graduation year, the year 2000, will be fixed in memory not only because the world has turned a very important calendar page, but because America has entered an era of unparalleled promise. We begin the 21st century with more than 22 million new jobs; the lowest unemployment rates in more than 30 years; the lowest poverty rates in 20 years; the lowest African American and Hispanic unemployment rates on record; and the longest period of economic growth in our entire history.

Needless to say, this is all very good news for you graduates entering the job market. It's even better news for your parents, who'd like nothing better than to put the Stairmaster in your old bedroom.

The world you're about to enter, as you know, is changing. The American pulse is quickening. The flow of information and the pace of innovation are picking up, while the volume

of written knowledge now doubles every five years. Technologies that scarcely existed when you first entered school now accelerate new ideas and drive the new, and truly global, economy. It is a powerful, sweeping transformation – the scope of which we have only begun to comprehend.

What we do know – what I hope you will recognize – is that this changing world belongs to you. Not just because you're young, but because your education at Carleton has endowed you with exactly the right skills to succeed: the ability to think and learn; the curiosity to embrace new ideas; the creativity to imagine a different world and the confidence to build it, step by step.

Of course, there are many Americans who do not have that chance. And that is what I am here to talk about today – about our obligation, at this moment of great promise, to give all students the chance to fulfill their God-given potential... to give every American the ability to thrive in this dynamic new economy... and to fulfill, at long last, our Founders' vision of opportunity for all.

Two centuries ago, at our nation's founding, opportunity meant, most of all, the freedom to carve a farm and an existence out of the forest frontier. Fifty years ago, it meant a high school education – or even the G.I. Bill – and a job for life. Today, opportunity means something different. It means mastering the tools and technologies of the new economy. It means having a computer and knowing how to use it. And more than ever, it means a college education.

In the Information Age, a college education is not a luxury; it is a necessity – for our people, and for our continued economic growth. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor's degree will grow more than twice as fast as jobs that don't. The three fastest growing occupations – all of them in the field of technology – require at least a bachelor's degree and pay much higher than the average job does. America can't afford to leave any student behind simply because he or she can't afford to pay for college.

I was the first person in my family ever to go to college. I had a grandmother who got a correspondent's course and earned a degree in nursing. She lived in a little town with about 50 people until she was old enough to make a go of it in the biggest city around, which had about 6,000 people in it. But from the time I was a kid, for whatever reason, my mother, my grandmother, and my stepfather told me I was going to college. And I believed them.

I remember the day I was accepted to college. Georgetown gave me a \$500 scholarship. Simply put, it made it possible for me to go to college. And if I hadn't, there's no way I'd be standing here today.

So when I became President, seven years ago, there was no greater priority for me than giving every hard-working student the same chance that was given to me, and the same chance that was given to you. A lot of people told us it wasn't possible. They didn't think we could double our investment in education and training; they didn't think we could balance the budget; and they certainly didn't think we could do both at the same time. But that's exactly what we've done.

We put in place an unprecedented strategy to open the doors of college to every American. In just seven years, we more than doubled college aid – something that was long overdue. We expanded Pell grants by more than 50 percent. We rewrote the student loan program to make it easier and cheaper to get the aid you need. And we're now enabling graduates to pay off their loans as a percentage of their income. Never again will students have to drop out for fear that they can't repay their loans.

We expanded the federal work-study program, to help a million students a year work their way through college. We created AmeriCorps, which has now given 150,000 young people a chance to earn money for college as they serve their communities. We gave families across America the chance to put their savings in new Education IRAs, to help them save for college, tax-free.

We created the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship Tax Credit, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first twelve. We launched a Lifetime Learning Tax Credit, which helps families pay for the last two years of college, for graduate school, or for job training. In 1998 alone, nearly 5 million Americans used these tax credits to open the doors of college, to open new doors of opportunity.

Now, Carleton is one of the very finest colleges in the entire United States. You earned your places here. And you should be proud – America should be proud – that more than half of you are here thanks not only to your parents' and your own hard work, but to a work-study position, a HOPE Scholarship, a Pell grant, or an AmeriCorps award.

[new study: benefits of a college ed. show how it's paying off]

[same study shows that more and more are going to college, but...]

[FLOTUS point on tuition]

[that's why, in SOTU, I proposed college opportunity tax credit]