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CREATOR: Sharolyn A. Rosier (CN=Sharolyn A. Rosier/OU=WHO/O=EOP [WHO])

CREATION DATE/TIME:29-APR-1998 14:49:13.00

SUBJECT: STATEMENT RE:RESOLUTION ON RACE

TO: Sarah S. Knight (CN=Sarah S. Knight/OU=WHO/O=EOP @ EOP [WHO])

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
04/30/97 04:00:30 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
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Subject: STATEMENT RE:RESOLUTION ON RACE

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
04/30/97 04:00 PM -----

STOTT_D @ A1
04/30/97 03:18:00 PM
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cc:
Subject: STATEMENT RE:RESOLUTION ON RACE

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 30, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I applaud the leadership of Senator Baucus, along with
Senator Burns and all members of the United States Senate who

have joined together to designate today as a National Day to Erase the Hate and Eliminate Racism. America is the world's most diverse democracy, and the world looks to us for leadership in building on that diversity, and showing that it is our greatest strength. Today's Resolution shows that the Senate is determined to reach across party lines to help achieve that promise.

We must do all we can to fight bigotry and intolerance, in ugly words and awful violence, in burned churches and bombed buildings -- including efforts such as today's resolution. The only way we can meet our challenges is by meeting them together -- as one America -- and giving all of our citizens, whatever their background, an opportunity to achieve their own greatness.

-30-30-30-

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
05/16/97 02:59:06 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
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Subject: 1997-05/16 Remarks by President re: Tuskegee

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
05/16/97 02:58 PM -----

SUNTUM_M @ A1
05/16/97 02:54:00 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: 1997-05/16 Remarks by President re: Tuskegee

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 16, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT

IN APOLOGY FOR STUDY DONE IN TUSKEGEE

The East Room

2:26 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Ladies and gentlemen, on Sunday, Mr. Shaw will celebrate his 95th birthday. (Applause.) I would like to recognize the other survivors who are here today and their families: Mr. Charlie Pollard is here. (Applause.) Mr. Carter Howard. (Applause.) Mr. Fred Simmons. (Applause.) Mr. Simmons just took his first airplane ride, and he reckons he's about 110 years old, so I think it's time for him to take a chance or two. (Laughter.) I'm glad he did. And Mr. Frederick Moss, thank you, sir. (Applause.)

I would also like to ask three family representatives who are here -- Sam Doner is represented by his daughter, Gwendolyn Cox. Thank you, Gwendolyn. (Applause.) Ernest Hendon, who is watching in Tuskegee, is represented by his brother, North Hendon. Thank you, sir, for being here. (Applause.) And George Key is represented by his grandson, Christopher Monroe. Thank you, Chris. (Applause.)

I also acknowledge the families, community leaders, teachers and students watching today by satellite from Tuskegee. The White House is the people's house; we are glad to have all of you here today. I thank Dr. David Satcher for his role in this. I thank Congresswoman Waters and Congressman Hilliard, Congressman Stokes, the entire Congressional Black Caucus. Dr. Satcher, members of the Cabinet who are here, Secretary Herman, Secretary Slater, members of the Cabinet who are here, Secretary Herman, Secretary Slater. A great friend of freedom, Fred Gray, thank you for fighting this long battle all these long years.

The eight men who are survivors of the syphilis study at Tuskegee are a living link to a time not so very long ago that many Americans would prefer not to remember, but we dare not forget. It was a time when our nation failed to live up to its ideals, when our nation broke the trust with our people that is the very foundation of our democracy. It is not only in remembering that shameful past that we can make amends and repair our nation, but it is in remembering that past that we can build a better present and a better future. And without remembering it, we cannot make amends and we cannot go forward.

So today America does remember the hundreds of men used in research without their knowledge and consent. We remember them and their family members. Men who were poor and African American, without resources and with few alternatives, they believed they had found hope when they were offered free medical care by the United States Public Health Service. They were betrayed.

Medical people are supposed to help when we need care, but even once a cure was discovered, they were denied help, and they were lied to by their government. Our government is supposed to protect the rights of its citizens; their rights were trampled upon. Forty years, hundreds of men betrayed, along with their wives and children, along with the community in Macon County, Alabama, the City

of Tuskegee, the fine university there, and the larger African American community.

The United States government did something that was wrong -- deeply, profoundly, morally wrong. It was an outrage to our commitment to integrity and equality for all our citizens.

To the survivors, to the wives and family members, the children and the grandchildren, I say what you know: No power on Earth can give you back the lives lost, the pain suffered, the years of internal torment and anguish. What was done cannot be undone. But we can end the silence. We can stop turning our heads away. We can look at you in the eye and finally say on behalf of the American people, what the United States government did was shameful, and I am sorry. (Applause.)

The American people are sorry -- for the loss, for the years of hurt. You did nothing wrong, but you were grievously wronged. I apologize and I am sorry that this apology has been so long in coming. (Applause.)

To Macon County, to Tuskegee, to the doctors who have been wrongly associated with the events there, you have our apology, as well. To our African American citizens, I am sorry that your federal government orchestrated a study so clearly racist. That can never be allowed to happen again. It is against everything our country stands for and what we must stand against is what it was.

So let us resolve to hold forever in our hearts and minds the memory of a time not long ago in Macon County, Alabama, so that we can always see how adrift we can become when the rights of any citizens are neglected, ignored and betrayed. And let us resolve here and now to move forward together.

The legacy of the study at Tuskegee has reached far and deep, in ways that hurt our progress and divide our nation. We cannot be one America when a whole segment of our nation has no trust in America. An apology is the first step, and we take it with a commitment to rebuild that broken trust. We can begin by making sure there is never again another episode like this one. We need to do more to ensure that medical research practices are sound and ethical, and that researchers work more closely with communities.

Today I would like to announce several steps to help us

achieve these goals. First, we will help to build that lasting memorial at Tuskegee. (Applause.) The school founded by Booker T. Washington, distinguished by the renowned scientist George Washington Carver and so many others who advanced the health and well-being of African Americans and all Americans, is a fitting site. The Department of Health and Human Services will award a planning grant so the school can pursue establishing a center for bioethics in research and health care. The center will serve as a museum of the study and support efforts to address its legacy and strengthen bioethics training.

Second, we commit to increase our community involvement so that we may begin restoring lost trust. The study at Tuskegee served to sow distrust of our medical institutions, especially where research is involved. Since the study was halted, abuses have been checked by making informed consent and local review mandatory in federally-funded and mandated research.

Still, 25 years later, many medical studies have little African American participation and African American organ donors are few. This impedes efforts to conduct promising research and to provide the best health care to all our people, including African Americans. So today, I'm directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Donna Shalala, to issue a report in 180 days about how we

can best involve communities, especially minority communities, in research and health care. You must -- every American group must be involved in medical research in ways that are positive. We have put the curse behind us; now we must bring the benefits to all Americans. (Applause.)

Third, we commit to strengthen researchers' training in bioethics. We are constantly working on making breakthroughs in protecting the health of our people and in vanquishing diseases. But all our people must be assured that their rights and dignity will be respected as new drugs, treatments and therapies are tested and used. So I am directing Secretary Shalala to work in partnership with higher education to prepare training materials for medical researchers. They will be available in a year. They will help researchers build on core ethical principles of respect for individuals, justice and informed consent, and advise them on how to use these principles effectively in diverse populations.

Fourth, to increase and broaden our understanding of ethical issues and clinical research, we commit to providing postgraduate fellowships to train bioethicists especially among African Americans and other minority groups. HHS will offer these fellowships beginning in September of 1998 to promising students enrolled in bioethics graduate programs.

And, finally, by executive order I am also today extending the charter of the National Bioethics Advisory Commission to October of 1999. The need for this commission is clear. We must

be able to call on the thoughtful, collective wisdom of experts and community representatives to find ways to further strengthen our protections for subjects in human research.

We face a challenge in our time. Science and technology are rapidly changing our lives with the promise of making us much healthier, much more productive and more prosperous. But with these changes we must work harder to see that as we advance we don't leave behind our conscience. No ground is gained and, indeed, much is lost if we lose our moral bearings in the name of progress.

The people who ran the study at Tuskegee diminished the stature of man by abandoning the most basic ethical precepts. They forgot their pledge to heal and repair. They had the power to heal the survivors and all the others and they did not. Today, all we can do is apologize. But you have the power, for only you -- Mr. Shaw, the others who are here, the family members who are with us in Tuskegee -- only you have the power to forgive. Your presence here shows us that you have chosen a better path than your government did so long ago. You have not withheld the power to forgive. I hope today and tomorrow every American will remember your lesson and live by it.

Thank you, and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

2:41 P.M. EDT

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Kevin S. Moran

06/09/97 02:37:44 PM

Record Type: Record

To: All OPD Users, All WHO Users

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Subject: The White House at Work (6/9)

----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
06/12/97 04:15:09 PM

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Subject: 1997-06-12 Briefing by Sylvia Mathews and Maria Echaveste

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
06/12/97 04:15 PM -----

SUNTUM_M @ A1

06/12/97 03:46:00 PM

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Subject: 1997-06-12 Briefing by Sylvia Mathews and Maria Echaveste

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 12, 1997

PRESS BRIEFING

SYLVIA MATHEWS, DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF,

AND

MARIA ECHAVESTE, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC LIAISON

The Briefing Room

1:15 P.M. EDT

MR. LOCKHART: Good afternoon, everyone. Before Mike comes out, we wanted to spend a few minutes to talk about the President's initiative on race, which he will give a speech in San Diego on Saturday, as you well know.

I'm going to invite a couple of people who've worked very hard -- long and hard -- and have done excellent work on this process. Deputy Chief of Staff Sylvia Mathews has led the process working with Maria Echaveste, the Director the Office of Public Liaison. Sylvia will walk you through who's on the board and how we went about setting up the board, the goals of the initiative, and

also some of the elements of the initiative.

So with that -- but one other note --

Q Will there be paper on it?

MR. LOCKHART: Yes, the paper is being xeroxed right now. It will be, when we're done, available in the bins.

On one logistical note, as we've told you, the advisory board will be here tomorrow. And Beverly Barnes, whom most of you know, who works with the Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles, will be handling the inquiries for the board, because I know a lot of you will be interested in talking to them. So, if you want to get in touch with the board members over the next few days, work through Beverly.

Q Got a meeting here tomorrow with them?

MR. LOCKHART: They are traveling out to San Diego with the President, and this is a get-together tomorrow.

Q What time will that be?

MR. LOCKHART: It's late in the afternoon, I think 4:30 p.m.

Q You're all going on Air Force One?

Q We can't be on the charter and be --

Q Will there be a readout here or will there be photo ops -- what's the logistics of the meeting?

MR. LOCKHART: I believe we'll do a pool spray at the top of the meeting and do something here. And then I'll be on the plane going out to San Diego.

Q But what about those of us -- somebody else is going on the plane but somebody is writing the story here because it's awfully late by the time you get there. Can there be a readout --

MR. LOCKHART: Yes, we'll try to do some sort of read out here.

Q For those of us who want to cover the news and then also be on the charter, is it possible to delay the charter?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, let me go and look at that, Wolf.

I'll see.

Q Why does the charter have to leave so early?

MR. LOCKHART: Well, let me -- I'll go back and look at it, okay? I will. Okay?

With that, Sylvia.

MS. MATHEWS: Thank you. The first thing I wanted to spend just a minute on are the goals and methods of the President's initiative and review that, and then talk about the elements of the initiative and then share with you the members of the President's Advisory Board.

Q Why don't we have the members first?

MS. MATHEWS: I'm happy to do it that way if you all would prefer.

The President's Advisory Board, which is -- it has a seven-person membership -- is going to be structured to advise him over the period of the -- a year-long period for the initiative. And the Chairman of the Board will be John Hope Franklin of Durham, North Carolina, who I'm sure many of you are familiar with, a retired historian and educator.

William F. Winter of Jackson, Mississippi. Governor Winter is a former Governor of Mississippi and has served in a number of capacities both inside and out of government and is in a law practice right now.

Linda Chavez-Thompson of Washington, D.C. I think many of you know her. She is the Executive Vice President with the AFL-CIO.

Robert Thomas of Coto DeCaza, California. Mr. Thomas is the President and CEO of Nissan USA.

Angela Oh, of California. Ms. Oh is a practicing lawyer in L.A. right now. She is also a person who was very involved in the L.A. riots, in part of the reconciliation efforts that occurred there -- the multiracial issues that were occurring there between African Americans, as well as the Asian and Hispanic communities, and she's been involved in that effort in her home city.

And, finally, Suzan Johnson Cook. And some of you may have met Suzan when she was a White House Fellow. Suzan is an African American female minister in New York City. Right now, she's senior pastor of what's called The Bronx Christian Fellowship in the Bronx. She was also the first female chaplain of the New York City Police Department.

The other name that I'll go ahead and announce now --

and you'll understand how it fits in the structure as I go on -- oh, I'm sorry, I skipped over Tom Kean, who I think you all are familiar with -- the former Governor.

Q Tom who?

MS. MATHEWS: Kean. And it's spelled K-e-a-n.

The other name that I will go ahead and announce now is Christopher Edley. Chris Edley is not a member of the advisory board, but what Chris is going to do is he's going to be a senior advisor to the initiative, and he will help us with our policy development. He'll be a consultant and will come down periodically and work with our Domestic Policy Council, Elena Kagan and Jose Cerda, to organize and develop policies over the period of the year.

So those are the names, and why don't I now go to --

Q Wait a second, what's Taylor Branch's role going to be? Is he going to sort of work with the President to write his report?

MS. MATHEWS: If it's all right, can I get through the initiative and then return to the question, or -- I think that might be helpful if we could get -- we'll do it that way, then. Good.

First, under the goals: Goal number one is to articulate the President's vision of racial reconciliation, and we think that's an important thing because it is his vision of how we want to take the country into the next century and talk about what he believes and why that's right, and that will be the focus of the speech. Part of why we're doing this briefing now is so that he has that ability in the speech on Saturday.

Goal number two is to help educate the nation, both about the facts surrounding the issue of race and the history. At this point, we have a generation -- the education has two focuses to it: the past and the future. We have a situation now where many people don't know the history of the civil rights movement, or a lot of the nation's history with regards to race relations, whether it's black, white, Hispanic or Native American. Additionally, the education part is about talking about what the future is going to look like.

If you looked at the Gallup study, I think you all probably saw some very interesting statistics. While that was black-white only and the initiative is broader than that, you saw the number of people, whites, and what they thought the racial mix was. There are some misperceptions in education there on what our racial balance is now, but also I'm not sure how many people in the United States realize that in the year 2050, we'll be at about 53 percent white and then 47 percent other minorities.

The third goal is to promote a constructive dialogue. I

think that's something you all have talked and heard a lot about leading up to this effort. And one thing I would add there, it's a constructive dialogue on the difficult issues. In order to have a dialogue, we need to have a dialogue on some of the positive things, like the Tuskegee apology, but we also need to talk about some of the tough issues like the kind of issues you all face every day, whether it's in your news organizations and hiring or in your communities.

The fourth goal is to recruit and encourage leadership. In order to give the effort breadth and depth, part of what we will do is try and work to get others involved, whether it's in business or in state and local government in the states throughout the nation.

And finally, the fifth goal is to find, develop, and implement solutions in critical areas, such as education, economic opportunity, housing, health care, crime and the administration of justice. And these solutions that we're looking for are for individuals, communities, for corporations, and for state and local governments.

On the methods, just a couple of points. One is Presidential leadership. This contrasts with past issues because of the close involvement of the President. That's why he chose to do an advisory board instead of what has been viewed as a traditional commission.

Then let me just say, it has three elements really, if you think about it: dialogue, study, and action. And I can spend time, but I will wait for questions to do that.

The elements of the initiative: one, the advisory board, which we just talked about. Those people will help scope and focus the study and dialogue work that we do over the year. They will also help us with policy ideas, with outreach to the community, with working with experts, and talking to the American people.

Two, the President is going to do significant events throughout the year. I think as it has already been reported, some of those will be town halls; others of those will be events like Tuskegee, and today we're announcing that we will be going to Little Rock for the Central High anniversary.

Q When is that?

MS. MATHEWS: September -- I don't know the exact date that we're going, but we can get that for you.

The third element is the outreach and consultation of leadership, which our advisory board will help us with and our staff that we'll set up will.

And the fourth thing is the President's report to the American people. Instead of having a report from a commission, the President will be doing his own report to the American people.

Finally, something that won't be in your paper but is an important element, is that we will be selecting an executive director and a staff. The staff will be about 15 to 20 people and will be a combination of detailees, agency reps, and a few hires. That will be funded -- we're working with -- Justice is working with its appropriators right now to try and do a reprogramming of funds to do that -- to pay for that.

I think with that, I should stop and we should take questions, unless you have anything to add, Maria.

MS. ECHAVESTE: I just wanted to add that in formulating this initiative, we did engage in a process of outreach that was both wide, but also close in. Senior staff, as well as the President, talked in depth with between 25 to 35 individuals in the course of the last two and a half months. But we also spoke to over 100 people before we finalized the initiative -- getting their reaction and their thoughts about what road he should take. We have ongoing a process of contacting over 300 people around the country -- opinion leaders, constituencies, organizations, others who we hope will be part of this initiative in the course of the next year.

I think the best thing to say is that the reaction from a number of different people -- and frankly the majority -- was positive in having the President take on this initiative, but also urging the President to take on the hard issues. And that is why the initiative has taken the form that it has.

So I'll stop there.

Q What is the ultimate goal? Is it integration? A total reconciliation? And what are you really striving for in English?

MS. MATHEWS: Our hope is that in a year's time that we will have ways that both policies and people can help the nation respect each other's differences, but at the same time, grow together as one. And that's it in a simple sentence, but let me just elaborate a little bit. And that's the idea that we're going to continue to become more and more racially diverse, and as we do, we need to learn that we have to start with the respect of each other's differences before we can focus on those things that are our shared values, our shared concerns, our shared problems and do it as one nation.

Q There's already been some criticism of the fact that the solutions come at the back end. There are people out there already saying what the President needs to do is talk about solutions to these problems on the street -- crime, justice, so forth -- now. And they want money as well.

MS. MATHEWS: I think two separate parts there. One is that we are going to start talking about those issues now, and as far as policy actions that will come over the time. The three different parts -- study, dialogue, and action -- are iterative, and they will feed into each other over the period of the year.

On the separate question of money -- did you want to --

MS. ECHAVESTE: I just wanted to add that this is a different time than it was, say, 25 or 30 years ago. There was a consensus, if you will, that there were legal barriers, things that the government needed to do. I would argue that at the moment, there is not a consensus that in fact racism still exists. There are many places around the country that believe that, in fact, we've solved all our problems. So before you start advocating particular solutions, there needs to be a process of shared views that, in fact, problems exist and how to address them.

Q Can you describe those problems? What is the problem that the President hopes to address with this? Is it racial prejudice and bigotry that he thinks is out of control or something of that nature?

MS. MATHEWS: I think that there are a number of different problems, and that's a part of what the initiative will show over time. We see problems in perception, and then you see there are really two categories: problems in perception and problems in reality. In the perception front, what's actually stereotypes and what's reality, and we saw, I think, a perception gap in the Gallup poll and we see that in a number of different places.

On the question of what's really wrong, the reality of how much racism does exist and how do we work to correct for that.

Q The Kerner Commission addressed all this 25 years ago or so, and a lot of people would say things have gotten a lot worse since then. How is this going to succeed where the Kerner Commission failed and the Lyndon Johnson initiative failed?

MS. ECHAVESTE: Well, I think for starters, the Kerner Commission, number one, focused only on African American and white relations. Notwithstanding that in different parts of the country we already had a multiethnic, multiracial community.

Number two, the Kerner Commission came as a result of a particular time in terms of violence and riots and that type of crisis. This is a different time.

And, number three, there are issues in terms of really asking -- there are some issues that relate to economics, and there will be those critics on the left who say money is what's needed, investment in the inner-cities, but there are others that would argue that, notwithstanding the strides that have been made in terms of

increasing opportunities for different minorities, that there continues to be racism even, for example, a company like Texaco, where the issue wasn't getting a job, it was actually the interactions among people and what kind of atmosphere people worked under.

So those are issues that aren't necessarily solved by money, but nonetheless have to be attacked.

Q Where is the staff going to come from? Which kind of staff are you looking for? You're reprogramming people, but from what functions?

MS. MATHEWS: From all our departments. They'll come from the Cabinet departments is where they will come from. When we talked about some of the substantive issue areas, like housing, the administration of justice, health care, Secretary Shalala in our Cabinet briefing yesterday expressed her interest in ensuring --

Q So many Cabinet -- it will be sort of a subset of the Cabinet?

MS. MATHEWS: We'll have people from all -- we have to have people from a number of the departments representing those different areas to help guide the policy development as well as the dialogue and the study.

Q I don't want to be excessively negative about this, because I understand that that's unpleasant and you're trying to do something good here and so forth, but I guess the interesting thing for a lot of us is that you keep -- the folks who talk about this keep saying, well, there was a consensus 25 years ago, there's no consensus today, and that's why we have to have this big sort of discussion to figure out what to do.

I think people who cover these issues would dispute that there was any consensus about that. Why was there a year-long battle over the Civil Rights Act in 1964? So I guess some people who have been analyzing this initiative wonder whether this idea that it's so unclear what to do, we don't know what the problems are, we have to figure it out before we can act, is kind of a way to avoid doing something; it's just a way to talk about these issues without really having to decide something and actually do something, those things that are within the President's power to do, like, for example, make certain appointments, integrate the White House staff a little bit more thoroughly than it is -- things of that sort. Do you know what I'm talking about, and could you speak to that?

MS. MATHEWS: I would be interested in the consensus point. If you want to articulate what you believe the consensus is -- that there is a race problem, that there isn't or that --

Q The idea that 25 years ago it was so clear what direction the country needed to move in cannot be the case if there

were just the profound legislative battles we had over every major civil rights initiative that's ever been passed in this country -- there were tremendous pitched battles. There were fist fights on the floor, off the floor, screaming fights. So clearly there was no consensus 25 years ago, and yet legislation was passed, moved forward and so forth -- and with the President's leadership.

See, my point is -- so it isn't just that everybody jumped up and said, we need to pass the Civil Rights Act. They didn't do that.

MS. MATHEWS: I think though that we believe that we are showing leadership. The truth is that -- I think that while this is an issue that often is sailing against the political headwinds in a number of ways -- by going to California and choosing that as the place in which we make our speech, I think we're making a statement.

Already, we've seen ads that are cut. I think the President is showing leadership on the issue and we're starting to see reaction. We're going to have critics from the left and critics from the right. They're going to be passionate and they're going to be vocal. That's why this is a tough issue and an important issue.

As far as the action, part of the thing that we believe is an important thing to do -- there are the policy elements, and we have already started work. The Domestic Policy Council, under Elena Kagan and Jose Cerda, working with our council's office have started the interagency process with the Justice Department and Education on specifically looking at the ramifications of Hopwood and Prop 209. We are on our way on those things.

The other things in terms of action -- the issue of dialogue -- when we've discussed things with a number of people outside, the importance of having people talk about it and having the President show the leadership -- to have the American people talk about the tough issues that we all aren't willing to talk about on a day-to-day basis.

Q Sylvia, how did you figure out that this would be a year-long process? It seems like an awful long time for issues that are on the front burner for a lot of people right now. Why will it take so long?

MS. MATHEWS: As I said, it will be an iterative process. And it's our expectation that policies will be announced along the way, and we will do that along the way.

As far as deciding on a year, we wanted to get the President's report out within a year.

Q Sylvia, let me just again ask you about this. If you find, as the President talks, that he doesn't build any consensus, will you then not put out policy? I mean, is this idea that he has to build the support for it first and if that isn't

there, you won't build?

MS. MATHEWS: No. We will put out the policies that we believe are best.

Q And secondly, if I could, people who met with the President the other night said that he talked about looking at polling data that showed what American whites are ready for discussing. How much has this been polled by the White House or by DNC pollsters for the White House?

MS. MATHEWS: That's a question I'll have to defer.

Q Well, why? I mean, you don't know?

MS. MATHEWS: In terms of how much -- I think understanding some of the issues that -- in terms of, do people think it is a problem and that sort of thing.

Q No, did you poll?

Q Did you do polling?

Q Or did Penn & Schoen or Greenberg do polling?

Q Anyone?

MS. MATHEWS: The issue in question of, do people consider this a problem.

Q No, the question is polling.

Q Just did you do --

MS. MATHEWS: Yes, yes, I'm answering the question with the issue that we examined.

Q Did they consider -- can you say how extensively and how many weeks you were polling on this?

MS. MATHEWS: Not extensively.

Q Not extensively?

MR. LOCKHART: I mean, I don't have any more exact numbers, but in addition to our own -- I mean, we -- Sylvia and a group were --

Q Joe, by, "our own" who do you mean? Do you mean Penn & Schoen?

MR. LOCKHART: Oh, I'll get that answer for you. I

mean, I don't know. But I know there was some look at sort of levels of perception on the issue. But also, there is a lot of information out there. Gallup is a very comprehensive, and we've looked at that. They came in and talked to us about that.

MS. MATHEWS: They came in and talked to us privately. There's a number of --

Q Did you fund it like the usual polling or was that from some other source?

MR. LOCKHART: I'll find out.

Q Sylvia, why did it take seven months for the President to nominate an Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights?

MS. MATHEWS: I think in selecting a person of the quality that we believe that we have -- that we went through and examined a number of different candidates around the country to ensure that we got the best candidate.

Additionally, I think you all know that the vetting process on our candidates is an important one that we like to do before we announce the candidates. And that took a while to do. Many people in this area -- when you look at this area, it's an area where people have a lot of writings. And in order for you to do that, you need to look and examine and understand what they've written and what they've said and what they think.

Q So, basically, what you're saying is you didn't want another Lani Guinier example?

MS. MATHEWS: I think what I'm saying is, we wanted to make sure that we had a candidate that we felt was the best candidate for the job and that we believed was a person who would represent our views.

Q Sylvia, can you flesh out some more on the task force? I mean, are they going to meet regularly or are they going to all move here and work full-time? Give me some examples of what they will actually do in a real-life basis.

MS. MATHEWS: Some examples of the types of things that the task force will do -- they will, on a regular basis, communicate as a group with the executive director in helping scope the project in terms of work plans and the type of issues we need to focus on. That's one type of activity they'll do.

Another one is, they'll be participants in the President's activities abroad as he -- out in the country -- as he's doing outreach and doing things like town halls.

Q It's not a paid position that they're doing, of course?

MS. MATHEWS: No. It is neither a paid position nor a full-time position.

Q Is it right to think of them as like a board for the executive director and the staff?

MS. MATHEWS: They are the advisory board to the President, yes. That is correct. And that's why we've called them a board.

Q Okay, but now does it -- I mean earlier it was task force -- they're like the board of directors would be for a college president or something like that. Is that a fair way of thinking about this?

MS. MATHEWS: Not being familiar with all that college presidents do, but, yes, that's a general --

Q They're going to be there giving advice and so forth. They're not actually doing study, research --

MS. MATHEWS: They will not be doing their research. That's the purpose of the staff.

Q You said you were making a statement by going to California. What statement are you making?

MS. MATHEWS: We believe that going to California -- Maria, do you want to do this one?

MS. ECHAVESTE: Yes. Going to California, as everyone knows, is a place where -- sets trends. It is the state that has a very diverse population, it is the home of Proposition 187, Proposition 209, the UC Regents. It is -- going to San Diego, generally thought of as white conservative; nonetheless, this campus happens to be among the most diverse of the UC. It's saying that we believe in taking this issue and having a dialogue about it and finding ways to confront the problems facing us.

Q Right. But the question -- when you made the statement about making a statement by going to California, it was in the context of --

MS. MATHEWS: We believe it's bold to go to California to a UC system when Prop 209 is an issue that is so relevant there.

Q So the statement is --

MS. MATHEWS: The statement is, we want to be clear that the President is -- he's expressed his view on this issue and we're going to continue to express our view on that issue and what he believes.

Q So the statement is we're opposed to Prop 209.

MS. MATHEWS: And we --

Q That's not bold -- I mean, you've said that.

MR. LOCKHART: It's broader than that. It's that this year-long initiative is not going to shy away from the controversial issues -- now, it's not going to deal with only broad, academic issues that aren't relevant to the political dialogue that's going on now. And by going to California, we're going into the place where you have one of the most active discussions going on within California, within the university system, and we're going in there and we're going to lay out what we plan to talk about for the next year.

We thought it was about the most relevant place you could go to give this, and I think there is a statement there.

MS. MATHEWS: And the future-oriented focus. The only other thing I would add is the future-oriented focus of the initiative, that the demographic changes that are occurring in the nation -- California is a place that is on the front edge of that.

Q Will he speak directly to the question of affirmative action when he speaks on Saturday in California? I mean, you've said that that's one reason he's going there. Is he actually going to talk about it?

MS. MATHEWS: It will be in the speech.

Q Can I follow? Maria, you've just mentioned the campus having a good record. As I know you know, in the last two days there's been quite a lot of racial turmoil on that campus because the Provost of Thurgood Marshall College has quit because they rejected his plan to reach out to disadvantaged blacks and Hispanics. Does that embarrass you? Does that give you pause about picking that campus?

MS. ECHAVESTE: It highlights that, in fact, the answers to what do you do in light of a UC Regents or Proposition 209 or the Hopwood case, the one response that had been considered had been, have universities make partnerships with local high schools in order to educate and prepare them for the university system, shows that UC San Diego's decision not to accept the charter high school, that those answers are not easy, but they definitely need to be considered. We don't -- shy about going there.

Q Sylvia, given the President's problems with Lani Guinier, the affirmative action review, the fact that his closest friends, like Marian Wright Edelman practically walked out on him when he did welfare reform, what makes you think that the President can succeed at this race initiative? What makes him believe that he can actually do something?

MS. MATHEWS: First, I would like to kind of go back to a little bit of the premise. On affirmative action, I think this President's stand on affirmative action, to stand up and say that he believes that amend it, not end it for affirmative action is very important. I believe that our proposed rulemaking right now on procurement that is out for comment right now will be a very important part, preserving and narrowing -- tailoring, as we've been advised by the courts to do.

So on that front -- in terms of the others that are around him and have been around him, if you look at our Cabinet and the people from Rodney Slater to Alexis Herman to Federico Pena that have been here -- and there are a number of others that we have -- within the administration we have a large group, both in the Cabinet and here in the White House -- I think that we think that the President can succeed, I think, because he is dedicating himself to it personally.

And the other thing I would say is that there isn't a silver bullet, this isn't an easy problem. We recognize it and we recognize the difficulties that we're going to face in trying to do it. But we also believe that it is the time -- at a time when the nation is in reasonable -- is economically healthy and a time when we're on the verge of some big changes as far as our demographics, that we need to do this, and that's why we're doing it now.

Q Could you talk a little bit about the process of boiling down the list of possibilities for this panel -- what were the criteria and who were some of the people who signed off on these people, other than the President?

MS. MATHEWS: The process started with a very long list of I'd say probably about 250 names. And what we attempted to do was find people from different walks of life who could contribute both their ideas and the people that they communicate and have contact with. We wanted -- John Hope Franklin, as you all know, is 82, but Suzan Cook is very young.

We wanted to get a mix because part of the initiative will focus on youth. We wanted to get people from different backgrounds. Suzan comes from a religious background. Thomas comes from a business background. We tried to get a mix of people in terms of views and perspectives. Governor Winter is a Southern governor; Governor Kean is from the North. And what we tried to do was get a balance of people that represented a number of different things so we could have a good mix of advice going in to the President.

Q Who did you run these names by? I mean, were they among the people who met with the President the other night? Did you run the names by them, or who exactly has signed off?

MS. MATHEWS: Some of those people we consulted early on with our names.

Q So did you consider people who were just simply opposed to affirmative action or government preference policies, or does the President want people who already basically support his premises?

MS. MATHEWS: Those names were considered, but what we tried to do was put together a group that we feel could advise us on the policies and issues that we want to pursue.

Q Basically agree with the President?

Q Why bother having that board if you've already decided -- that you want these people to support what you already believe.

MS. MATHEWS: I think that what we're talking about when we talk about affirmative action is a pretty fundamental core, one of the policy areas that we'll be looking at. So in that area -- and actually, I think the truth is, we didn't ask that question when we asked the members to serve. Do you --

Q Why not?

Q They knew their record.

MS. MATHEWS: I'm answering the question of, did we have people -- is the question, do we have people on the board who support --

Q -- like a full debate. I mean, did you take -- there's plenty of prominent people who made it clear they're opposed to affirmative action. I mean, did you seek out those kinds of people, or was it clear that you want essentially people who basically agree with the President's approach to advise on more narrow questions rather than the whole spectrum?

MS. MATHEWS: On the issue of Prop 209 and affirmative action specifically, there were names on the list that are opposed to our position that we originally put together. However, on that particular issue, we did not directly ask people -- do you support that, do you not support that.

Q But you ruled out the people you knew who were opposed. Is that correct?

MS. ECHAVESTE: This commission is more --

MS. MATHEWS: It wasn't based on --

MS. ECHAVESTE: -- it's not a commission, it's an advisory board. You're thinking of a commission --

Q But you ruled out the people you knew were opposed. Isn't that correct?

MS. MATHEWS: They're going to be part of the dialogue.

Q But they won't be on the advisory board.

MS. MATHEWS: At this point, all the people -- the people that are mainly vocal against affirmative action are not a part of the advisory board.

Q Did you consult with any people like that in the process? Can you identify any people that were consulted with?

MS. ECHAVESTE: I just don't have my list of names, but we did talk to people who thought -- who had different views about how to deal with racism in this country that -- where the answer isn't in affirmative action, but economic opportunity, as a way of dealing with those issues. We did talk to people like that.

Q Sylvia, you are talking about healing racial divide. What American are you specifically hoping to target or to bring into the fold with this whole initiative?

MS. MATHEWS: I think that it is our hope that the initiative will reach everyone. When we say "race," we are referring to whites, Hispanics, blacks, Asian Americans, and Native Americans. We believe it's very important for whites in the country to be a part of the initiative.

Q Are you looking more so to get more white people to understand there is a problem, especially since you said earlier that the majority here in America is white?

MS. MATHEWS: We're looking for both. We're looking for both people of color as well as whites to look and examine the issue and see. That's part of why in the study section we talked about stereotypes versus reality, to understand which groups have -- we're going to look at which pieces are right and which are reality.

Q Is there concern that the California affirmative action will spread through the country -- it's contagious?

MS. ECHAVESTE: I wouldn't use the word "contagious"; the fact is that a lot of people all over the country are saying that affirmative action is not needed, that in fact, racism and discrimination is no longer a problem.

Q I mean, in the states and so forth, infecting the college preferences?

MS. ECHAVESTE: Absolutely.

Q Can I try a question that I asked in a briefing again? Is the President prepared to deal with the possibility that this full discussion, as often occurs in, say, employment, in workplaces, that this could exacerbate racial problems at least in the short term, and what would he be willing to do about them?

MS. MATHEWS: I think that as we discussed before, that the President is ready for a difficult discussion. I think as was reported today and has been reported before, that sometimes people's efforts on this front do create strains and stresses, and I think we're ready for taking that on. I think we've already seen the advertising that's occurred both in Washington and San Diego, which are signs. We are, as I have said, going to have critics from the left and the right. And that's because it is a very important issue that many people feel very passionately about. And we're already hearing that, and I think we're ready to take that.

Q You said you talked to some people who disagree with the administration position. Was Ward Connerly one of them? And what is your reaction to the fact that he -- while he's running these radio ads against the President -- will be there at the commencement address Saturday?

MS. ECHAVESTE: He's a UC Regent.

Q Is he somebody you talked to?

MS. ECHAVESTE: No.

Q What do you say to a lot of these civil rights leaders who are very upset that they are not on this advisory board, like Jesse Jackson, Kweisi Mfume, and people of that nature?

MS. ECHAVESTE: Part of the reaction we got when we were doing our outreach was the fact that a lot of people said, don't try to do a committee, don't try to do a group. You'll never figure out who should be on it. The fact is, the President cannot take on this issue alone and -- he is a full-time a President. And when a small advisory group that can help guide and help us identify the key issues -- what we should focus on when we're traveling around the country, what is the way to go -- and that was the decision that was made.

MS. MATHEWS: And we'll be consulting with those people. I think you all know Reverend Jackson was in last week and Kweisi Mfume was in as well this week. So the effort is not limited to the advisory board.

Q Sylvia, does the President still --

Q -- the main concern is the fact that they deal with civil rights and issues like this on a daily basis --

MS. ECHAVESTE: And they have the expertise. And we

will be working with them. Think of it as -- the way we think of it is it's a year-long process in which, at different points in time, different groups of people will be convened, a conversation had, at which, certainly in the process here in the White House that we had -- there was, in fact, different views around that table that was very enlightening and eye opening.

Q Sylvia, does the President believe that the fundamental conclusion of the Kerner Commission is still accurate today; that there are two societies in this country -- one black, one white, separate and unequal?

MS. MATHEWS: I think that he would say that we have made some progress, but that there is still a long way to go. And I think the other thing that he would say is, it's not a black and white; it's a black, white, Asian American; that it's a different -- in that sense, it's also different from Kerner; that it's not just two -- it's 100. And that that's a part of why the initiative is so important at this time.

Q Was the Justice Department civil rights jobs, did that -- did you make a concerted effort to get that filled prior to the announcement this weekend? Does that explain the timing of that?

MS. MATHEWS: We've been working on that for a while. We were pleased that we were able to announce it before we go to California.

Q Can you elaborate on just what the President's role is envisioned to be? You talk quite a bit about the board here. Is he going to be -- does he see himself as a mediator, a conciliator, a moderator? What exactly is his ultimate role in this process?

MS. MATHEWS: I think the President will have a number of different roles. We will depend on his intellectual leadership as we go through our processes with the executive staff as well as the White House staff. He will be the person that will be on the line in terms of his events -- leading dialogue in different settings, such as town halls. He also will be the President speaking to these issues in terms of like how he will do in the speech in California, which are three different ways that the President will be involved and engaged in the process.

Q Sylvia, do you all have a sense yet of what kind of venues you're going to do the town halls in, and when the first one will be?

MS. MATHEWS: No, we've had a number of requests that I think once we get -- we want to consult with the advisory board as well as the executive director. We've had a number of requests from everyone from communities to news organizations.

Q When do you anticipate -- how long a time before you do the first town hall?

MS. MATHEWS: I think that will be dependent on the President's schedule.

Q Is there some core set of beliefs that the President has at this point that he will just want to do that he thinks is right and that maybe he wants his advisory board to help him find a way to implement it -- but coming into this? And if so, can you tell us, what the core is of the beliefs he has, and in terms of -- I mean, very specifically, something that should be a piece of

legislation, something that could be remedied by one way or the other? Where is his ferment here going into this?

MS. MATHEWS: I think sort of two different answers to that question -- the speech. (Laughter.) We'll let Mr. McCurry -- that will come out in the speech. All right.

Thank you.

MR. LOCKHART: The Little Rock Central High visit in September 25th.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END 1:54 P.M. EDT

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
06/13/97 06:19:18 PM
Record Type: Record

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

cc:

Subject: 1997-06/13 RBTP/MTG W/ADVISORY BOARD ON RACE

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on

06/13/97 06:19 PM -----

SUNTUM_M @ A1
06/13/97 05:54:00 PM

Record Type: Record

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

cc:

Subject: 1997-06/13 RBTP/MTG W/ADVISORY BOARD ON RACE

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release
13, 1997

June

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN MEETING WITH
THE ADVISORY BOARD TO THE
PRESIDENT ON RACE

The Oval Office

4:50 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: I'd like to begin by thanking this distinguished group of Americans for their willingness to serve on an advisory board to me to examine the state of race relations in America over the next year, to participate in making sure that the American people have facts, not myths, upon which to base their judgments and proceed, to launching a nationwide, honest discussion that we hope will be replicated in every community in this country and that will lead to some specific recommendations for further actions on our part as we move forward.

I think this is the right time to do this, because there is not a major crisis engulfing the nation that dominates the headlines every day, the economy is strong, crime is down, our position in the world is good. But if you look at where we are and where we're going, we will soon be, in the next few decades, a multiracial society in which no racial group is in a majority. And we are living in a world in which that gives us an enormous advantage in relating to other countries in the world since we have people from every country in the world here.

Already, we have five big school districts in America with children from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups; soon we'll have 12, within the next year or so. And also, if you look at the rest of the world, all the wonders of modern technology are being threatened by the rise of ethnic and racial and religious and tribal conflicts around the world, we'll be in a unique position to show people, not just tell people, but show people they don't have to give in to those darker impulses if we can create one America out of this incredible diversity we have.

So you all know this has been a big concern of mine for a long time, but I just believe that this is the right time for us to try to prepare for the new century and to take this time to look at it, and I have a very great group of people here, and there are hundreds, perhaps even thousands more who would like to participate in this debate, and we intend to give them the chance to do it.

Q How bad do you think race relations are in this country today? I mean, what are the real tensions?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they're much better than they used to be, but I think there is still discrimination, I think there is still both illegal discrimination and discrimination that may not rise to the level of illegality, but certainly undermines the quality of life and our ability to live and work together.

And I think there is still great disparity in real opportunity, particularly for racial minorities who are physically isolated from the rest of us in low-income areas with high crime rates and low rates of economic and educational opportunity.

I also believe there are glaringly different perceptions of the fairness of how various aspects of American society operates -- most clearly the criminal justice system, but a lot of other areas as well.

I also believe that we have not taken enough time to think about the implications of what it will mean when our racial questions are not primarily issues between African Americans and white Americans, although still there is a lot of unfinished business there, but of the entire texture of

American diversity.

So I think that there are problems. I think things are better than they used to be, but I think that we have a lot of work to do in order to be one America.

Q Mr. President, we have an interesting phenomenon in

that a lot of Americans work in integrated work environments, but they aren't friends. I mean, they are colleagues at work, but they're not friends at home, they don't socialize together, they don't voluntarily associate with each other. Is there anything that you can do about this, is there anything you should try to do about this?

THE PRESIDENT: It's certainly nothing you can legislate, but I think that one of the things that I would hope that the board and I will be able to do is to show America examples where people are working together outside the workplace as friends to build their communities, and to demonstrate that in cases where that has occurred, not only are communities stronger and social problems reduced, but the people involved are happier people.

I think that's one thing I hope we'll be able to talk about. It may be a little old-fashioned and Pollyanna, but I basically think that we'll all be happier as Americans if we know each other and we feel comfortable with each other and we're getting along with together. I think that it will make -- I think we'll have more fun. I think we'll feel better about ourselves -- not just we'll feel like we're good or noble or anything, but we'll feel like we're doing what makes sense and what ought to be the better part of human nature.

Q Mr. President, given how you've been criticized in the past on how you selected an Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Lani Guinier and how you've been criticized by your close friend, Marion Wright Edelman on welfare reform and how she essentially said it would leave poor minority children out in the dust and also how you struggled to come to a position on affirmative action that brought some rather tense moments between you and the Congressional Black Caucus and, lastly, how you were criticized on being in Texas, giving a speech on race relations on the day of The Million Man March, how much credibility do you think you honestly bring to the issue of race relations, and how much do you honestly think you can accomplish in relation to your goals?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I ought to congratulate you. In 30 seconds, you've probably got 100 percent of the criticisms that have been leveled against me.

Q Oh, there's a new one today. The Speaker --

Q Besides the Speaker saying that's -- (laughter)

--

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, I was invited a long time ago to give that speech in Texas, and I think it was a very important speech. I've had -- secondly, more importantly, anybody who looks at my entire public life can see that it's been dominated by three things: economics, education and race.

If there is any issue I ought to have credibility on, it is this one, because it is a part of who I am and what I've done, and I don't feel the need to defend myself. I think all you have to do is look at the way I constitute my administration, look at the way that we've changed the Federal Bench and look at the policies I've advocated. And I'm very proud of the process through which we went to develop the affirmative action policy -- with Mr. Edley here, was a part of that -- and I think we did it right. After all, we not only had to come up with a position, we had to come up with a position in a way that we could defend it against those who thought we were wrong and who were determined to undo it, and we wanted to give everybody a chance to be a part of it; so I'm rather proud of that.

And on the welfare issue, time will prove whether Marion Edelman is right or I am. That's all I can tell you. All I can tell you is, even before the Welfare Reform Bill passed, we moved more people from welfare to work than at any time in American history and the Council of Economic Advisors says that 36 percent of them -- about 30 percent of them moved because of initiatives taken by states to help people move from welfare to work. We kept the guarantee for medical care, we kept the guarantee for nutrition for poor children, we kept the guarantee that the money had to be spent on poor people, we gave the states more money to spend on welfare than they would have today under the old system. They have 20 percent more money to spend on poor people today than they would have had if we hadn't changed the law -- today. And we're going to get, under the Budget Agreement, \$3 billion more to create jobs for people who don't have them. So let's -- give me a couple of years to see whether --who is right on this. She was sincere and honest in her position and I'm sincere and honest in mine, and time will see who was right.

Q Mr. President -- going to be worried that this is going to be all talk and no action. Are there going to be concrete proposals that are going to come out of this? In what areas?

THE PRESIDENT: I expect there to be concrete proposals. I also wanted to say there will simultaneously be concrete proposals that will be debated in the context of the budget that will directly bear on this. For example, one of the things that troubles me about those in favor of getting rid of affirmative action is, I don't recall any of them coming up with any alternatives. Nor do I hear any voices assuming some responsibility for the apparent resegregation of higher education in Texas and California and some places as a result of it.

So, yes, I think we are duty-bound to come up with some policy, but I also think we're duty-bound to try to mobilize the energies and the attention of the rest of America so that everybody can be a part of this.

Q Does this mean you will specifically denounce Proposition 209 tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: I've already done that, but I will make my position on that issue clear again tomorrow.

Q I assume you've seen the Speaker's comment that he's looked at the Advisory Commission and assumes that it will come up with the, I think he said, same old, tired, liberal big government proposals. Would you like to disabuse him of that impression?

THE PRESIDENT: One of the things we did in 1993, which was not an old, tired, liberal, big government proposal -- Ronald Reagan said it was the best antipoverty program in American history with the earned income tax credit -- we doubled it in 1993 to help the working poor, to reward -- here is another thing I wanted to -- most minorities work for a living, they are not on welfare. And there are a lot of people out there working, not making much money. So the earned income tax credit says we're not going to tax people who work into poverty.

This new tax program that has been proposed by the Speaker's Ways and Means Committee would penalize the working poor and especially working poor mothers. So I would say that I'd be glad to have his advice, but this is a case where he needs to neaten up his own house a little bit and get those -- if he's for work and empowerment and not the big government solutions, then they ought to change that tax package and stop punishing the working poor.

Q What did you think of the Republican leaders all voting against the disaster bill? Wasn't that odd?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm just glad it passed. Mayor Owens, the Mayor of -- I visited out there in North Dakota called me last night after I signed it and said how glad she was the people were going to get their aid, and that's all I have to say. This never should have been political, and I don't want the politics to continue and I don't want to talk about victories or defeat here. People are going to get help; that's all that counts. We've got to go back to working on this budget and all these other issues.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END 4:05 P.M. EDT

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98

02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
06/16/97 10:00:57 AM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
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Subject: Executive Order re: Race

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
06/16/97 10:01 AM -----

Darby E. Stott
06/13/97 07:33:22 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
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Subject: Executive Order re: Race

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 13, 1997

EXECUTIVE ORDER

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY BOARD ON RACE

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), and in order to establish a President's Advisory Board on Race, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. (a) There is established the President's Advisory Board on Race. The Advisory Board shall comprise 7 members from outside the Federal Government to be appointed by the President. Members

shall each have substantial experience and expertise in the areas to be considered by the Advisory Board. Members shall be representative of the diverse perspectives in the areas to be considered by the Advisory Board.

(b) The President shall designate a Chairperson from among the members of the Advisory Board.

Sec. 2. Functions. (a) The Advisory Board shall advise the President on matters involving race and racial reconciliation, including ways in which the President can:

(1) Promote a constructive national dialogue to confront and work through challenging issues that surround race;

(2) Increase the Nation's understanding of our recent history of race relations and the course our Nation is charting on issues of race relations and racial diversity;

(3) Bridge racial divides by encouraging leaders in communities throughout the Nation to develop and implement innovative approaches to calming racial tensions;

(4) Identify, develop, and implement solutions to problems in areas in which race has a substantial impact, such as education, economic opportunity, housing, health care, and the administration of justice.

(b) The Advisory Board also shall advise on such other matters as from time to time the President may refer to the Board.

(c) In carrying out its functions, the Advisory Board shall coordinate with the staff of the President's Initiative on Race.

Sec. 3. Administration. (a) To the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Department of Justice shall provide the financial and administrative support for the Advisory Board.

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(b) The heads of executive agencies shall, to the extent permitted by law, provide to the Advisory Board such information as it may require for the purpose of carrying out its functions.

(c) The Chairperson may, from time to time, invite experts to submit information to the Advisory Board and may form subcommittees or working groups within the Advisory Board to review specific matters.

(d) Members of the Advisory Board shall serve without compensation but shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by law for persons serving intermittently in

the Government service (5 U.S.C. 5701-5707).

Sec. 4. General. (a) Notwithstanding any other Executive order, the functions of the President under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended, except that of reporting to the Congress, that are applicable to the Advisory Board shall be performed by the Attorney General, or his or her designee, in accordance with guidelines that have been issued by the Administrator of General Services.

(b) The Advisory Board shall terminate on September 30, 1998, unless extended by the President prior to such date.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE,
June 13, 1997.

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Catherine T. Kitchen
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Subject: 1997-06/14 press briefing by advisory board on race relations

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Diego, California)

Immediate
Release

June 14, 1997

For

PRESS BRIEFING BY
PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY BOARD ON RACE

Rimac Arena
San Diego, California

9:17 A.M. (L)

MR. LOCKHART: Good morning. Since the advisory board will be leaving immediately after the speech to go to the lunch reception, I've asked them to come in this morning and spend a few minutes to see if you have any questions.

Let me just introduce them to you and then I'll leave them to you. We have Chairman John Hope Franklin, Linda Chavez-Thompson, Suzan Johnson Cook, Governor Tom Kean, Angela Oh, Robert Thomas, and Governor William Winter, and Christopher Edley, who is the senior adviser.

DR. FRANKLIN: Any questions?

Q Do you know where and when the town meetings are going to be?

DR. FRANKLIN: No, we don't. I wish we did. We just had our first informal meeting yesterday. We aren't constituted yet officially as an advisory board. We will make some plans in the not too distant future, and we hope then to announce when and where the town meetings will be.

The town meetings will be just one feature, one of many features in the process of trying to discuss and act with respect to the whole question of racial and ethnic and other relations.

Q As you may know, a lot of critics of the group you're a member of say that, well, we've heard a lot of good words before, we've commissions set up, we've town meetings, we've seen all of these things done before, and there is still a lot of racial divide and tension in this country. What do you think you're going to be able to do that's different from what's been done in the past?

DR. FRANKLIN: I don't know that we've had a lot of town meetings with respect to this question. We've had town meetings, but I don't think we've had a national dialogue, national conversation on the question of race. That was not true in 1921 after the riots that ended World War I. That was not true after the riots that led to the creation of the Kerner Commission, with which I'm very familiar. Kerner was an old and very dear friend of mine.

And so it cannot be said that these are just some more town meetings and that sort of thing. We haven't had this before. I'm not suggesting that town meetings will solve the problems even if we do have them, but I am suggesting that a national conversation about race and ethnicity has not occurred

in our history. I think as an historian I can speak with some certainty about that.

Now, one doesn't want to get stuck or hung on the question of town meetings either or any conversation as far as that's concerned because conversations and town meetings and

whatever else we have in the way of oral communications are for the purpose of leading toward action of various kinds. And I don't think we've had that before, either.

So there's a large area in which we can explore these matters which, indeed, has not been explored before.

Q What sort of action do you hope this leads to?

DR. FRANKLIN: We hope that the action will lead to a number of things. We hope that it will lead to very specific improvements in education. We hope that it will lead to very specific improvements in housing, elimination of housing discriminations of various kinds. We hope that it will lead to specific elimination of discrimination in employment. We hope that it will strengthen the mechanisms that are in place now that have to do with the elimination of employment discrimination. We hope that it will lead specifically to the creation of large numbers of groups of people working in their own communities to improve the whole climate and, in turn, the whole set of policies with respect to race relations and that sort of thing. It can lead to a lot of things and those are only a few. I have colleagues here who are as well informed -- perhaps better than I.

Q Should we say that you expect to meet again within days, weeks, when you'll start your business?

DR. FRANKLIN: We've got our calendars ready to set some meeting times and I can't say at this moment whether it will be next week or the week after. I can say within a matter of weeks we will be running -- we will be up and running and fully operative.

Q Dr. Franklin, what do you say about some members of Congress thinking about apologizing to black America for slavery, and then Newt Gingrich is saying no.

DR. FRANKLIN: And Newt Gingrich is saying what?

Q Pretty much no. He really doesn't think it's a good idea.

DR. FRANKLIN: I think that, whether we do it as a nation or whether we do it as individuals or whether Mr. Gingrich will undertake this himself, we are all to acknowledge that there is some serious contradiction between the policies of this country with respect to race and the fundamental documents and sacred statements with respect to our nation -- that is, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States -- and they are not consonant with the policies that have been pursued by this country with respect to race.

Whether this will bring anyone out to issue a formal apology, I don't know. But anyone who looks at the history of race in this country and looks at the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence will know -- if they can read and write, they will know -- that there is a very serious contradiction, and we have been derelict and responsible for a whole history of miscreant activities, not unlike those which we condemned England for committing in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Q Dr. Franklin --

Q So the issue must be addressed -- the slavery issue must be addressed?

Q I was just going to follow up, but I'll let her follow up. Go ahead.

Q So are you saying the slavery issue must be

addressed in this Commission? To help heal the racial divide, do you think the slavery issue of black America must be addressed?

DR. FRANKLIN: I would say the slavery issue must be addressed by every American, but let me add to that that it's more than the slavery issue. Hear me, hear me now: It's more

than the slavery issue. It is the ideological underpinnings of slavery, the development of a philosophy in this country that stated categorically that blacks were inferior, that they were physiologically and intellectually and ethically inferior. And the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment could not end that, you see, for that had already been deeply ingrained so that when you turned off slavery there still remained these very important salient features that had been ingrained into the American ethos, that blacks were not worthy.

And you see, you can't turn that off by ending slavery, because it's something more than slavery, something deeper than slavery. You could end slavery, but you couldn't end that because that's in the minds and hearts of people.

So you've got another problem here to confront. If it were only slavery, it would be relatively simple, because slavery is over. But you continue in the 19th and in the 20th century, and in 1997, you continue to have people in this country who hold to the ideas that were the underpinnings of slavery, and they hold to them even after slavery is over.

Q Professor, I think the question, though, is given the political context, that President Clinton did formally apologize on behalf of the American people for the Tuskegee experiments, and now a Congressman has proposed that he also apologize for what was obviously a much worse moment in U.S. history: slavery. Should the President of the United States formally apologize for slavery that occurred in the United States?

DR. FRANKLIN: I don't know what my colleagues think of that. I think every person in the United States ought to recognize the fact that this was a despicable, terrible act on the part of our founding fathers and all the people who came before us. Whether it can be subsumed under an apology by anybody, one person, I don't know, I'm not prepared to say.

But I think every American needs to confront this matter. I don't want to -- I've got all this talent here. Look at them. Marvelous.

Q We'd be happy to hear from the rest of the panel on this question -- should the President apologize for slavery?

DR. FRANKLIN: I think there are so many things that the President can and should do, and I think you might hear some of these when he speaks this morning.

MR. THOMAS: I think at this stage of our life as an advisory board we're in no position yet to make a recommendation to the President, but it certainly is something that we would consider as an advisory board.

Q Dr. Franklin, when you spoke of the differences with earlier commissions like Kerner, one of the differences is, those commissions dealt solely with black-white. How does it complicate your task or change the mission of this board when you're going to be dealing also with Hispanic, Asian-American --a broader question than faced Kerner.

DR. FRANKLIN: Do you want me to answer that? I can answer that. I'd be glad to answer.

MR. THOMAS: I think all of us could answer that. The task is laid out before us. The President has clearly identified what he wants to accomplish and this will not be a difficult issue to expand into races and cultures of all kinds.

Now, there will be a concentration on the African American race and the black and white issue, as he has said, but he has also said that he wants to extend this into all diverse issues. And just living here in Southern California we are faced with that on a daily basis and so it will not be difficult -- particularly through the town hall meetings -- to expose the fact that we have many racial issues and many diverse cultures here that we have to deal with.

MS. OH: Let me begin by saying that, quite frankly, as an Asian American, I feel that I am somewhat of an intruder on a dialogue that has been a black/white sort of paradigm for all of the time that we have ever talked about race and racism in this country -- which isn't very much time, frankly.

None the less, I feel that the invitation to engage in what is really a historic endeavor and the reception that Professor Franklin and others on this advisory board have given me in response to that very statement, that I feel I am an intruder. There are elements in our communities that would not like to hear from Asian America, that would not like to hear from Hispanic or Latino community, however you want to identify it --and you will learn, as we engage in this dialogue, why I even make that very small remark. And it's because there's a sentiment that by allowing people like myself into this dialogue there will be some sort of a dilution.

The reality is that there will be an enrichment. The reality is that we will all learn an incredible amount of information that will take away the mythology. The reality is that this is going to be a difficult and painful dialogue. For those who think that this is a feel-good experience, you need to understand that in the last 24 hours we all met each other for the very first time and we're all -- I think I speak with some confidence here -- struck by the honesty and the willingness of every single one of us who sits at this table at this moment to

allow the vulnerability, to allow the pain, and then to embrace the reality that we are all part of one nation.

That is the goal here because the human resources that we have in this nation are incredible, and we hope to bring that to light.

MS. COOK: I think it's also to raise the question, can we be one America in the 21st century? And so, I think that's why we're here. We bring our differences, and we will agree in some areas, and we certainly will disagree because we all bring our cultural and sociological perspectives to the table.

But I was born during the civil rights era, and so I'm a civil rights baby, which means that Martin Luther King's children and Malcolm X's children are all pretty much in my age group. We -- actually some of us are friends. And there has not been a dialogue since the marches of '63 when we were five and six years old.

And so I'm looking forward to race being put on the table. And I think it's an important issue, and we cannot act as though it's not an issue in America. So I'm looking forward to it. And I look forward to it with hope that we will be honest and vulnerable and that we can begin to heal some of the painful areas that each of us has experienced.

MS. CHAVEZ-THOMPSON: We should have a commission on vertically challenged people. (Laughter.) Trying to get up here

on this podium.

My name is Linda Chavez-Thompson. As a Latina labor activist, I went through many types of discrimination in the state of Texas, but the reason that I'm on this advisory board is because it's not a commission to make a report to the American people, it is an advisory board to the President so that the President makes the report to the American people. He wants and has talked with us very sincerely, has brought in some of his own personal reasons as to why he wants to see America address the issue of race.

When I was six years old, my name was changed in the first grade. My birth name is Lydia. But my 1st grade teacher changed it to Linda because it was easier for her. Why, I don't know. So all my life I have been known as Linda.

I serve on this advisory board because, right, I need a few more meetings in my life. (Laughter.) But I asked what was it going to do, what were we going to be allowed to do. And we've agreed that we may disagree. The President has agreed that he may disagree with us. And we may disagree with him and

we will talk about it.

But the issue of race must be discussed, because as he has often said, it is something that America oftentimes doesn't want to talk about -- you put it off, you don't want to discuss it because maybe you don't have the answer, maybe you're embarrassed by the fact that you don't have the answer. But if we don't talk about it how do we address such major issues that have people of color earning less money than others, living in housing conditions that go back to the '30s and '40, living and working at a lesser status than people who are not of color.

So I wanted to serve on this board because I want to help make a difference. I've listened to the rhetoric. I've listened to the questions of whether this is going to make a difference. The alternative is, what if we don't talk about it? What if we don't try to make something happen? Yes, we have a year -- but we have a lifetime that if we don't spend a year talking about it, that lifetime will continue to have racial problems and I want to try to bring a solution.

GOVERNOR KEAN: First of all, I want to associate myself with the remarks of my colleagues and my chairman. I'm going to say basically that many people have written and said that this country could not go into the next century and achieve anything like our promise unless this issue was addressed, and addressed openly.

This is the first President who's been willing to do this. It's not an easy issue, it's an issue that most people in political life have tried to avoid. This is an issue that this President is willing to address. And, therefore, I think it's incumbent upon all citizens to help him and to help us in this year to address it. And that means Republicans as well as Democrats, because this cannot be a partisan -- it means the Congress, it means the governors, it means leaders at all levels and people at all levels. And we are going to be reaching out to the leadership of the Congress and to the governors for help.

And my hope is that everybody will respond willingly and that we will take all those ideas and try to incorporate them to the best of our ability in our advice to the President.

GOVERNOR WINTER: My name is William Winter. I served as Governor of Mississippi back in the 1980s. I would like to address very briefly, from my own point of view, the skepticism and the cynicism that have been reflected in some comments about the creation of this board.

Like President Clinton, I grew up in the segregated South. I can remember the skepticism and the cynicism that

greeted some of us back in the '50s and '60s when we suggested that there had to be an elimination of segregation, because we saw discrimination limiting the capacity of people, of all the people of my region. Now we've come a long way since then, and we've come a long way based both on activist government programs, but we have come a further way on the basis of a creation of a body of people of good will.

This is what is going to be at the key, in my opinion, for the solution to whatever remains of the racial crisis in this country. We have come a long way. We still have a long way to go. I think that we have the greatest opportunity that any generation has ever had to create this sensitivity with respect to our fellow Americans.

The very diversity of our population is what is going to give strength to the American system and the future. And that's what my role, as I view it, on this board is, along with that of my colleagues -- is to try to create a state of mind that says that racism -- racism in any form, wherever it comes from -- is unacceptable in a civilized society.

I think that ought to be the goal for all of us. And I'm hopeful we can take some mighty steps as members of this board to move us in that direction. And I want to salute President Clinton for taking this magnificent step that he has taken today, and saying really for the first time to the American people what the issues are.

MR. LOCKHART: Thank you very much.

END

9:45 P.M. (L)

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Diego, California)

For Immediate Release

June 14, 1997

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

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

10:47 A.M. (L)

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

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

Let me say to Chancellor Dynes and President Atkinson,

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

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

And I can't help but noting that there's another person here that deserves some special recognition -- the University of California at San Diego Class of 1977 -- a Filipino-American woman that became the youngest Captain of the Navy and my personal physician, Dr. Connie Mariano. Where is she? (Applause.)

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

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

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

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

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

Here at home, we must ensure that every child has the chance you have had to develop your God-given capacities. We cannot

wait for them to get in trouble to notice them.

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

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

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

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

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

Consider this: We were born with a Declaration of Independence which asserted that we were all created equal and a Constitution that enshrined slavery. We fought a bloody civil war to abolish slavery and preserve the union, but we remained a house divided and unequal by law for another century. We advanced across the continent in the name of freedom, yet in so doing we pushed Native Americans off their land, often crushing their culture and

their livelihood. Our Statue of Liberty welcomes poor, tired, huddled masses of immigrants to our borders, but each new wave has felt the sting of discrimination.

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

Though minorities have more opportunities than ever today, we still see evidence of bigotry -- from the desecration of houses of worship, whether they be churches, synagogues or mosques, to demeaning talk in corporate suites. There is still much work to be done by you, members of the class of 1997. But those who say we cannot transform the problem of prejudice into the promise of unity forget how far we have come, and I cannot believe they have ever seen a crowd like you. (Applause.)

When I look at you, it is almost impossible for me even to remember my own life. I grew up in the high drama of the Cold War, in the patriotic South. Black and white southerners alike wore our nation's uniform in defense of freedom against communism. They fought and died together, from Korea to Vietnam. But back home, I went to segregated schools, swam in segregated public pools, sat in all-white sections at the movies, and traveled through small towns in my state that still marked restrooms and water fountains "white" and "colored."

By the grace of God I had a grandfather with just a grade school education but the heart of a true American, who taught me that it was wrong. And by the grace of God, there were brave African Americans like Congressman John Lewis, who risked their lives time and time again to make it right. And there were white Americans like Congressman Bob Filner, a freedom rider on the bus with John Lewis, in the long, noble struggle for civil rights, who knew that it was a struggle to free white people, too.

To be sure, there is old, unfinished business between black and white Americans, but the classic American dilemma has now become many dilemmas of race and ethnicity. We see it in the tension between black and Hispanic customers and their Korean or Arab grocers; in a resurgent anti-Semitism even on some college campuses; in a hostility toward new immigrants from Asia to the Middle East to the former communist countries to Latin America and the Caribbean --even those whose hard work and strong families have brought them success in the American Way.

We see a disturbing tendency to wrongly attribute to entire groups, including the white majority, the objectionable conduct of a few members. If a black American commits a crime, condemn the act -- but remember that most African Americans are hard-working, law-abiding citizens. If a Latino gang member deals

drugs, condemn the act -- but remember the vast majority of Hispanics are responsible citizens who also deplore the scourge of drugs in our life. If white teenagers beat a young African American boy almost to death just because of his race, for God's sakes condemn the act -- but remember the overwhelming majority of white people will find it just as hateful. If an Asian merchant discriminates against her customers of another minority group, call her on it -- but remember, too, that many, many Asians have borne the burden of prejudice and do not want anyone else to feel it.

Remember too, in spite of the persistence of prejudice, we are more integrated than ever. More of us share neighborhoods and work and school and social activities, religious life, even love and marriage across racial lines than ever before. More of us enjoy each other's company and distinctive cultures than ever before. And more than ever, we understand the benefits of our racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity in a global society, where networks of commerce and communications draw us closer and bring rich rewards to those who truly understand life beyond their nation's borders.

With just a twentieth of the world's population, but a fifth of the world's income, we in America simply have to sell to the other 95 percent of the world's consumers just to maintain our standard of living. Because we are drawn from every culture on earth, we are uniquely positioned to do it. Beyond commerce, the diverse backgrounds and talents of our citizens can help America to light the globe, showing nations deeply divided by race, religion and tribe that there is a better way.

Finally, as you have shown us today, our diversity will enrich our lives in non-material ways -- deepening our understanding of human nature and human differences, making our communities more exciting, more enjoyable, more meaningful. That is why I have come here today to ask the American people to join me in a great national effort to perfect the promise of America for this new time as we seek to build our more perfect union.

Now, when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven to it by some emergency or social cataclysm, now is the time we should learn together, talk together and act together to build one America. (Applause.)

Let me say that I know that for many white Americans, this conversation may seem to exclude them or threaten them. That must not be so. I believe white Americans have just as much to gain as anybody else from being a part of this endeavor -- much to gain from an America where we finally take responsibility for all our children so that they, at last, can be judged as Martin Luther King hoped, "Not by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." (Applause.)

What is it that we must do? For four and a half years now, I have worked to prepare America for the 21st century with a strategy of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and an

American community of all our citizens. To succeed in each of these areas, we must deal with the realities and the perceptions affecting all racial groups in America.

First, we must continue to expand opportunity. Full participation in our strong and growing economy is the best antidote to envy, despair and racism. We must press forward to move millions more from poverty and welfare to work; to bring the spark of enterprise to inner cities; to redouble our efforts to reach those rural communities prosperity has passed by. And most important of all, we simply must give our young people the finest education in the world.

There are no children who, because of their ethnic or racial background, who cannot meet the highest academic standards if we set them and measure our students against them, if we give them well-trained teachers and well-equipped classrooms, and if we continue to support reasoned reforms to achieve excellence, like the charter school movement. (Applause.)

At a time when college education means stability, a good job, a passport to the middle class, we must open the doors of college to all Americans and we must make at least two years of college as universal at the dawn of the next century as a high school diploma is today.

In our efforts to extend economic and educational opportunity to all our citizens, we must consider the role of affirmative action. I know affirmative action has not been perfect in America -- that's why two years ago we began an effort to fix the things that are wrong with it -- but when used in the right way, it has worked. (Applause.)

It has given us a whole generation of professionals in fields that used to be exclusive clubs -- where people like me got the benefit of 100 percent affirmative action. There are now more women-owned businesses than ever before. There are more African American, Latino and Asian American lawyers and judges, scientists and engineers, accountants and executives than ever before.

But the best example of successful affirmative action is our military. Our armed forces are diverse from top to bottom -- perhaps the most integrated institution in our society and certainly the most integrated military in the world. And, more important, no one questions that they are the best in the world. So much for the argument that excellence and diversity do not go hand in hand. (Applause.)

There are those who argue that scores on standardized tests should be the sole measure of qualification for admissions to colleges and universities. But many would not apply the same standard to the children of alumni or those with athletic ability. (Applause.)

I believe a student body that reflects the excellence and the diversity of the people we will live and work with has independent educational value. Look around this crowd today. Don't you think you have learned a lot more than you would have if everybody sitting around you looked just like you? I think you have. (Applause.)

And beyond the educational value to you, it has a public interest because you will learn to live and work in the world you will live in better. When young people sit side by side with people of many different backgrounds, they do learn something that they can take out into the world. And they will be more effective citizens.

Many affirmative action students excel. They work hard, they achieve, they go out and serve the communities that need them for their expertise and role model. If you close the door on them, we will weaken our greatest universities and it will be more difficult to build the society we need in the 21st century. (Applause.)

Let me say, I know that the people of California voted to repeal affirmative action without any ill motive. The vast majority of them simply did it with a conviction that discrimination and isolation are no longer barriers to achievement. But consider the results. Minority enrollments in law school and other graduate programs are plummeting for the first time in decades. Assuming the same will likely happen in undergraduate education. We must not resegregate higher education or leave it to the private universities to do the public's work. (Applause.)

At the very time when we need to do a better job of living and learning together, we should not stop trying to equalize economic opportunity. To those who oppose affirmative action, I ask you to come up with an alternative. I would embrace it if I could find a better way. And to those of us who still support it, I say we should continue to stand for it, we should reach out to those who disagree or are uncertain and talk about the practical impact of these issues, and we should never be thought unwilling to work with those who disagree with us to find new ways to lift people up and bring people together. (Applause.)

Beyond opportunity, we must demand responsibility from every American. Our strength as a society depends upon both -- upon people taking responsibility for themselves and their families, teaching their children good values, working hard and obeying the law, and giving back to those around us. The new economy offers fewer guarantees, more risks, and more rewards. It calls upon all of us to take even greater responsibility for our education than ever before.

In the current economic boom, only one racial or ethnic group in America has actually experienced a decline in income --

Hispanic Americans. One big reason is that Hispanic high school drop-out rates are well above -- indeed, far above -- those of whites and blacks. Some of the drop-outs actually reflect a strong commitment to work. We admire the legendary willingness to take the hard job at long hours for low pay. In the old economy, that was a responsible thing to do. But in the new economy, where education is the key, responsibility means staying in school. (Applause.)

No responsibility is more fundamental than obeying the law. It is not racist to insist that every American do so. The fight against crime and drugs is a fight for the freedom of all our people, including those -- perhaps especially those -- minorities living in our poorest neighborhoods. But respect for the law must run both ways. The shocking difference in perceptions of the fairness of our criminal justice system grows out of the real experiences that too many minorities have had with law enforcement officers. Part of the answer is to have all our citizens respect the law, but the basic rule must be that the law must respect all our citizens. (Applause.)

And that applies, too, to the enforcement of our civil rights laws. For example, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has a huge backlog of cases with discrimination claims -- though we have reduced it by 25 percent over the last four years. We can do no much better without more resources. It is imperative that Congress -- especially those members who say they're for civil rights but against affirmative action -- at least give us the money necessary to enforce the law of the land and do it soon. (Applause.)

Our third imperative is perhaps the most difficult of all. We must build one American community based on respect for one another and our shared values. We must begin with a candid conversation on the state of race relations today and the implications of Americans of so many different races living and working together as we approach a new century. We must be honest with each other. We have talked at each other and about each other for a long time. It's high time we all began talking with each other.

Over the coming year I want to lead the American people in a great and unprecedented conversation about race. In community efforts from Lima, Ohio, to Billings, Montana, in remarkable experiments in cross-racial communications like the uniquely named ERACISM, I have seen what Americans can do if they let down their guards and reach out their hands.

I have asked one of America's greatest scholars, Dr. John Hope Franklin, to chair an advisory panel of seven distinguished Americans to help me in this endeavor. He will be joined by former Governors Thomas Kean of New Jersey and William Winter of Mississippi, both great champions of civil rights; by Linda Chavez-Thompson, the Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO; by Reverend Suzan Johnson Cook, a minister from the Bronx and former White House Fellow; by Angela Oh, an attorney and Los Angeles

community leader; and Robert Thompson, the CEO of Nissan U.S.A. -- distinguished leaders, leaders in their community.

I want this panel to help educate Americans about the facts surrounding issues of race, to promote a dialogue in every community of the land to confront and work through these issues, to recruit and encourage leadership at all levels to help breach racial divides, and to find, develop and recommend how to implement concrete solutions to our problems -- solutions that will involve all of us in government, business, communities, and as individual citizens.

I will make periodic reports to the American people about our findings and what actions we all have to take to move America forward. This board will seek out and listen to Americans from all races and all walks of life. They are performing a great citizen service, but in the cause of building one America all citizens must serve.

As I said at the President's Summit on Service in Philadelphia, in our new era such acts of service are basic acts of citizenship. Government must play its role, but much of the work must be done by the American people as citizen service. The very effort will strengthen us and bring us closer together.

In short, I want America to capture the feel and the spirit that you have given to all of us today. I'd like to ask the board to stand and be recognized. I want you to look at them, and I want you to feel free to talk to them over the next year or so. Dr. Franklin and members of the board. (Applause.)

Honest dialogue will not be easy at first. We'll all have to get past defensiveness and fear and political correctness and other barriers to honesty. Emotions may be rubbed raw, but we must begin.

What do I really hope we will achieve as a country? If we do nothing more than talk, it will be interesting but it won't be enough. If we do nothing more than propose disconnected acts of policy, it would be helpful, but it won't be enough.

But if ten years from now people can look back and see that this year of honest dialogue and concerted action helped to lift the heavy burden of race from our children's future, we will have given a precious gift to America.

I ask you all to remember just for a moment, as we have come through the difficult trial on the Oklahoma City bombing, remember that terrible day when we saw and wept for Americans and forgot for a moment that there were a lot of them from different races than we are.

Remember the many faces and races of the Americans who did not sleep and put their lives at risk to engage in the rescue, the helping and the healing. Remember how you have seen things like

that in the natural disasters here in California. That is the face of the real America. That is the face I have seen over and over again. That is the America, somehow, some way we have to make real in daily American life. (Applause.)

Members of the graduating class, you will have a greater opportunity to live your dreams than any generation in our history, if we can make of our many different strands, one America -- a nation at peace with itself bound together by shared values and aspirations and opportunities and real respect for our differences.

I am a Scotch-Irish Southern Baptist, and I'm proud of it. But my life has been immeasurably enriched by the power of the Torah, the beauty of the Koran, the piercing wisdom of the religions of East and South Asia -- all embraced by my fellow Americans. I have felt indescribable joy and peace in black and Pentecostal churches. I have come to love the intensity and selflessness of my Hispanic fellow Americans toward la familia. As a Southerner, I grew up on country music and county fairs and I still like them. (Laughter.) But I have also reveled in the festivals and the food, the music and the art and the culture of Native Americans and Americans from every region in the world.

In each land I have visited as your President, I have felt more at home because some of their people have found a home in America. For two centuries, wave upon wave of immigrants have come to our shores to build a new life drawn by the promise of freedom and a fair chance. Whatever else they found, even bigotry and violence, most of them never gave up on America. Even African American, the first of whom we brought here in chains, never gave up on America.

It is up to you to prove that their abiding faith was well-placed. Living in islands of isolation -- some splendid and some sordid -- is not the American way. Basing our self-esteem on the ability to look down on others is not the American way. Being satisfied if we have what we want and heedless of others who don't even have what they need and deserve is not the American way. We have torn down the barriers in our laws. Now we must break down the barriers in our lives, our minds and our hearts.

More than 30 years ago, at the high tide of the civil rights movement, the Kerner Commission said we were becoming two Americas, one white, one black, separate and unequal. Today, we face a different choice: will we become not two, but many Americas, separate, unequal and isolated? Or will we draw strength from all our people and our ancient faith in the quality of human dignity, to become the world's first truly multi-racial democracy. That is the unfinished work of our time, to lift the burden of race and redeem the promise of America.

Class of 1997, I grew up in the shadows of a divided America, but I have seen glimpses of one America. You have shown me one today. That is the America you must make. It begins with your dreams, so dream large, live your dreams, challenge your parents and

teach your children well.

God bless you and good luck.

END

11:23 A.M. (L)

Message Sent

To:

Julie E. Mason
April Mellody
Darby E. Stott
Julia R. Green
Lorraine L. Wytkind
Laura D. Schwartz
Lori E. Abrams
Lori Anderson
Brenda M. Anders
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Lanny J. Davis
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James M. Teague
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Doris O. Matsui
Andrew J. Mayock
Anne E. McGuire ,
Cheryl D. Mills
Megan C. Moloney
Kevin Moran
Jonathan Murchinson
Elizabeth R. Newman
Peter R. Orszag
Carole A. Parmelee
Sally P. Paxton
Jonathan Prince
Peter O'Keefe
Jonathan P. Robell
Charles F. Ruff
Virginia N. Rustique
Evan Ryan
G. Timothy Saunders
Stuart Shear
Douglas S. Sheorn
David Shipley
Robert M. Shireman
Jake Siewert
Joshua Silverman
Brian D. Smith
Craig T. Smith
Richard Socarides
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COGDELL_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
backup @ wilson.ai.mit.edu@INET@LNGTWY
wh-outbox-distr @ clinton.ai.mit.edu@INET@LNGTWY
BARBUSCHAK_K @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOME_M @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOW_T @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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GILLESPIE_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GRAY_W @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GRIBBEN_J @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
HAAS_L @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
HKlasky @ PANET.US-STATE.GOV@CD@LNGTWY
JOHNSON_WC @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
LIZIK_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
RILEY_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
SAMBURG_T @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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SMITH_BD @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
STUMPF_D @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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WOZNIAK_N @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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Message Sent

To:

Jamie S. Williams/WHO/EOP

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
06/16/97 10:26:00 AM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: 1997-06/14 PRESS BRIEFING ON RACE ADVISORY BOARD

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
06/16/97 10:26 AM -----

SUNTUM_M @ A1
06/16/97 10:17:00 AM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: 1997-06/14 PRESS BRIEFING ON RACE ADVISORY BOARD

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(San Diego, California)

For Immediate Release

June 14, 1997

PRESS BRIEFING BY
PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY BOARD ON RACE

Rimac Arena
San Diego, California

9:17 A.M. (L)

MR. LOCKHART: Good morning. Since the advisory board will be leaving immediately after the speech to go to the lunch reception, I've asked them to come in this morning and spend a few minutes to see if you have any questions.

Let me just introduce them to you and then I'll leave them to you. We have Chairman John Hope Franklin, Linda Chavez-Thompson, Suzan Johnson Cook, Governor Tom Kean, Angela Oh, Robert Thomas, and Governor William Winter, and Christopher Edley, who is the senior adviser.

DR. FRANKLIN: Any questions?

Q Do you know where and when the town meetings are going to be?

DR. FRANKLIN: No, we don't. I wish we did. We just had our first informal meeting yesterday. We aren't constituted yet officially as an advisory board. We will make some plans in the not too distant future, and we hope then to announce when and where the town meetings will be.

The town meetings will be just one feature, one of many features in the process of trying to discuss and act with respect to the whole question of racial and ethnic and other relations.

Q As you may know, a lot of critics of the group you're a member of say that, well, we've heard a lot of good words before, we've commissions set up, we've town meetings, we've seen all of these things done before, and there is still a lot of racial divide and tension in this country. What do you think you're going to be able to do that's different from what's been done in the past?

DR. FRANKLIN: I don't know that we've had a lot of town meetings with respect to this question. We've had town meetings, but I don't think we've had a national dialogue, national conversation on the question of race. That was not true in 1921 after the riots that ended World War I. That was not true after the riots that led to the creation of the Kerner Commission, with which I'm very familiar. Kerner was an old and very dear friend of mine.

And so it cannot be said that these are just some more town meetings and that sort of thing. We haven't had this before. I'm not suggesting that town meetings will solve the problems even if we do have them, but I am suggesting that a national conversation about race and ethnicity has not occurred in our history. I think as an historian I can speak with some certainty about that.

Now, one doesn't want to get stuck or hung on the question of town meetings either or any conversation as far as that's concerned because conversations and town meetings and

whatever else we have in the way of oral communications are for the purpose of leading toward action of various kinds. And I don't think we've had that before, either.

So there's a large area in which we can explore these matters which, indeed, has not been explored before.

Q What sort of action do you hope this leads to?

DR. FRANKLIN: We hope that the action will lead to a number of things. We hope that it will lead to very specific improvements in education. We hope that it will lead to very specific improvements in housing, elimination of housing discriminations of various kinds. We hope that it will lead to specific elimination of discrimination in employment. We hope that it will strengthen the mechanisms that are in place now that have to do with the elimination of employment discrimination. We hope that it will lead specifically to the creation of large numbers of groups of people working in their own communities to improve the whole climate and, in turn, the whole set of policies with respect to race relations and that sort of thing. It can lead to a lot of things and those are only a few. I have colleagues here who are as well informed -- perhaps better than I.

Q Should we say that you expect to meet again

within days, weeks, when you'll start your business?

DR. FRANKLIN: We've got our calendars ready to set some meeting times and I can't say at this moment whether it will be next week or the week after. I can say within a matter of weeks we will be running -- we will be up and running and fully operative.

Q Dr. Franklin, what do you say about some members of Congress thinking about apologizing to black America for slavery, and then Newt Gingrich is saying no.

DR. FRANKLIN: And Newt Gingrich is saying what?

Q Pretty much no. He really doesn't think it's a good idea.

DR. FRANKLIN: I think that, whether we do it as a nation or whether we do it as individuals or whether Mr. Gingrich will undertake this himself, we are all to acknowledge that there is some serious contradiction between the policies of this country with respect to race and the fundamental documents and sacred statements with respect to our nation -- that is, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States -- and they are not consonant with the policies that have been pursued by this country with respect to race.

Whether this will bring anyone out to issue a formal apology, I don't know. But anyone who looks at the history of race in this country and looks at the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence will know -- if they can read and write, they will know -- that there is a very serious contradiction, and we have been derelict and responsible for a whole history of miscreant activities, not unlike those which we condemned England for committing in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Q Dr. Franklin --

Q So the issue must be addressed -- the slavery issue must be addressed?

Q I was just going to follow up, but I'll let her follow up. Go ahead.

Q So are you saying the slavery issue must be addressed in this Commission? To help heal the racial divide, do you think the slavery issue of black America must be addressed?

DR. FRANKLIN: I would say the slavery issue must be addressed by every American, but let me add to that that it's more than the slavery issue. Hear me, hear me now: It's more than the slavery issue. It is the ideological underpinnings of slavery, the development of a philosophy in this country that stated categorically that blacks were inferior, that they were

physiologically and intellectually and ethically inferior. And the Emancipation Proclamation and the 13th Amendment could not end that, you see, for that had already been deeply ingrained so that when you turned off slavery there still remained these very important salient features that had been ingrained into the American ethos, that blacks were not worthy.

And you see, you can't turn that off by ending slavery, because it's something more than slavery, something deeper than slavery. You could end slavery, but you couldn't end that because that's in the minds and hearts of people.

So you've got another problem here to confront. If it were only slavery, it would be relatively simple, because slavery is over. But you continue in the 19th and in the 20th century, and in 1997, you continue to have people in this country who hold to the ideas that were the underpinnings of slavery, and they hold to them even after slavery is over.

Q Professor, I think the question, though, is given the political context, that President Clinton did formally apologize on behalf of the American people for the Tuskegee experiments, and now a Congressman has proposed that he also apologize for what was obviously a much worse moment in U.S. history: slavery. Should the President of the United States formally apologize for slavery that occurred in the United States?

DR. FRANKLIN: I don't know what my colleagues think of that. I think every person in the United States ought to recognize the fact that this was a despicable, terrible act on the part of our founding fathers and all the people who came before us. Whether it can be subsumed under an apology by anybody, one person, I don't know, I'm not prepared to say.

But I think every American needs to confront this matter. I don't want to -- I've got all this talent here. Look at them. Marvelous.

Q We'd be happy to hear from the rest of the panel on this question -- should the President apologize for slavery?

DR. FRANKLIN: I think there are so many things that the President can and should do, and I think you might hear some of these when he speaks this morning.

MR. THOMAS: I think at this stage of our life as an advisory board we're in no position yet to make a recommendation to the President, but it certainly is something that we would consider as an advisory board.

Q Dr. Franklin, when you spoke of the differences with earlier commissions like Kerner, one of the differences is,

those commissions dealt solely with black-white. How does it complicate your task or change the mission of this board when you're going to be dealing also with Hispanic, Asian-American -- a broader question than faced Kerner.

DR. FRANKLIN: Do you want me to answer that? I can answer that. I'd be glad to answer.

MR. THOMAS: I think all of us could answer that. The task is laid out before us. The President has clearly identified what he wants to accomplish and this will not be a difficult issue to expand into races and cultures of all kinds.

Now, there will be a concentration on the African American race and the black and white issue, as he has said, but he has also said that he wants to extend this into all diverse issues. And just living here in Southern California we are faced with that on a daily basis and so it will not be difficult -- particularly through the town hall meetings -- to expose the fact that we have many racial issues and many diverse cultures here that we have to deal with.

MS. OH: Let me begin by saying that, quite frankly, as an Asian American, I feel that I am somewhat of an intruder on a dialogue that has been a black/white sort of paradigm for all of the time that we have ever talked about race and racism in this country -- which isn't very much time, frankly.

None the less, I feel that the invitation to engage in what is really a historic endeavor and the reception that Professor Franklin and others on this advisory board have given me in response to that very statement, that I feel I am an intruder. There are elements in our communities that would not like to hear from Asian America, that would not like to hear from Hispanic or Latino community, however you want to identify it -- and you will learn, as we engage in this dialogue, why I even make that very small remark. And it's because there's a sentiment that by allowing people like myself into this dialogue there will be some sort of a dilution.

The reality is that there will be an enrichment. The reality is that we will all learn an incredible amount of information that will take away the mythology. The reality is that this is going to be a difficult and painful dialogue. For those who think that this is a feel-good experience, you need to understand that in the last 24 hours we all met each other for the very first time and we're all -- I think I speak with some confidence here -- struck by the honesty and the willingness of every single one of us who sits at this table at this moment to allow the vulnerability, to allow the pain, and then to embrace the reality that we are all part of one nation.

That is the goal here because the human resources that we have in this nation are incredible, and we hope to bring that to light.

MS. COOK: I think it's also to raise the question, can we be one America in the 21st century? And so, I think that's why we're here. We bring our differences, and we will agree in some areas, and we certainly will disagree because we all bring our cultural and sociological perspectives to the table.

But I was born during the civil rights era, and so I'm a civil rights baby, which means that Martin Luther King's children and Malcolm X's children are all pretty much in my age group. We -- actually some of us are friends. And there has not been a dialogue since the marches of '63 when we were five and six years old.

And so I'm looking forward to race being put on the table. And I think it's an important issue, and we cannot act as though it's not an issue in America. So I'm looking forward to it. And I look forward to it with hope that we will be honest and vulnerable and that we can begin to heal some of the painful areas that each of us has experienced.

MS. CHAVEZ-THOMPSON: We should have a commission on vertically challenged people. (Laughter.) Trying to get up here on this podium.

My name is Linda Chavez-Thompson. As a Latina labor activist, I went through many types of discrimination in the state of Texas, but the reason that I'm on this advisory board is because it's not a commission to make a report to the American people, it is an advisory board to the President so that the President makes the report to the American people. He wants and has talked with us very sincerely, has brought in some of his own personal reasons as to why he wants to see America address the issue of race.

When I was six years old, my name was changed in the first grade. My birth name is Lydia. But my 1st grade teacher changed it to Linda because it was easier for her. Why, I don't know. So all my life I have been known as Linda.

I serve on this advisory board because, right, I need a few more meetings in my life. (Laughter.) But I asked what was it going to do, what were we going to be allowed to do. And we've agreed that we may disagree. The President has agreed that he may disagree with us. And we may disagree with him and we will talk about it.

But the issue of race must be discussed, because as he has often said, it is something that America oftentimes doesn't want to talk about -- you put it off, you don't want to

discuss it because maybe you don't have the answer, maybe you're embarrassed by the fact that you don't have the answer. But if we don't talk about it how do we address such major issues that have people of color earning less money than others, living in housing conditions that go back to the '30s and '40, living and working at a lesser status than people who are not of color.

So I wanted to serve on this board because I want to help make a difference. I've listened to the rhetoric. I've listened to the questions of whether this is going to make a difference. The alternative is, what if we don't talk about it? What if we don't try to make something happen? Yes, we have a year -- but we have a lifetime that if we don't spend a year talking about it, that lifetime will continue to have racial problems and I want to try to bring a solution.

GOVERNOR KEAN: First of all, I want to associate myself with the remarks of my colleagues and my chairman. I'm going to say basically that many people have written and said that this country could not go into the next century and achieve anything like our promise unless this issue was addressed, and addressed openly.

This is the first President who's been willing to do this. It's not an easy issue, it's an issue that most people in political life have tried to avoid. This is an issue that this President is willing to address. And, therefore, I think it's incumbent upon all citizens to help him and to help us in this year to address it. And that means Republicans as well as Democrats, because this cannot be a partisan -- it means the Congress, it means the governors, it means leaders at all levels and people at all levels. And we are going to be reaching out to the leadership of the Congress and to the governors for help.

And my hope is that everybody will respond willingly and that we will take all those ideas and try to incorporate them to the best of our ability in our advice to the President.

GOVERNOR WINTER: My name is William Winter. I served as Governor of Mississippi back in the 1980s. I would like to address very briefly, from my own point of view, the skepticism and the cynicism that have been reflected in some comments about the creation of this board.

Like President Clinton, I grew up in the segregated South. I can remember the skepticism and the cynicism that

greeted some of us back in the '50s and '60s when we suggested that there had to be an elimination of segregation, because we saw discrimination limiting the capacity of people, of all the people of my region. Now we've come a long way since then, and

we've come a long way based both on activist government programs, but we have come a further way on the basis of a creation of a body of people of good will.

This is what is going to be at the key, in my opinion, for the solution to whatever remains of the racial crisis in this country. We have come a long way. We still have a long way to go. I think that we have the greatest opportunity that any generation has ever had to create this sensitivity with respect to our fellow Americans.

The very diversity of our population is what is going to give strength to the American system and the future. And that's what my role, as I view it, on this board is, along with that of my colleagues -- is to try to create a state of mind that says that racism -- racism in any form, wherever it comes from -- is unacceptable in a civilized society.

I think that ought to be the goal for all of us. And I'm hopeful we can take some mighty steps as members of this board to move us in that direction. And I want to salute President Clinton for taking this magnificent step that he has taken today, and saying really for the first time to the American people what the issues are.

MR. LOCKHART: Thank you very much.

END 9:45 P.M. (L)

Message Sent

To:

Julie E. Mason
April Mellody
Darby E. Stott
Julia R. Green
Lorraine L. Wytkind
Laura D. Schwartz
Lori E. Abrams
Lori Anderson
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Adam W. Goldberg
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Richard Hayes
Russell W. Horwitz
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david t. johnson
Michele Jolin
James M. Teague
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Jim Kohlenberger @ OVP@EOP
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Andrew J. Mayock
Anne E. McGuire
Cheryl D. Mills
Megan C. Moloney
Kevin Moran
Jonathan Murchinson
Elizabeth R. Newman
Peter R. Orszag
Carole A. Parmelee

Sally P. Paxton
Jonathan Prince
Peter O'Keefe
Jonathan P. Robell
Charles F. Ruff
Virginia N. Rustique
Evan Ryan
G. Timothy Saunders
Stuart Schear
Douglas S. Sheorn
David Shipley
Robert M. Shireman
Jake Siewert
Joshua Silverman
Brian D. Smith
Craig T. Smith
Richard Socarides
Douglas B. Sosnik
Todd Stern
Michael J. Sullivan
Jonathan H. Schnur/OVP @ OVP
Sylvia M. Mathews
Lisa Tamagni
Virginia M. Terzano @ ovp@eop
terri tingen
Barry J. Toiv
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Serena C. Torrey
June G. Turner
Dag Vega
Lorraine A. Voles @ ovp@eop
Michael Waldman
Angelina Walker @ ovp@eop
Teresa Wildman
SUNTUM_M @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
COGDELL_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
backup @ wilson.ai.mit.edu@INET@LNGTWY
wh-outbox-distr @ clinton.ai.mit.edu@INET@LNGTWY
BARBUSCHAK_K @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOME_M @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOW_T @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BLINKEN_A @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
CAPLAN_P @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
CUTLER_L @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GILLESPIE_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GRAY_W @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GRIBBEN_J @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
HAAS_L @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
HKlasky @ PANET.US-STATE.GOV@CD@LNGTWY
JOHNSON_WC @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
LIZIK_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
MOFFETT_J @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
RILEY_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY

SAMBURG_T @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
SMITH_BD @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
STUMPF_D @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
WEINER_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
WOZNIAK_N @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
usia01 @ access.digex.com@INET@LNGTWY
1=US@2=WESTERN UNION@3=@5=ATT.COM@*ELN\62955104@MRX@LNGTWY
62955104 @ eln.attmail.com@INET@LNGTWY
73030.21 @ compuserve.com@INET@LNGTWY
INFOMGT @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
karen @ TALKRADIONEWS.COM@CD@LNGTWY
newsdesk @ usnewswire.com@INET@LNGTWY
usnwire @ access.digex.com@INET@LNGTWY

Message Sent

To:

Jamie S. Williams/WHO/EOP
Patrick E. Briggs/WHO/EOP
Kyle M. Baker/WHO/EOP
Maureen A. Hudson/WHO/EOP
Diane Ikemiyashiro/WHO/EOP
Sarah S. Knight/WHO/EOP
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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Matthew B. Ezzell
06/16/97 05:38:57 PM
Record Type: Record

To: All WHO Users, All OPD Users
cc:
Subject:

----- Forwarded by Matthew B. Ezzell/WHO/EOP on 06/16/97
05:29 PM -----

Eli G. Attie
06/16/97 05:11:11 PM
Record Type: Record

To: Matthew B. Ezzell/WHO/EOP @ EOP
cc:
Subject:

----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
07/01/97 03:19:20 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Personnel Announcement: Terry Edmonds

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
07/01/97 03:19 PM -----

Elizabeth R. Newman
07/01/97 03:11:17 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Personnel Announcement: Terry Edmonds

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate
Release
1, 1997

July

Statement by the Press Secretary

President Clinton today promoted J. Terry Edmonds to the position of Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Speechwriting, a newly created position. For the past two years he has served as Special Assistant to the President and Presidential Speechwriter. His new role will include additional supervisory and editing responsibilities. Mr. Edmonds took a leave of absence in 1996, and served as Senior Advisor for Speechwriting on the Clinton-Gore campaign. He is recognized as the first African American presidential speechwriter.

Prior to joining the White House in March 1995, Mr. Edmonds was Deputy Director of Speechwriting for HHS Secretary Donna Shalala. He also has more than 24 years experience as a public affairs and feature writer in both the public and private sectors. He served as Press Secretary for then-Maryland Congressman Kweisi Mfume, and also served as Director of Communications for the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

-30-30-30-

Message Sent

To:

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Ann M. Cattalini/WHO/EOP
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Cynthia M. Jasso-Rotunno/WHO/EOP
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Christa Robinson/OPD/EOP
Thomas D. Janenda/WHO/EOP
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Dina Wood/WHO/EOP
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Stacey L. Rubin/WHO/EOP
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COGDELL_C @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
Lawrence J. Haas/OMB/EOP
INFOMGT @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
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LIZIK_C @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
MCHUGH_L @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
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GRAY_W @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
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WEINER_R @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
SCHAEFER_V @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
GRIBBEN_J @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
RILEY_R @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
ROBINSON_C @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
RONNEL_S @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
tnewell @ ostp.eop.gov @ INET @ LNGTWY
Roger V. Salazar/OVP @ OVP
Joseph P. Lockhart/WHO/EOP
Elizabeth R. Newman/WHO/EOP
Carolyn Curiel/WHO/EOP
Jordan Tamagni/WHO/EOP
HEMMIG_M @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
Thurgood Marshall Jr./OVP @ OVP
Elisabeth S. Steele/OVP @ OVP
Serena C. Torrey/WHO/EOP
Kevin S. Moran/WHO/EOP
Ashley L. Raines/OA/EOP
Peter A. Weissman/WHO/EOP
Mary A. Dixon/OVP @ OVP
Douglas J. Band/WHO/EOP
Julia M. Payne/OVP @ OVP
Edwin R. Thomas III/WHO/EOP
Sherman A. Williams/WHO/EOP
William W. McCathran/WHO/EOP
Jonathan P. Robell/WHO/EOP

Message Sent

To:

Jamie S. Williams/WHO/EOP
Patrick E. Briggs/WHO/EOP
Kyle M. Baker/WHO/EOP
Maureen A. Hudson/WHO/EOP
Diane Ikemiyashiro/WHO/EOP
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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
07/17/97 04:49:48 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Remarks by the President at NAACP

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
07/17/97 04:50 PM -----

SUNTUM_M @ A1
07/17/97 04:38:00 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Remarks by the President at NAACP

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

For Immediate Release
1997

July 17,

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NAACP NATIONAL CONVENTION

David Lawrence Convention Center
Pittsburgh, Pe

nnsylvania

11:45 A.M. EDT

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

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

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

I'm glad to be joined here by the Mayor of Pittsburgh, my good friend, Tom Murphy. And I'm glad to see all the board members. I have many friends on this board. Bishop Graves is my bishop. And if they let me go home, I'll be in his jurisdiction again. (Applause.) And I know that --

I've
been looking for them out of my eye, but I know there must be a delegation
from Arkansas here -- Dale Charles and the others. Where are you? Where
are
my people from home there? Thank you very much. (Applause.)

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

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

I am joined today by a distinguished array of people from
the
administration -- the Secretary of Education, Dick

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

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

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

I am honored to be here to add my voice to yours in
discussing what we have to do to prepare our people for this new
century. Since 1993 I have worked hard to build one America on a

simple formula: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, a community of all Americans prepared to continue to lead the world toward peace and freedom and prosperity. Much has been done, but much remains to be done.

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

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

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

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

We know that in this new world we're moving into so quickly, new technologies and the globalization of information and communications, and the economy, will require of all us new skills. We know already from what has been happening in the last 20 years that those that have the skills to succeed will do so in this new economy. They will thrive. And those who lack the skills will not.

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

Second, we know that we can't have high standards

and high expectations unless all our students have the tools they

must have to meet the standards and master the basics. If we do this, all our children, no matter where they live, can achieve.

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

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

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

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

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

been working to improve our schools.

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

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

But you look at those 4th grade test scores. Don't

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

First, we have to make sure these kids do have the help they need to meet the standards. And that means, in the beginning, that every parent and every community leader must join

the teachers. That's why we're mobilizing a million volunteer tutors to make sure that by the beginning of the next century, every 8-year-old, wherever he or she lives and whatever their native language may be, will be able to read independently by the 3rd grade. If you can't read, you can't learn the rest of what you need to know. (Applause.)

The second thing we have to do is make sure that every school has good, well-qualified, well-trained teachers. (Applause.) Our nation faces a very significant teacher recruitment challenge. Over the next decade, we will need to hire -- listen to this -- over 2 million teachers because of increasing teacher retirements and an enrollment boom that will

bring more students than ever into our classrooms -- a total of 54 million students by the year 2006. Just over the next five years, we must hire 350,000 teachers in high-poverty urban and rural schools.

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

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

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

Our proposal also includes funds to strengthen teacher preparation programs so that those who go into teacher are better prepared to teach their students. We know students in distressed areas, who need the best teachers, often have teachers who have had the least preparation. For example, right now, 71 percent of students taking physical science courses like chemistry and physics, and 33 percent of English students in high-poverty schools take classes with teachers who do not even have a college minor in their field.

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

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

(Applause.)

Third, let me say I believe that charter schools can be an important tool for improving education, especially for

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

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

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

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

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

schools and libraries so that all of our children can do it.

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

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

We fought hard to keep weapons and drugs out of our classrooms. We supported parents and communities who wanted to have things like school uniform programs, tougher truancy programs, who wanted to have curfew programs -- things that they thought would improve the safety of our students lives. But the

bottom line is this: We can have equal opportunity and excellence in education, we can have it only if we are determined to have both. We will not have one without the other. (Applause.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Now, if we can't do something to revitalize the

economy of our poorer areas when we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 23 years and business is out there looking for new opportunities to invest, when can we do it? We have to do it now.

What should we be doing? We've been working on this since 1993, to try to create the environment in which people would wish to invest and give people a chance -- empowerment zones, enterprise communities, community banks that loan money to people who live in the neighborhood to start small businesses,

cleaning up the environment of our cities so people will feel free to invest and they won't worry about somebody coming along and suing them because we've already cleaned up the problems, giving tax relief to our lowest-income working people through the Earned Income Tax Credit, strengthening the Community Reinvestment Act so that more banks would invest money in the inner cities, opening up housing opportunities.

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

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

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

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

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

which people can invest and work.

Creative mayors have ideas about how to do this. But if we can't do it now with the national unemployment rate at five percent, when can we do it? It is America's best opportunity for continued growth. If we had this many consumers in a nation 50 miles out in the Gulf of Mexico, we would be

pouring money into it, and investment money. I say to you, our cities and our rural counties, where there is unemployment and underemployment, is our next big avenue of growth. And we have to get together and make sure it gets done. (Applause.)

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

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

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

In other words, it's a good deal that there are so

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

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

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

We have to enforce the civil rights laws. I hope you will help me to secure the confirmation of my nominee to be the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. (Applause.) For 23 years, this son of Chinese immigrants has worked for the cause of equal opportunity; for many years as a

lawyer of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. I thank you for your support of him, but I ask you now to stay with him and let's make sure he will be confirmed. (Applause.)

And then I ask you to continue to work with Dr. Franklin and Judy Winston and our advisory panel. We have to do

this together. For this whole century, the NAACP has been a moral beacon, reminding us that in the end we have to become an integrated society, or one America. (Applause.) That's going to be more important than ever before.

Today, the only state in America without a majority race is Hawaii, but within five years there will be no majority race in California, our biggest state, with 13 percent of our population. In Detroit -- Wayne County, Michigan, which we used to think of as the great melting pot of white ethnics and black folks from the South that couldn't make a living on the farm anymore that went to find a job in the car plants -- there are now more than 145 different racial and ethnic groups in that county -- in Detroit. We are changing very rapidly. And we have not given much thought -- not only to how we're going to heal our old wounds and meet our old challenges, but how we're going to become one America in the 21st century. We need your help.

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

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

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

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

END

12:25 P.M. EDT

Message Sent

To:

Julie E. Mason
April Mellody
Darby E. Stott
Julia R. Green
Lorraine L. Wytkind
Laura D. Schwartz
Lori E. Abrams
Lori Anderson
Brenda M. Anders
Eli G. Attie
Kris M Balderston
Beverly J. Barnes
David S. Beaubaire
Marsha E. Berry
Lanny A. Breuer
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Laura Capps
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Steven A. Cohen
Michelle Crisci
Carolyn Curiel
Suzanne Dale
Lanny J. Davis
Marilyn DiGiacobbe

James A. Dorskind
Jennifer D. Dudley
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Jason S. Goldberg
Ricardo M. Gonzales
Donald Goldberg
Richard Hayes
Russell W. Horwitz
Thomas D. Janenda
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david t. johnson
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James M. Teague
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David E. Kalbaugh
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Jonathan P. Robell
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wh-outbox-distr @ clinton.ai.mit.edu@INET@LNGTWY
BARBUSCHAK_K @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOME_M @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOW_T @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BLINKEN_A @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
CAPLAN_P @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
CUTLER_L @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GILLESPIE_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GRAY_W @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
GRIBBEN_J @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
HAAS_L @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
JOHNSON_WC @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
LIZIK_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
MOFFETT_J @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
RILEY_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
SMITH_BD @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
STUMPF_D @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
WEINER_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
WOZNIAC_N @ A1@CD@LNGTWY

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Message Sent

To:

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Kyle M. Baker/WHO/EOP
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Woyneab M. Wondwossen/WHO/EOP

----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
07/18/97 09:36:29 AM
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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: 1997-7-17 remarks to Nat. Assn of Black Journalists

----- Forwarded by Catherine T. Kitchen/WHO/EOP on
07/18/97 09:36 AM -----

SUNTUM_M @ A1
07/17/97 08:26:00 PM

Record Type: Record

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

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Subject: 1997-7-17 remarks to Nat. Assn of Black Journalists

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Chicago, Illinois)

For Immediate Release
1997

July 17,

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS

Hyatt Regency Hotel
Chicago, Illinois

7:30 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I must say, when Arthur was speaking, I thought to myself that he sounded like a president. (Laughter.) And I said to myself, if I had a voice like that, I could run for a third term, even though -- (laughter).

I enjoyed meeting with your board members and JoAnne Lyons Wooten, your Executive Director backstage. I met Vanessa Williams, who said, you know, I'm the president-elect; have you got any advice for me on being president? True story. I said, I do. Always act like you know what you're doing. (Laughter.)

I want to say to you, I'm delighted to be joined here tonight by a distinguished group of people from our White House and from the administration, including the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman; and the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; and a number of others from the White House. Where is my White House crew? Would you all stand up -- everybody here from the administration, the Department of Education, Department of Labor. (Applause.)

I don't know whether he is here or not, but I understand Congressman Bobby Rush was here earlier today, and I know there are some other local officials from Chicago who are here. And this is a great place to come. Chicago is such a wonderful city that there was an article this morning in the New York Times bragging on Chicago. (Laughter.) And I saw the Mayor today. He said, I know we have finally arrived. If they're bragging on us in New York, we have made it.

And I congratulate all the people here on the

remarkable improvements they've made in this magnificent city in the last few years. I'd also like to say a special word of thanks to Reverend Jesse Jackson. I see him here in the audience and I know he's here. Thank you. (Applause.)

I always kind of hate to speak when Jesse is in the audience. (Laughter.) You know, I mean, every paragraph gets a grade. (Laughter.) Most of them aren't very good. I can just hear it now -- all the wheels turning.

I want to thank Reverend Jackson for agreeing to co-chair, along with the Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater, an American delegation to an economic conference in Zimbabwe, where he'll be going next week. And I know you all wish him well on that. We are doing our best to have a major initiative reaching out to Africa, recognizing that more and more countries in Africa are becoming functioning, successful democracies; that half a dozen countries in Africa have had growth rates of 7 percent or more last year and will equal that again this year; and that this is an enormous opportunity for us not only to promote better lives for the millions and millions of people who live on that continent, but also better opportunities for Americans and better partnerships with Africa in the years ahead.

Well, you heard your President say that I promised to come here in 1992 if I got elected. And I'm trying to keep every promise I made. And I'm sure glad I got a second term so I didn't get embarrassed on this one. (Laughter.)

In the years since I assumed office, I have worked very hard to create an America of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, with a community of all Americans, a country committed to continuing to lead the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity. And that begins with giving every person in this country the chance to live up to his or her

God-given abilities.

Many of you chose to become journalists because you thought it was the best way to use your God-given talent -- your gift with words, your knack for asking tough questions, which some of us find maddening -- (laughter) -- and for getting the answers, your instincts with a camera or a microphone, your ability to connect with people and get them to understand what it is you're trying to get across. And you did not just to make a living, but to make a difference. I thank you for that. And I think that all of us want that opportunity for everyone in this country.

Last month in San Diego, I called upon Americans to begin a dialogue, a discussion over the next year and perhaps beyond, to deal with what I think is the greatest challenge we'll face in the 21st century, which is whether we really can become one America as we become more diverse; whether as we move into a truly global society, we can be the world's first truly great multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious democracy. I asked the American people to undertake a serious discussion of the lingering problems and the limitless possibilities that attend our diversity.

I came here tonight to talk a little more about this initiative, to ask each of you to examine what role you can play in it and the vital contributions as journalists and as African Americans you might make in leading your news rooms, your communities, and our nation in the right kind of dialogue.

Five years ago, I talked about how we could prepare our people to go into the 21st century, and we've made a lot of strides since then. Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and once again the strongest in the world. Our social problems are finally bending to our efforts. But at this time of great prosperity, we know we still have a lot of great challenges in order to live up to our ideals, in order to live up to what we say America should mean.

And it seems to me that at this time when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven by some emergency or some imminent cataclysm in our society, we really have not only an opportunity, but an obligation to address and to better resolve the vexing, perplexing, often painful issues surrounding our racial history and our future.

We really will, whether we're prepared for it or not, become a multiracial democracy in the next century. Today, of our 50 states, only the state of Hawaii has no majority race. But within three to five years, our largest state, California, where 13 percent of us live, will have no majority race. Five of our school districts already draw students from over 100

different racial and ethnic groups, including the school district in the city of Chicago. But within a matter of a couple of years, over 12 school districts will have students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups.

When I was a boy, I knew that a lot of people went from my native state in Arkansas to Detroit to make a living because they couldn't make a living on the farm anymore. Many of them were African Americans, and they joined the white ethnics, many of whom were from Central and Eastern Europe and from Ireland in the Detroit area, working in the car plants, getting the good middle class jobs, being able to educate their children, looking forward to a retirement. Some of them actually are coming back home now and buying land. And Nicholas Lehman (phonetic) traced that movement in a great book he wrote not so long ago.

But now Detroit is not just a place of white ethnics and African Americans. In Wayne County, there are over 145 different racial and ethnic groups represented today. So the paradigm is shifting. And so, as part of our engagement in this national dialogue, we have to both deal with our old, unfinished business, and then imagine what we are going to be like in 30 years and whether we can actually become one America when we're more different. Is there a way not only to respect our diversity, but even to celebrate it and still be one America? Is

there a way to use this to help us economically and to spread opportunity here?

Why are there so many people in the Congress in both parties excited about this Africa initiative? Because we have so many African Americans -- even people who were never concerned about it before understand this is a great economic opportunity for America. Why do we have a unique opportunity to build a partnership with Brazil and Argentina and Chile and all the countries in Latin America? Because we have people from all those countries here in our country. Why do we have the opportunity to avoid having Asia grow, but grow in a more closed and isolated way, running the risk of great new problems 30, 40, 50 years from now? Because we have so many Asian Americans who are making a home here in America with ties back home to their native lands and cultures. We are blessed if we can make this work.

We also may have a chance to make peace in other parts of the world if we can make peace within our borders with ourselves. But let's not kid ourselves -- the differences between people are so deep and so ingrained, it's so easy to scratch the surface and have something bad go wrong, and we see that in countries less privileged than ourselves when things go terribly wrong -- whether it's between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi; or the Catholics and the Protestants in

the home of my ancestors, Ireland; or the Croats, the Serbs, and the Muslims who are, interestingly enough, biologically indistinguishable, in Bosnia; or the continuing travails of the Jews and the Arabs in the Middle East.

If you look through all of human history, societies have very often been defined by their ability to pit themselves as coherent units against those who were different from themselves. Long ago in prehistory, it probably made a lot of sense for people that were in one tribe to look at people in another tribe as enemies, because there was a limited amount of food to eat or opportunities for shelter, because people did not know how to communicate with each other so they had to say, people that look like me are my friends, people that don't look like me are my enemies.

But why, on the verge of the 21st century, are we still seeing people behave like that all over the world? And why here even in America do we find ourselves, all of us at some time, gripped by stereotypes about people who don't look like we do?

So we shouldn't kid ourselves. This is not going to be an easy task. But there is hardly anything more important because we know we have a great economy; we know we have a strong military; we know we have a unique position in the world today with the fall of communism virtually everywhere and the rise of market economies and the success that we've offered. But we know

we also have these lingering inequalities and problems in America. And if we can overcome them and learn to really live together and celebrate, not just tolerate but celebrate our differences and still say, in spite of all those differences, the most important thing about me is that I am an American, that there is no stopping what we can do and what our children can become.

This week in Washington, John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of the advisory board I appointed on racial reconciliation. The executive director of that board, Judy Winston, who has been our Acting Under Secretary of Education, is also here with me tonight. I am very proud that she has agreed to do that and very excited about what has happened. The first meeting was full of lively debate and honest disagreement. I like that. We should discover quickly that people who are honestly committed to advancing this dialogue will have honest differences and they ought to be aired.

Earlier today, as your President said, at the NAACP Convention in Pittsburgh, I reiterated my long-held belief that we will never get to our one America in the 21st century unless we have both equality and excellence in educational opportunity. We have to give every American access to the world's best

schools, best teachers, best education. And that means we have to have high standards, high expectations and high levels of accountability from all of us who were involved in it.

But I want to say to you, we know our children can learn. For years and years, ever since 1984, when the Nation at Risk -- 1983 -- when the Nation At Risk report was issued, people said, well, you can't expect American education to compete favorably with education in other countries because we have a more diverse student body and because we have so many more poor children and so many immigrants and because, because, because.

This year, on the International Math and Science Tests given to 4th and 8th graders, for the first time since we began a national effort to improve our schools over a decade ago, our 4th graders -- not all of them, but a representative sample, representative of race, region, income -- scored way above the national average in math and science -- disproving the notion that we cannot achieve international excellence in education even for our poorest children. It is simply not true.

This year, again, our 8th graders scored below the international average, emphasizing the dimensions of the challenge, because when the kids who carry all these other burdens to school every day -- the burden of poverty, the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods, the burden of unmet medical needs, often the burden of problems at home -- when they hit adolescence and when they are pressured and tempted to get involved in other things, it gets to be a lot tougher. So we haven't done everything we need to do. But the evidence is here

now; it is no longer subject to debate that we can't compete. And that's good, because we need to. And because our children, however poor they are, are entitled to just as much educational opportunity as anybody else.

Now, I believe that we made a big mistake in the United States not adopting national standards long before this. And I believe our poorest children and our minority children would be doing even better in school had we adopted national standards a long time ago and held their schools to some measure of accountability. It is not their fault, it is the rest of our faults that we are not doing it. (Applause.)

So when I say by 1999 we ought to test all our 4th graders and all our 8th graders -- the 4th graders in reading, the 8th graders in math -- it's not because I want the individual kids to get a grade, it's because everybody ought to make that grade. If you have a standard, everyone ought to clear the bar. And if they're not, there is something wrong with the educational system that ought to be fixed. And you can't know it unless you understand what the standard is and hold people to some accountability. But don't let anybody tell you that these kids

can't do it. That is just flat wrong. They can do it.
(Applause.)

Today I did announce one new initiative that I think is very important, and that is a \$350 million multiyear scholarship program modeled on the National Medical Service Corps. You know, a lot of us come from places that have a lot of poor rural areas that are medically under-served. We got doctors into those areas, into the Mississippi Delta, because we said, hey, if you'll go to medical, we'll help you go to medical school, but you've got to go out to a poor under-served area and be a doctor to people who need you. Then later you can go make all the money you want somewhere else. But if we help you go to medical school, will you go out here and help people where they don't have doctors? And the National Health Service Corps has done a world of good.

So what I propose today, and what we're going to send up to Capitol Hill with the Reauthorization of Higher Education Act is a series of scholarships that will go to people who say, I will teach in a poor area for three years if you will help me get an education. (Applause.)

This is the first specific policy to come out in connection with our year-long racial reconciliation initiative. There will be more policies. But it's not just a matter of public policy. There will also be local actions, private actions which will have to be taken. And we also need the dialogue, the discussion. It is about the mind and the heart. And, therefore, I say again, your voices and your observations are going to be very valuable.

In the communities where we have a constructive, ongoing dialogue, where people not only talk together but work together across racial lines, there are already stunning stories that stir the heart and give us hope for the future. There is nothing people can't do. Most people are basically good. Their leaders have to give them a framework in which the best can come out and the worst can be repressed. And that's what we have to do here. We've got to learn how to deal with a fundamentally new and different situation as well as deal with a lot of old, unresolved problems in our past that dog us in the present.

As journalists, you have experienced firsthand both the progress and the continuing challenge of race in our country. Some of you in this audience are pioneers in your field, perhaps the first people of color ever to claim a desk, a phone, a typewriter in the news rooms of our big-city papers and stations. Some of you, when you were beginning your careers, knew that it was hard enough to find just one editor who would consider your work, let alone the hundreds of newspaper and broadcasting executives who this week have descended on this job fair that you

sponsored to recruit the young people who are here today.

They've come here not just because they recognize the value of a diverse and racially representative staff, but also because they know from experience that they'll find some of the best talent in American journalism here at this convention. (Applause.)

But our news rooms are like all of our other working environments -- they've come a long way, they've still got a ways to go. (Applause.) Just as in other work places in America, minority representation on many staffs and mast heads is not what it ought to be. Wide gaps continue to exist in the way whites and minorities perceive their workplaces and in the way they perceive each other. We have to bridge this gap everywhere in America.

But it is especially important in the press because you are the voice and, in some ways, the mirror of America through which we see ourselves and one another. I encourage you to continue to reach out to your colleagues; to listen to each other; to understand where we're all coming from; to lead your organizations in the writing, the editing, the broadcasting fare and the thought-provoking stories about the world we live in and the one we can live in. We have a lot to do to build that one America for the 21st century, but I believe we're up to the challenge, and I know that you are up to the challenge.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. FENNELL: Thank you very much, Mr. President. As is customary in these forums here at our national convention, at this time, we bring forth our questioners. We are journalists, after all, and you knew this was coming. (Laughter.)

We have selected four journalists who will ask the questions of the day. Eric Thomas, reporter and anchor at KGO-TV in San Francisco; Chinta Strausberg, reporter of the Chicago Defender; Cheryl Smith, a reporter at KKDA-Radio, Grand Prairie, Texas --

THE PRESIDENT: I know where that is.

MR. FENNELL: Yes. And Brent Jones, our student representative, a junior at the University of Florida in Gainesville. (Applause.)

To the questioners.

Q Chinta Strausberg, the Chicago Defender newspaper. Mr. President, do you support an \$8 billion superhighway, massive superhighway at a time when Congress has

reduced funding for mass transit in Chicago as well? And if that superhighway is built, sir, will black contractors be a major part of it as a down payment on reparations?

THE PRESIDENT: What superhighway? Say it again? Did I -- what's this project?

Q It's a proposed congressional plan -- \$8 billion massive superhighway that would connect the United States with Canada and Mexico, and it is being discussed in Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know that I'm familiar enough with the project. I do believe we need to continue to improve our infrastructure. Secretary Slater and I have argued that we should not under-fund mass transit and urban transportation. And indeed, in the transportation bill I sent to Congress, we asked for several hundred million dollars more directly targeted to help people on welfare who are required to go to work, get to where the jobs are if their jobs aren't within walking distance. Only about 10 percent of the people on public assistance own their own cars. And we believe we need more investment in mass transit in the cities. So -- and I don't think it should be an either-or situation.

And in terms of contracting, I support affirmative action programs generally in employment, in education, and in economic development. And I've done everything I could to fix what were the generally recognized shortcomings of some of the programs that graduate out the firms that may not need it any more, but to continue it where I think it is appropriate. So I continue to support that.

And I think it is a mistake for us not to have initiatives to help create minority-owned businesses. I think we should -- as a matter of fact, let me just back up and say, when I was in San Francisco at the Mayors Conference not very long

ago, I said to them that I thought we ought to develop a private-sector, job-related model for high unemployment areas in our

cities and -- because there was no way the government social services could ever create enough economic opportunity for people. And I thought, if we couldn't do it when the national unemployment rate was the lowest in 23 years, when could we do it?

So I think we need to do more to help people organize and start their own businesses, to help build economic clusters of activity, to help give people models as well as opportunities to work, to see that we can do this. I don't think we're doing nearly enough in this area, and I think we have a new

opportunity to do it because the unemployment rate is low in the nation.

As I've heard Reverend Jackson say for 20 years, the biggest undeveloped market in America are the poor unemployed and under-employed people in our inner cities and our rural areas. Now is the time we should be creating more businesses there, not having fewer businesses. That's what I believe. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, your scholarship proposal notwithstanding, there is still an assault on affirmative action in this country. In my home state of California in the wake of Proposition 209 and last year's vote by the University of California Board of Regents, minority applications and enrollment in the UC system this year are down. There will be not one new black student enrolled at the prestigious Bolt Hall School of Law at the University of California this fall. What specific programs, scholarship program notwithstanding, do you propose to stem this tide and make sure that there is diversity in higher education in this country? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, I think we need to make sure that we continue to use federal law to the maximum extent we can to promote an integrated educational environment -- (applause) -- so that we have to review, whether in the Education Department, in the Justice Department, whether there are any further actions we can take legally to promote an integrated educational environment in higher education in the states where these actions have been taken.

Secondly, I think we need to look at whether there is some way by indirection to achieve the same result. I know that the legislature in Texas, in an attempt to overcome the impact of the Hopwood decision in Texas, just passed what they call the "Ten Percent Solution," which would be to guarantee admissions to any Texas public institution of higher education to the top 10 percent of the graduating class of any high school in Texas. And because of the way the African Americans and Hispanics living patterns are in Texas, that may solve the problem. Whether that would work in California, I don't know. I haven't studied the way the school districts are organized enough. But I think we have to come up with some new and fairly innovative ways to do that.

Thirdly, I think, on the professional schools, my own view -- I'm a little stumped here. We have to really -- we're going to have to reexamine what we can do. I don't know why the people who promoted this in California think it's a good thing to have a segregated set of professional schools. It would seem to me that, since these professionals are going to be

operating in the most ethnically-diverse state in the country, they would want them to be educated in an environment like they're going to operate. I don't understand that. (Applause.)

But there may be some ways to get around it, and we're looking at it and working on it. But I think it's going to be easier to stop it from happening at the undergraduate level than at the professional school level. And we're going to have to really think about whether there is some way around it, whether it would be some sort of economic designation or something else. But we're working on that.

And finally, let me say, I think we need to continue to provide more resources, because one of the real problems we have is, even in the last five years, when we've had economic recovery, the college enrollment rates of minorities in America have not gone up in an appropriate way. And in this budget that I'm trying to get passed through Congress, we've got the biggest increase in education funding in 32 years, the biggest increase in Pell Grant scholarships in 20 years, another huge increase in work-study funds, and the tax proposal, as we structured them, would, in effect, guarantee two years of college to virtually everyone in America and help people with two more years of college.

We've got a huge dropout problem in higher education among minorities that I think is having an impact on then what happens in the graduate schools and in the professional schools. I don't think there is a simple answer. And I think, frankly, the way 209 is worded, it's a bigger problem even than the Hopwood case in Texas. But I can tell you we're working on it: first, is there anything the Justice Department or the Civil Rights Office of the Education Department can do? We're examining that. Second, is there a specific solution like the Texas "Ten Percent Solution" that would overcome it at least in a specific state. Third, come up with some more funds and some more specific scholarship programs to try to overcome it.

It's a great concern to me, and I think it is moving the country in exactly the wrong direction. And I might say, if you look at the performance of affirmative action students, it doesn't justify the action that was taken. That's another point that ought to be made.

So the one thing that I believe is, I believe that the rather shocking consequences in the professional schools in both Texas and California will have a deterrent impact on other

actions like that in other states. And I believe you will see more efforts now to avoid this. I think a lot of people who even voted for 209 have been pretty shocked at what happened and I don't believe the people of California wanted that to occur. And I think the rhetoric sounded better than the reality to a lot of voters.

So I can tell you that, while I'm very concerned about it, I think if we all work on it, we can reverse it in a matter of a couple of years. And we just have to hope we don't lose too many people who would otherwise have had good opportunities because of it. But it is an urgent matter of concern to me. (Applause.)

Q Good afternoon, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon.

Q My question also has to do with education for more at a high school and middle school level. The dropout rate, crime, and drugs are more prevalent in inner city schools than in suburban schools, consequently leading to a lower quality education in many inner city schools. What will your administration do through government-aided programs or initiatives to combat these problems and ensure everyone in America is receiving a comparable education? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I want to answer your question, but first I'd like to start with a compliment to the African American community. Last year, the high school graduation rate nationally among African Americans was well above 80 percent and almost at the level -- almost equal to the level for white Americans. And it's a little known and appreciated fact. And it's a great tribute, since, as you pointed out, people who are in inner city schools, particularly where there's a lot of violence, a lot of drugs, a lot of problems, have to struggle harder to stay and get through and come out -- it's a stunning achievement that the differential in graduation rate is now only about 4 percent. That's a stunning thing. That's very, very good. (Applause.)

Now, I'll tell you what we're trying to do. We're trying to do several things. We're trying, first of all, to help these schools work better with helping the teachers and the principals to operate drug-free and weapon-free schools; with supporting juvenile justice systems like the one in Boston where, I might add, not a single child has been killed by a handgun in nearly two years in Boston, Massachusetts. (Applause.)

So we've got to create a safe and drug-free environment. Then we're trying to support more parents groups in establishing their own schools. For example, I met with a number of Hispanic leaders recently -- a lot of you are familiar with the group, La Raza. They are operating, La Raza is operating 15 charter schools, where the parents have been permitted to work

with teachers to establish their own schools within the public school system, and set up the rules which govern them and make sure that they're good for the kids.

There are a number -- there's no magic bullet here, but what we're trying to do is to take the lessons from every public school that is working in a difficult environment where there's a low dropout rate and a high performance rate, and say, they all have five or six common elements; and then we're trying to provide the funds and the support to people all over America to replicate that.

I want to take my hat off to the people of Chicago here who have had a very difficult situation in their schools, and they have been turning it around and raising student performance quite markedly in the last couple of years with the involvement -- aggressive involvement of parents and students. There's a student who sits on the local board governing the schools here now. And I think that's -- I guess the last thing I'd say is, I would favor having communities have someone like you on their governing boards because I think if they'd listen more to the young people about what it would take to clean up and fix up the schools, I think we'd be ahead. (Applause.)

Let me just make two other comments. I think there are some places where money will make a difference. I mentioned one in trying to get good teachers there. We're going to have to replace 2 million teachers within the next decade -- 2 million with retirements and more kids coming to school.

Another is old school buildings. I was in Philadelphia the other day. The average age of a school building in Philadelphia is 65 years of age. The school buildings in Philadelphia should be drawing Social Security. That's how old they are. (Laughter.) Now, a lot of those old buildings are very well-built and can last for another 100 years, but they have to be maintained. We have school buildings in Washington where they're open -- where there are three stories in the school building, and one whole floor has to be shut down because it's not safe for the kids to be there. So we've got to be careful about that. We need an initiative to help repair the school buildings.

And finally, let me say that I think technology offers young, lower-income kids an enormous opportunity. If we can hook up every classroom in America to the Internet by the year 2000 -- (applause) -- get the computers in there -- a lot of you do things with computers that people who are in your line of work couldn't even imagine five years ago. When I go on a trip now on Air Force, I go back and watch the photographers send their pictures over the computer back to news room.

If we can hook up every classroom to the Internet, have adequate computers, adequate educational software, properly-

trained teachers, and then involve the parents in the use of this to keep up with the school work and all that and get to the point

where the personal computer is almost as likely to be in a home -- even a below-income person has a telephone -- we can keep working in that direction.

I think technology will give young Americans the chance, for the first time in history, whether they come from a poor, a middle class or a wealthy school district, the first time ever to all have access to the same information, at the same level of quality, at the same time. That has never happened in the history of the country.

So if we do it right and the teachers are trained to help the young people use it, it will revolutionize equality of educational opportunity. At the same time it raises excellence in education. So those are basically some of my thoughts about this.

And thank you for asking and for caring about the people that are coming along behind you. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, Cheryl Smith, KKDA-Radio, Dallas, Texas. Every four years, African Americans cast their votes for a presidential candidate who will hopefully address some of the issues affecting black Americans. Do you feel African Americans should be pleased with your efforts thus far? And what can we expect from you in the future, especially in the area of judiciary appointments? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the short answer is, yes. (Laughter.) I do. I mean, if you look at what's happened to African American unemployment, African American homeownership; if you look at the fight that I've waged on affirmative action and what I've tried to do for access to education, as well as quality of education; if you look at my record on appointments in the administration, in the judiciary, which far outstrips any of my predecessors of either party -- (applause) -- if you look at the larger effort that I've made to try to get Americans to come together and bridge the racial divide and to make people understand that we are each other's best assets, I would say that the answer to your first question is, yes.

Now, what else do we still have to do? First thing that I think is terribly important is, we have to, in addition to what I've talked about -- I've already talked about education and the racial initiative, so we'll put those to the side, I've already talked about them -- I think we have got to recognize that there is a legacy here which has not been fully overcome, and that the United States is consigning itself to substandard performance as a nation if we continue to allow huge pockets of people to be under-employed or unemployed in our inner city neighborhoods and in our poor rural areas, who are disproportionately minority.

At a time when we have a 5 percent unemployment rate, we ought to be able to seriously address what it would take to put people to work and to give people education and to create business opportunities.

But let me just give you two examples. We've had a Community Reinvestment Act requiring banks to make loans in traditionally under-served areas for 20 years. We decided to enforce it. Seventy percent of all the loans made under the Community Reinvestment Act have been made in the four and a half years since this administration has been in office. (Applause.) In the 20 years -- 70 percent of all the loans. That's the good news. The bad news is, not enough money has been loaned.

We set up these community development banks modeled on the South Shore Bank here in Chicago. A lot of you are familiar with it if you've been around here. In our new budget agreement, we have enough funds to more than double that. We set up the empowerment zones and the enterprise communities. In our new budget act, we have enough funds to more than double that. We have a housing strategy that we believe can attract middle class people as well as low income people to have housing together in the inner cities so that we can also attract a business base here.

We know a lot more than we used to do about what it would take to have a thriving and working private sector in our urban areas. I have not done that yet. And that's what you ought to expect me to be working on.

And then there are a lot of unmet social problems that we need to deal with. It's still -- you know, I got my head handed to me, I guess, in the '94 elections because I had this crazy idea that America ought not to be the only country in the world where working families and their children didn't have health care. It seemed to be a heretical idea, but I still believe that and I'm not sorry I tried. (Applause.) So now we're trying to give our children health coverage. And I think you ought to expect all the children in the African American community to be able to go to a doctor when they need it.

I think you ought to expect us to continue our assault on HIV and AIDS. And until we find the cure, I think you ought to expect us to stay at the task. (Applause.) I think you ought to expect us to continue to make headway on other medical problems which have a disproportionate impact in your community.

These are some of the things that I think that you should expect of us -- more opportunity, tackling more of the problems, bringing us together.

I have tried to be faithful to the support I have received, not only because it was the support I have received,

but because I believed it was the right thing to do. And I believe that when our eight years is over, you'll be able to look

back on it and see not only a lot of efforts made, but a lot of results obtained.

Thank you very much.

END

7:00 P.M. CDT

Message Sent

To:

Julie E. Mason
April Mellody
Darby E. Stott
Julia R. Green
Lorraine L. Wytkind
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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Chicago, Illinois)

For Immediate Release
1997

July 17,

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS

Hyatt Regency Hotel
Chicago, Illinois

7:30 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I must say, when Arthur was speaking, I thought to myself that he sounded like a president. (Laughter.) And I said to myself, if I had a voice like that, I could run for a third term, even though -- (laughter).

I enjoyed meeting with your board members and JoAnne Lyons Wooten, your Executive Director backstage. I met Vanessa Williams, who said, you know, I'm the president-elect; have you got any advice for me on being president? True story. I said, I do. Always act like you know what you're doing. (Laughter.)

I want to say to you, I'm delighted to be joined here tonight by a distinguished group of people from our White House and from the administration, including the Secretary of Labor, Alexis Herman; and the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley; and a number of others from the White House. Where is my White House crew? Would you all stand up -- everybody here from the administration, the Department of Education, Department of Labor. (Applause.)

I don't know whether he is here or not, but I understand Congressman Bobby Rush was here earlier today, and I know there are some other local officials from Chicago who are here. And this is a great place to come. Chicago is such a wonderful city that there was an article this morning in the New York Times bragging on Chicago. (Laughter.) And I saw the Mayor today. He said, I know we have finally arrived. If they're bragging on us in New York, we have made it.

And I congratulate all the people here on the

remarkable improvements they've made in this magnificent city in the last few years. I'd also like to say a special word of thanks to Reverend Jesse Jackson. I see him here in the audience and I know he's here. Thank you. (Applause.)

I always kind of hate to speak when Jesse is in the audience. (Laughter.) You know, I mean, every paragraph gets a grade. (Laughter.) Most of them aren't very good. I can just hear it now -- all the wheels turning.

I want to thank Reverend Jackson for agreeing to co-chair, along with the Secretary of Transportation, Rodney Slater, an American delegation to an economic conference in Zimbabwe, where he'll be going next week. And I know you all wish him well on that. We are doing our best to have a major initiative reaching out to Africa, recognizing that more and more countries in Africa are becoming functioning, successful democracies; that half a dozen countries in Africa have had growth rates of 7 percent or more last year and will equal that again this year; and that this is an enormous opportunity for us not only to promote better lives for the millions and millions of people who live on that continent, but also better opportunities for Americans and better partnerships with Africa in the years ahead.

Well, you heard your President say that I promised to come here in 1992 if I got elected. And I'm trying to keep every promise I made. And I'm sure glad I got a second term so I didn't get embarrassed on this one. (Laughter.)

In the years since I assumed office, I have worked very hard to create an America of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, with a community of all Americans, a country committed to continuing to lead the world toward greater peace and freedom and prosperity. And that begins with giving every person in this country the chance to live up to his or her God-given abilities.

Many of you chose to become journalists because you thought it was the best way to use your God-given talent -- your gift with words, your knack for asking tough questions, which some of us find maddening -- (laughter) -- and for getting the answers, your instincts with a camera or a microphone, your ability to connect with people and get them to understand what it is you're trying to get across. And you did not just to make a living, but to make a difference. I thank you for that. And I think that all of us want that opportunity for everyone in this country.

Last month in San Diego, I called upon Americans to begin a dialogue, a discussion over the next year and perhaps beyond, to deal with what I think is the greatest challenge we'll face in the 21st century, which is whether we really can become one America as we become more diverse; whether as we move into a truly global society, we can be the world's first truly great multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious democracy. I asked the American people to undertake a serious discussion of the lingering problems and the limitless possibilities that attend our diversity.

I came here tonight to talk a little more about this initiative, to ask each of you to examine what role you can play in it and the vital contributions as journalists and as African Americans you might make in leading your news rooms, your communities, and our nation in the right kind of dialogue.

Five years ago, I talked about how we could prepare our people to go into the 21st century, and we've made a lot of strides since then. Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and once again the strongest in the world. Our social problems are finally bending to our efforts. But at this time of great prosperity, we know we still have a lot of great challenges in order to live up to our ideals, in order to live up to what we say America should mean.

And it seems to me that at this time when there is more cause for hope than fear, when we are not driven by some emergency or some imminent cataclysm in our society, we really have not only an opportunity, but an obligation to address and to better resolve the vexing, perplexing, often painful issues surrounding our racial history and our future.

We really will, whether we're prepared for it or not, become a multiracial democracy in the next century. Today, of our 50 states, only the state of Hawaii has no majority race. But within three to five years, our largest state, California, where 13 percent of us live, will have no majority race. Five of our school districts already draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups, including the school district in the city of Chicago. But within a matter of a couple of years, over 12 school districts will have students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups.

When I was a boy, I knew that a lot of people went from my native state in Arkansas to Detroit to make a living because they couldn't make a living on the farm anymore. Many of them were African Americans, and they joined the white ethnics, many of whom were from Central and Eastern Europe and from Ireland in the Detroit area, working in the car plants, getting the good middle class jobs, being able to educate their children,

looking forward to a retirement. Some of them actually are coming back home now and buying land. And Nicholas Lehman (phonetic) traced that movement in a great book he wrote not so long ago.

But now Detroit is not just a place of white ethnics and African Americans. In Wayne County, there are over 145 different racial and ethnic groups represented today. So the paradigm is shifting. And so, as part of our engagement in this national dialogue, we have to both deal with our old, unfinished business, and then imagine what we are going to be like in 30 years and whether we can actually become one America when we're more different. Is there a way not only to respect our diversity, but even to celebrate it and still be one America? Is

there a way to use this to help us economically and to spread opportunity here?

Why are there so many people in the Congress in both parties excited about this Africa initiative? Because we have so many African Americans -- even people who were never concerned about it before understand this is a great economic opportunity for America. Why do we have a unique opportunity to build a partnership with Brazil and Argentina and Chile and all the countries in Latin America? Because we have people from all those countries here in our country. Why do we have the opportunity to avoid having Asia grow, but grow in a more closed and isolated way, running the risk of great new problems 30, 40, 50 years from now? Because we have so many Asian Americans who are making a home here in America with ties back home to their native lands and cultures. We are blessed if we can make this work.

We also may have a chance to make peace in other parts of the world if we can make peace within our borders with ourselves. But let's not kid ourselves -- the differences between people are so deep and so ingrained, it's so easy to scratch the surface and have something bad go wrong, and we see that in countries less privileged than ourselves when things go terribly wrong -- whether it's between the Hutus and the Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi; or the Catholics and the Protestants in the home of my ancestors, Ireland; or the Croats, the Serbs, and the Muslims who are, interestingly enough, biologically indistinguishable, in Bosnia; or the continuing travails of the Jews and the Arabs in the Middle East.

If you look through all of human history, societies have very often been defined by their ability to pit themselves as coherent units against those who were different from themselves. Long ago in prehistory, it probably made a lot of sense for people that were in one tribe to look at people in another tribe as enemies, because there was a limited amount of food to eat or opportunities for shelter, because people did not

know how to communicate with each other so they had to say, people that look like me are my friends, people that don't look like me are my enemies.

But why, on the verge of the 21st century, are we still seeing people behave like that all over the world? And why here even in America do we find ourselves, all of us at some time, gripped by stereotypes about people who don't look like we do?

So we shouldn't kid ourselves. This is not going to be an easy task. But there is hardly anything more important because we know we have a great economy; we know we have a strong military; we know we have a unique position in the world today with the fall of communism virtually everywhere and the rise of market economies and the success that we've offered. But we know

we also have these lingering inequalities and problems in America. And if we can overcome them and learn to really live together and celebrate, not just tolerate but celebrate our differences and still say, in spite of all those differences, the most important thing about me is that I am an American, that there is no stopping what we can do and what our children can become.

This week in Washington, John Hope Franklin convened the first meeting of the advisory board I appointed on racial reconciliation. The executive director of that board, Judy Winston, who has been our Acting Under Secretary of Education, is also here with me tonight. I am very proud that she has agreed to do that and very excited about what has happened. The first meeting was full of lively debate and honest disagreement. I like that. We should discover quickly that people who are honestly committed to advancing this dialogue will have honest differences and they ought to be aired.

Earlier today, as your President said, at the NAACP Convention in Pittsburgh, I reiterated my long-held belief that we will never get to our one America in the 21st century unless we have both equality and excellence in educational opportunity. We have to give every American access to the world's best schools, best teachers, best education. And that means we have to have high standards, high expectations and high levels of accountability from all of us who were involved in it.

But I want to say to you, we know our children can learn. For years and years, ever since 1984, when the Nation at Risk -- 1983 -- when the Nation At Risk report was issued, people said, well, you can't expect American education to compete favorably with education in other countries because we have a more diverse student body and because we have so many more poor children and so many immigrants and because, because, because.

This year, on the International Math and Science Tests given to 4th and 8th graders, for the first time since we began a national effort to improve our schools over a decade ago, our 4th graders -- not all of them, but a representative sample, representative of race, region, income -- scored way above the national average in math and science -- disproving the notion that we cannot achieve international excellence in education even for our poorest children. It is simply not true.

This year, again, our 8th graders scored below the international average, emphasizing the dimensions of the challenge, because when the kids who carry all these other burdens to school every day -- the burden of poverty, the burden of crime and drugs in their neighborhoods, the burden of unmet medical needs, often the burden of problems at home -- when they hit adolescence and when they are pressured and tempted to get involved in other things, it gets to be a lot tougher. So we haven't done everything we need to do. But the evidence is here

now; it is no longer subject to debate that we can't compete. And that's good, because we need to. And because our children, however poor they are, are entitled to just as much educational opportunity as anybody else.

Now, I believe that we made a big mistake in the United States not adopting national standards long before this. And I believe our poorest children and our minority children would be doing even better in school had we adopted national standards a long time ago and held their schools to some measure of accountability. It is not their fault, it is the rest of our faults that we are not doing it. (Applause.)

So when I say by 1999 we ought to test all our 4th graders and all our 8th graders -- the 4th graders in reading, the 8th graders in math -- it's not because I want the individual kids to get a grade, it's because everybody ought to make that grade. If you have a standard, everyone ought to clear the bar. And if they're not, there is something wrong with the educational system that ought to be fixed. And you can't know it unless you understand what the standard is and hold people to some accountability. But don't let anybody tell you that these kids can't do it. That is just flat wrong. They can do it. (Applause.)

Today I did announce one new initiative that I think is very important, and that is a \$350 million multiyear scholarship program modeled on the National Medical Service Corps. You know, a lot of us come from places that have a lot of poor rural areas that are medically under-served. We got doctors into those areas, into the Mississippi Delta, because we said, hey, if you'll go to medical, we'll help you go to medical school, but you've got to go out to a poor under-served area and be a doctor to people who need you. Then later you can go make

all the money you want somewhere else. But if we help you go to medical school, will you go out here and help people where they don't have doctors? And the National Health Service Corps has done a world of good.

So what I propose today, and what we're going to send up to Capitol Hill with the Reauthorization of Higher Education Act is a series of scholarships that will go to people who say, I will teach in a poor area for three years if you will help me get an education. (Applause.)

This is the first specific policy to come out in connection with our year-long racial reconciliation initiative. There will be more policies. But it's not just a matter of public policy. There will also be local actions, private actions which will have to be taken. And we also need the dialogue, the discussion. It is about the mind and the heart. And, therefore, I say again, your voices and your observations are going to be very valuable.

In the communities where we have a constructive, ongoing dialogue, where people not only talk together but work together across racial lines, there are already stunning stories that stir the heart and give us hope for the future. There is nothing people can't do. Most people are basically good. Their leaders have to give them a framework in which the best can come out and the worst can be repressed. And that's what we have to do here. We've got to learn how to deal with a fundamentally new and different situation as well as deal with a lot of old, unresolved problems in our past that dog us in the present.

As journalists, you have experienced firsthand both the progress and the continuing challenge of race in our country. Some of you in this audience are pioneers in your field, perhaps the first people of color ever to claim a desk, a phone, a typewriter in the news rooms of our big-city papers and stations. Some of you, when you were beginning your careers, knew that it was hard enough to find just one editor who would consider your work, let alone the hundreds of newspaper and broadcasting executives who this week have descended on this job fair that you sponsored to recruit the young people who are here today.

They've come here not just because they recognize the value of a diverse and racially representative staff, but also because they know from experience that they'll find some of the best talent in American journalism here at this convention. (Applause.)

But our news rooms are like all of our other working environments -- they've come a long way, they've still got a ways to go. (Applause.) Just as in other work places in America, minority representation on many staffs and mast heads is not what

it ought to be. Wide gaps continue to exist in the way whites and minorities perceive their workplaces and in the way they perceive each other. We have to bridge this gap everywhere in America.

But it is especially important in the press because you are the voice and, in some ways, the mirror of America through which we see ourselves and one another. I encourage you to continue to reach out to your colleagues; to listen to each other; to understand where we're all coming from; to lead your organizations in the writing, the editing, the broadcasting fare and the thought-provoking stories about the world we live in and the one we can live in. We have a lot to do to build that one America for the 21st century, but I believe we're up to the challenge, and I know that you are up to the challenge.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. FENNELL: Thank you very much, Mr. President. As is customary in these forums here at our national convention, at this time, we bring forth our questioners. We are journalists, after all, and you knew this was coming. (Laughter.)

We have selected four journalists who will ask the questions of the day. Eric Thomas, reporter and anchor at KGO-TV in San Francisco; Chinta Strausberg, reporter of the Chicago Defender; Cheryl Smith, a reporter at KKDA-Radio, Grand Prairie, Texas --

THE PRESIDENT: I know where that is.

MR. FENNELL: Yes. And Brent Jones, our student representative, a junior at the University of Florida in Gainesville. (Applause.)

To the questioners.

Q Chinta Strausberg, the Chicago Defender newspaper. Mr. President, do you support an \$8 billion superhighway, NAFTA superhighway at a time when Congress has reduced funding for mass transit in Chicago as well? And if that superhighway is built, sir, will black contractors be a major part of it as a down payment on reparations?

THE PRESIDENT: What superhighway? Say it again? Did I -- what's this project?

Q It's a proposed congressional plan -- \$8 billion NAFTA superhighway that would connect the United States with Canada and Mexico, and it is being discussed in Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know that I'm familiar enough with the project. I do believe we need to continue to improve our infrastructure. Secretary Slater and I have argued that we should not under-fund mass transit and urban transportation. And indeed, in the transportation bill I sent to Congress, we asked for several hundred million dollars more directly targeted to help people on welfare who are required to go to work, get to where the jobs are if their jobs aren't within walking distance. Only about 10 percent of the people on public assistance own their own cars. And we believe we need more investment in mass transit in the cities. So -- and I don't think it should be an either-or situation.

And in terms of contracting, I support affirmative action programs generally in employment, in education, and in economic development. And I've done everything I could to fix what were the generally recognized shortcomings of some of the programs that graduate out the firms that may not need it any more, but to continue it where I think it is appropriate. So I continue to support that.

And I think it is a mistake for us not to have initiatives to help create minority-owned businesses. I think we

should -- as a matter of fact, let me just back up and say, when I was in San Francisco at the Mayors Conference not very long ago, I said to them that I thought we ought to develop a private-sector, job-related model for high unemployment areas in our cities and -- because there was no way the government social services could ever create enough economic opportunity for people. And I thought, if we couldn't do it when the national unemployment rate was the lowest in 23 years, when could we do it?

So I think we need to do more to help people organize and start their own businesses, to help build economic clusters of activity, to help give people models as well as opportunities to work, to see that we can do this. I don't think we're doing nearly enough in this area, and I think we have a new opportunity to do it because the unemployment rate is low in the nation.

As I've heard Reverend Jackson say for 20 years, the biggest undeveloped market in America are the poor unemployed and under-employed people in our inner cities and our rural areas. Now is the time we should be creating more businesses there, not having fewer businesses. That's what I believe. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, your scholarship proposal notwithstanding, there is still an assault on affirmative action in this country. In my home state of California in the wake of Proposition 209 and last year's vote by the University of

California Board of Regents, minority applications and enrollment in the UC system this year are down. There will be not one new black student enrolled at the prestigious Bolt Hall School of Law at the University of California this fall. What specific programs, scholarship program notwithstanding, do you propose to stem this tide and make sure that there is diversity in higher education in this country? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, I think we need to make sure that we continue to use federal law to the maximum extent we can to promote an integrated educational environment -- (applause) -- so that we have to review, whether in the Education Department, in the Justice Department, whether there are any further actions we can take legally to promote an integrated educational environment in higher education in the states where these actions have been taken.

Secondly, I think we need to look at whether there is some way by indirection to achieve the same result. I know that the legislature in Texas, in an attempt to overcome the impact of the Hopwood decision in Texas, just passed what they call the "Ten Percent Solution," which would be to guarantee admissions to any Texas public institution of higher education to the top 10 percent of the graduating class of any high school in Texas. And because of the way the African Americans and Hispanics living patterns are in Texas, that may solve the

problem. Whether that would work in California, I don't know. I haven't studied the way the school districts are organized enough. But I think we have to come up with some new and fairly innovative ways to do that.

Thirdly, I think, on the professional schools, my own view -- I'm a little stumped here. We have to really -- we're going to have to reexamine what we can do. I don't know why the people who promoted this in California think it's a good thing to have a segregated set of professional schools. It would seem to me that, since these professionals are going to be operating in the most ethnically-diverse state in the country, they would want them to be educated in an environment like they're going to operate. I don't understand that. (Applause.)

But there may be some ways to get around it, and we're looking at it and working on it. But I think it's going to be easier to stop it from happening at the undergraduate level than at the professional school level. And we're going to have to really think about whether there is some way around it, whether it would be some sort of economic designation or something else. But we're working on that.

And finally, let me say, I think we need to continue to provide more resources, because one of the real problems we have is, even in the last five years, when we've had economic

recovery, the college enrollment rates of minorities in America have not gone up in an appropriate way. And in this budget that I'm trying to get passed through Congress, we've got the biggest increase in education funding in 32 years, the biggest increase in Pell Grant scholarships in 20 years, another huge increase in work-study funds, and the tax proposal, as we structured them, would, in effect, guarantee two years of college to virtually everyone in America and help people with two more years of college.

We've got a huge dropout problem in higher education among minorities that I think is having an impact on then what happens in the graduate schools and in the professional schools. I don't think there is a simple answer. And I think, frankly, the way 209 is worded, it's a bigger problem even than the Hopwood case in Texas. But I can tell you we're working on it: first, is there anything the Justice Department or the Civil Rights Office of the Education Department can do? We're examining that. Second, is there a specific solution like the Texas "Ten Percent Solution" that would overcome it at least in a specific state. Third, come up with some more funds and some more specific scholarship programs to try to overcome it.

It's a great concern to me, and I think it is moving the country in exactly the wrong direction. And I might say, if you look at the performance of affirmative action students, it doesn't justify the action that was taken. That's another point that ought to be made.

So the one thing that I believe is, I believe that the rather shocking consequences in the professional schools in both Texas and California will have a deterrent impact on other actions like that in other states. And I believe you will see

more efforts now to avoid this. I think a lot of people who even voted for 209 have been pretty shocked at what happened and I don't believe the people of California wanted that to occur. And I think the rhetoric sounded better than the reality to a lot of voters.

So I can tell you that, while I'm very concerned about it, I think if we all work on it, we can reverse it in a matter of a couple of years. And we just have to hope we don't lose too many people who would otherwise have had good opportunities because of it. But it is an urgent matter of concern to me. (Applause.)

Q Good afternoon, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon.

Q My question also has to do with education for more at a high school and middle school level. The dropout rate,

crime, and drugs are more prevalent in inner city schools than in suburban schools, consequently leading to a lower quality education in many inner city schools. What will your administration do through government-aided programs or initiatives to combat these problems and ensure everyone in America is receiving a comparable education? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I want to answer your question, but first I'd like to start with a compliment to the African American community. Last year, the high school graduation rate nationally among African Americans was well above 80 percent and almost at the level -- almost equal to the level for white Americans. And it's a little known and appreciated fact. And it's a great tribute, since, as you pointed out, people who are in inner city schools, particularly where there's a lot of violence, a lot of drugs, a lot of problems, have to struggle harder to stay and get through and come out -- it's a stunning achievement that the differential in graduation rate is now only about 4 percent. That's a stunning thing. That's very, very good. (Applause.)

Now, I'll tell you what we're trying to do. We're trying to do several things. We're trying, first of all, to help these schools work better with helping the teachers and the principals to operate drug-free and weapon-free schools; with supporting juvenile justice systems like the one in Boston where, I might add, not a single child has been killed by a handgun in nearly two years in Boston, Massachusetts. (Applause.)

So we've got to create a safe and drug-free environment. Then we're trying to support more parents groups in establishing their own schools. For example, I met with a number of Hispanic leaders recently -- a lot of you are familiar with the group, La Raza. They are operating, La Raza is operating 15 charter schools, where the parents have been permitted to work with teachers to establish their own schools within the public

school system, and set up the rules which govern them and make sure that they're good for the kids.

There are a number -- there's no magic bullet here, but what we're trying to do is to take the lessons from every public school that is working in a difficult environment where there's a low dropout rate and a high performance rate, and say, they all have five or six common elements; and then we're trying to provide the funds and the support to people all over America to replicate that.

I want to take my hat off to the people of Chicago here who have had a very difficult situation in their schools, and they have been turning it around and raising student performance quite markedly in the last couple of years with the involvement -- aggressive involvement of parents and students. There's a student who sits on the local board governing the

schools here now. And I think that's -- I guess the last thing I'd say is, I would favor having communities have someone like you on their governing boards because I think if they'd listen more to the young people about what it would take to clean up and fix up the schools, I think we'd be ahead. (Applause.)

Let me just make two other comments. I think there are some places where money will make a difference. I mentioned one in trying to get good teachers there. We're going to have to replace 2 million teachers within the next decade -- 2 million with retirements and more kids coming to school.

Another is old school buildings. I was in Philadelphia the other day. The average age of a school building in Philadelphia is 65 years of age. The school buildings in Philadelphia should be drawing Social Security. That's how old they are. (Laughter.) Now, a lot of those old buildings are very well-built and can last for another 100 years, but they have to be maintained. We have school buildings in Washington where they're open -- where there are three stories in the school building, and one whole floor has to be shut down because it's not safe for the kids to be there. So we've got to be careful about that. We need an initiative to help repair the school buildings.

And finally, let me say that I think technology offers young, lower-income kids an enormous opportunity. If we can hook up every classroom in America to the Internet by the year 2000 -- (applause) -- get the computers in there -- a lot of you do things with computers that people who are in your line of work couldn't even imagine five years ago. When I go on a trip now on Air Force, I go back and watch the photographers send their pictures over the computer back to news room.

If we can hook up every classroom to the Internet, have adequate computers, adequate educational software, properly-trained teachers, and then involve the parents in the use of this

to keep up with the school work and all that and get to the point where the personal computer is almost as likely to be in a home -- even a below-income person has a telephone -- we can keep working in that direction.

I think technology will give young Americans the chance, for the first time in history, whether they come from a poor, a middle class or a wealthy school district, the first time ever to all have access to the same information, at the same level of quality, at the same time. That has never happened in the history of the country.

So if we do it right and the teachers are trained to help the young people use it, it will revolutionize equality of

educational opportunity at the same time it raises excellence in education. So those are basically some of my thoughts about this.

And thank you for asking and for caring about the people that are coming along behind you. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, Cheryl Smith, KKDA-Radio, Dallas, Texas. Every four years, African Americans cast their votes for a presidential candidate who will hopefully address some of the issues affecting black Americans. Do you feel African Americans should be pleased with your efforts thus far? And what can we expect from you in the future, especially in the area of judiciary appointments? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the short answer is, yes. (Laughter.) I do. I mean, if you look at what's happened to African American unemployment, African American homeownership; if you look at the fight that I've waged on affirmative action and what I've tried to do for access to education, as well as quality of education; if you look at my record on appointments in the administration, in the judiciary, which far outstrips any of my predecessors of either party -- (applause) -- if you look at the larger effort that I've made to try to get Americans to come together and bridge the racial divide and to make people understand that we are each other's best assets, I would say that the answer to your first question is, yes.

Now, what else do we still have to do? First thing that I think is terribly important is, we have to, in addition to what I've talked about -- I've already talked about education and the racial initiative, so we'll put those to the side, I've already talked about them -- I think we have got to recognize that there is a legacy here which has not been fully overcome, and that the United States is consigning itself to substandard performance as a nation if we continue to allow huge pockets of people to be under-employed or unemployed in our inner city neighborhoods and in our poor rural areas, who are disproportionately minority.

At a time when we have a 5 percent unemployment rate, we ought to be able to seriously address what it would take to put people to work and to give people education and to create business opportunities.

But let me just give you two examples. We've had a Community Reinvestment Act requiring banks to make loans in traditionally under-served areas for 20 years. We decided to enforce it. Seventy percent of all the loans made under the Community Reinvestment Act have been made in the four and a half years since this administration has been in office. (Applause.) In the 20 years -- 70 percent of all the loans. That's the good

news. The bad news is, not enough money has been loaned.

We set up these community development banks modeled on the South Shore Bank here in Chicago. A lot of you are familiar with it if you've been around here. In our new budget agreement, we have enough funds to more than double that. We set up the empowerment zones and the enterprise communities. In our new budget act, we have enough funds to more than double that. We have a housing strategy that we believe can attract middle class people as well as low income people to have housing together in the inner cities so that we can also attract a business base here.

We know a lot more than we used to do about what it would take to have a thriving and working private sector in our urban areas. I have not done that yet. And that's what you ought to expect me to be working on.

And then there are a lot of unmet social problems that we need to deal with. It's still -- you know, I got my head handed to me, I guess, in the '94 elections because I had this crazy idea that America ought not to be the only country in the world where working families and their children didn't have health care. It seemed to be a heretical idea, but I still believe that and I'm not sorry I tried. (Applause.) So now we're trying to give our children health coverage. And I think you ought to expect all the children in the African American community to be able to go to a doctor when they need it.

I think you ought to expect us to continue our assault on HIV and AIDS. And until we find the cure, I think you ought to expect us to stay at the task. (Applause.) I think you ought to expect us to continue to make headway on other medical problems which have a disproportionate impact in your community.

These are some of the things that I think that you should expect of us -- more opportunity, tackling more of the problems, bringing us together.

I have tried to be faithful to the support I have received, not only because it was the support I have received, but because I believed it was the right thing to do. And I

believe that when our eight years is over, you'll be able to look back on it and see not only a lot of efforts made, but a lot of results obtained.

Thank you very much.

END

7:00 P.M. CDT

Message Sent

To:

Julie E. Mason
April Mellody
Darby E. Stott
Julia R. Green
Lorraine L. Wytkind
Laura D. Schwartz
Lori E. Abrams
Lori Anderson
Brenda M. Anders
Eli G. Attie
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wh-outbox-distr @ clinton.ai.mit.edu@INET@LNGTWY
BARBUSCHAK_K @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOME_M @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BARTHOLOW_T @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
BLINKEN_A @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
CAPLAN_P @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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GRAY_W @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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HAAS_L @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
JOHNSON_WC @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
LIZIK_C @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
RILEY_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
NAPLAN_S @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
SMITH_BD @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
STUMPF_D @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
WEINER_R @ A1@CD@LNGTWY
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newsdesk @ usnewswire.com@INET@LNGTWY
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Message Sent

To:

Jamie S. Williams/WHO/EOP
Patrick E. Briggs/WHO/EOP
Kyle M. Baker/WHO/EOP
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Diane Ikemiyashiro/WHO/EOP
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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Catherine T. Kitchen
08/04/97 04:30:55 PM
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SUNTUM_M @ A1
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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
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Subject: 1997-08/04 remarks by President to Nat'l Urban League

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 4, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

Washington Convention Center
Washington, D.C.

3:40 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Chairman Linen, and members of the board, Hugh Price. Hugh, I want to thank you for that introduction. I hope somebody got that on tape. (Laughter.) was embarrassed there for a while it was so nice. (Laughter.)

Let me say to all of you what you already know, which is that Hugh Price has been a breath of fresh air on the Washington scene. He has been a brilliant leader for the Urban League, and I look forward to his leadership for many years to come. He's not as term-limited as I am, I don't think. So we ought to keep him around for a while. I think he's been great. (Applause.)

Congressman Payne and ladies and gentlemen, I have many things for which to be grateful to the Urban League. The two that come most immediately to mind are Vernon Jordan and Ron Brown. And I thank you for that. (Applause.) And I'm delighted to see Alma here -- thank you. She's already heard her quota of speeches by me, so this is great forbearance I think.

When I was governor of Arkansas, I had the privilege of working with your local chapters. I saw firsthand how the Urban League changed the lives and the minds of people. And I want to say a special word of thanks for the support that you have given the work that we are now engaged in here for at least a year with regard to our initiative on racial reconciliation. It means a lot to me, but it also sends a strong signal to Americans that we can no longer afford to ignore the continuing racial divisions that undermine our greatness. (Applause.)

I might just say parenthetically what many of you already know, that this year we're spending -- and with a distinguished advisory board headed by Dr. John Hope Franklin -- is a year that will deal with the unfinished business of the work of reconciling and moving forward on an equal basis African Americans and white Americans. But it also must look forward to what America is becoming.

Today we have only one state, Hawaii, which has no racial majority. But in just a few years, within a decade, California will have no racial majority: That's over 13 percent of our population. And within 30 to 40 years, unless there is a dramatic change in our population, there will be no single race in the majority in America. We have always said our country is about ideas and ideals and principles. We're about to find out. (Laughter.) We're about to find out. And we had best be ready for it.

In this global society of ours, it is an incredible advantage if we can not only get along and tolerate each other, but actually celebrate our differences and be united as one America. And I would say in that regard, I would like to thank all the business people and others who are supporters and members of and active in the Urban League who have reached across racial lines to try to build that one America. I am grateful to you as well, and I thank you very much. (Applause.)

Whitney Young once said, "It's better to be prepared for an opportunity and not have one than to have an opportunity and not be prepared." Unfortunately, a lot of Americans for too long knew about being prepared for an opportunity and not having one. I come here today to say we have an opportunity and we must be prepared.

Tomorrow I will sign the balanced budget legislation into law. We have already reduced the size of the government's deficit by 80 percent from the time I took office, but we have done it while investing more, not less, in the education of our children and in the revitalization of our urban areas and in our preparation for tomorrow through research and development.

Tomorrow's budget I want to talk about a minute because it represents unprecedented opportunities and the means for all Americans to seize them. Already, unemployment and inflation are at their lowest points in a generation. Our neighborhoods are freeing themselves from the fearful grasp of crime and violence, more than in years. Last year the drop in violent crime in the United States was the largest in 35 years. The African American unemployment rate is the lowest in more than 20 years. We've had a historic drop in the number of people dependent upon public assistance for their livelihoods. But now we are going to try to finish the job.

Our historic balanced budget is an empowerment budget, preparing Americans for the 21st century. I saw what Hugh Price said here yesterday about economic power being the last frontier, and I have seen Mr. Brach's new magazine cover, which I understand is sold out already, but I agree. We have to be about the business of giving people the power to make the most of their own lives and their families and their neighborhoods and their communities. That is the last frontier.

This budget will give every American willing to work hard and take responsibility that kind of opportunity. It honors our values by strengthening our families, investing in the education and health care of our children, moving more people from welfare to work, continuing to make our communities more livable. It is the strongest budget for our cities in over a generation. It keeps America firmly on the course of bringing new businesses, good jobs and hopes back to our most distressed urban areas. It will help us to ensure that the blighted downtowns of the late 20th century do not follow us into the 21st.

It will instead give them the chance to buzz again with energy and optimism, generated by Americans working hard, teaching children, raising families, and preparing for the future.

Beyond the right kinds of investments in this budget, we've fought for and won the kinds of tax cuts and credits that will truly benefit working families and communities. This balanced budget will keep interest rates down and investment up. Already, what we have been able to do has produced 13 million jobs in four and a half years. And I am proud of that, but we have more to do.

In this budget, we fought for and won \$24 billion to bring health care to as many as 5 million children who don't have health insurance today. (Applause.) This is the single, largest investment by the national government in health care since the passage of the Medicaid program in 1965. (Applause.)

Today, there are about 10 million children who don't have health insurance. Interestingly enough, if the 3 million kids who are out there today who are eligible for Medicaid could simply be identified and enrolled, and then we could use this money to reach 5 million more, the children of working parents who don't have health insurance on the job, we would be almost 80 percent of the way home to providing health insurance for all American children. I hope you will help us to identify those children. And we'll do our best to make sure that the programs work. They'll be administered state by state. And the Urban League is organized state by state -- we need you out there working state by state to make sure this program reaches children.

But we can make a profound difference in the lives not only of these children, but their families, by simply guaranteeing that they will have the health insurance that they ought to have for the hearing test, the vision test, to go to the dentist, to see the doctor, and if, God forbid, they needed to go to the hospital. It's a big deal, as my daughter used to say.

We fought for and won a \$500-per-child tax credit to help families -- millions of them -- and especially those struggling to lift themselves beyond poverty and raise their children well on modest salaries. That includes firefighters, police officers, nurses, teachers, technicians, people who deserve all the help they can get to raise their children as they work hard to serve us and make America a better place.

We fought for and won the most significant new investment in education in over 30 years and the largest increase in investment in helping people to on to college since the G.I. Bill passed 50 years ago. (Applause.) Through expanded Pell Grants, the biggest in two decades, tuition tax deductions for the cost of all four years of college and graduate school, and going back to school

for adults, education IRAs and our HOPE Scholarship which will open the doors of college to all Americans for at least two years after high school, we are establishing a system in which every American who is willing to study hard will be able to go on to college and to thrive in our new economy. It is very important. (Applause.)

And I might emphasize that this will be especially important as we try to bring America together in this new knowledge-based economy. The African American high school graduation rate is now, thankfully, almost as high as the high school graduation rate for white Americans. But the rate of college graduation still shows a great differential, and you can see it in the unemployment rates, you can see it in the income rates. We owe it to the young people coming up to make sure that everybody, including people already out there in the work force, who is willing to go back to school and able to go back to school should not be barred from going back to school for financial means. This budget will make sure that they will not be. (Applause.)

We have fought to more than triple the number of empowerment zones from nine to 31 across America, to bring businesses and jobs back to downtown areas with a combination of tax credits that will leverage billions of dollars in new private investment over the next five years.

I have seen this working in communities all across America. I have seen what happened in Detroit. I have watched the unemployment rate be cut in half in four years when the private sector works with vigorous community leaders and takes maximum advantage of the incentives in the empowerment zones. And we have to keep going until that kind of investment is present everywhere. And I might say, there are even more generous incentives to invest in the Nation's Capital to bring it back and bring it back to where it ought to be -- (applause) -- where people want to live here, want to go to school here, and feel safe on the streets, and we know we've got a functioning economy. And I want to assure you that I'm going to keep working until Washington, D.C. is what the people of Washington and the people of the United States deserve for it to be. (Applause.)

We worked to provide tax incentives to businesses who agree to clean up and redevelop some 14,000 brownfields. Now, that's a term of art. Those are environmentally-contaminated, but otherwise attractive business sites in urban areas. Most business people simply cannot afford the risk or the costs on their own. This budget will give them the incentives necessary to do it. Our cities are full of places which would be good for new investments were it not for the environmental liability staring investors in the face. This will help to lift that burden and bring investment back to our inner cities. (Applause.)

Finally, we're working to more than double our investments in this budget in community development financial institutions, the community banks that make loans to individual entrepreneurs to start businesses in areas where they wouldn't be

started otherwise -- often the loans being made to people who couldn't get the loans otherwise.

When I became President, I found that our country through our foreign aid programs had been setting up these banks for small entrepreneurs in poor countries for years, but we weren't doing the same things for the American people who had something to contribute to their own economies in the neighborhoods of America. We're going to keep going until we've got a vigorous community development bank in every neighborhood in America. (Applause.)

I might say in deference to one of your board members, I especially appreciate the support we have received from Nations Bank in the community bank effort. They have made a huge difference to the acceptability and the viability in this country. (Applause.)

This budget will continue our efforts to fund 100,000 community police officers walking the beat, making our communities safe, helping our kids to stay out of trouble. Crime has dropped for five years in a row. And mayor after mayor after mayor tells me the more people want to live in our cities and feel good about living in our cities, the more they will invest in our cities and put people to work there.

Finally, let me say that last summer when I signed the welfare bill into law, I promised to work to fix the severe shortcomings of the bill -- to eliminate aspects of the law that had nothing whatever to do with welfare reform, and to find ways to encourage more employers to hire people from welfare rolls. This budget makes good on those promises. It restores both Medicaid and SSI benefits to the legal immigrants who work hard and pay taxes in our country. They should not be punished if they get hurt through no fault of their own. They ought to be entitled to benefits they pay taxes for like everybody else. (Applause.) It makes sure that disabled children who are now no longer defined as disabled under the Supplemental Security Income law will not lose their Medicaid coverage. And it expands food stamp benefits for unemployed citizens trying as hard as they can to keep jobs and find jobs.

And let me say why this is important. It's easy in the welfare debate, it's easy in the poverty debate, to forget about the younger, single men, because they do not get welfare. But we need them very badly -- to be educated, to be trained, to be in the work force, to be in strong families, to be a constructive role in our future. Sometimes, the only public benefits they get are from food stamps. That may be the only incentive we have to involve them in education, in training, in job placement programs. So restoring these benefits is very important.

And for all of you who care a lot about the condition of poor people and helping them to become more independent and go to work, I say, yes, by all means, we have to move every able-bodied off welfare; but let's not forget about all those young, single men out there who need to be a part of America's positive future who cannot

be on welfare, but can be standing on the street, and ought to be at school or at work and building good families and contributing to our future. (Applause.)

This budget also provides \$3 billion to the cities to help welfare recipients find and keep good-paying jobs -- even more money to go with child care and job training and job placement -- \$3 billion more -- and it will help. And finally, it offers tax credits for employers that hire people from the welfare rolls. We also made sure that these welfare recipients will be paid an honest wage, nothing less than the federal minimum wage for the jobs that they do. And I think that is the right thing to do. (Applause.)

Finally, let me say that we know the best thing we can do to empower our children to succeed in this new global economy is to make sure they have a world-class education. You have often said education is the great equalizer. And I read in the newspaper today, so I know it's so -- (laughter) -- that you said yesterday that we had to make sure our young people discarded their second-class expectations, that none of us should impose second-class expectations on young people. I say amen to that.

One of the things that we know now, folks, is that all of our children can learn. (Applause.) Many years ago, almost 15 years ago now, when I started in earnest the work in my state on national education reforms and national standards of what children should take and what courses should be offered, it was really commonplace to hear people say, well, you cannot expect America to measure up to the highest international standards from kindergarten through high school. Oh, yes, we've got the best college system in the world, but you just can't expect us to measure up. And I'd always ask, why? And they said, well, because we have too many children whose first language is not English; we have too many children who live in poor and difficult circumstances. We have too many children who live in violent circumstances. We have too much difference in the level of funding in our schools. Our school year is not as long as it is some other places. I heard all these reasons. You know, I remember the first time I left my home state; some people thought I was dumb just because I talked the way I did. (Laughter.) Might have been right for all I know. (Laughter.)

But I've heard all this, you know, and I must say it was frustrating. Year in and year out, you'd see these international test scores and America would always be below the international average. And we'd say, yes, but their populations are more homogenous than ours, their education systems are more homogenous. There was always some reason that sounded pretty good.

Well, this sure, for the first time, on the International Math and Science Test scores -- several thousand American students representative by race, by region, by income take that test every year. This year our 4th graders scored way above the international average for the first time. (Applause.) So we don't have to listen to that anymore. We don't have to listen to that

anymore.

Now, the bad news is our 8th graders did not score above the international average, but we do know there are some reasons for that. We know that all the social problems that our kids live with get more intense around the time of adolescence. We know that a lot of our middle schools or our junior high schools are organized for

the Ozzie and Harriet days of the '50s and the '60s when the world was different than it is now, and they're often too big and not as functional as they need to be. (Applause.) And we need to rethink that. We know there are a lot of reasons, but I'll tell you something -- one thing we know is that we can't blame on the kids anymore, because the 4th grade test proves that the children can do it. (Applause.) The 4th grade test proves that the children can do it. (Applause.)

And that's why I'm trying so hard to get America, finally, on the eve of the 21st century, to establish national standards, and to test all of our kids at the fourth grade in reading and all of our kids at the 8th grade in math, because I know we can meet those standards. And I know you don't do any child a favor in the world we're going to send them into by holding them to lower expectations. If they're poor, if they have a difficult neighborhood, if they have a difficult home environment -- you know what? They need good education even more than the rest of the kids. They need it even more. (Applause.) They need it even more. (Applause.) And they deserve it even more. (Applause.) They deserve it. (Applause.)

So I ask you to help me. And if we implement this budget -- children's health care, child and education tax credits, new businesses and jobs for our cities, welfare to work, high academic standards -- these things will help our people to make the most of their own lives. But empowerment is a concept which, by definition, implies a response from every individual. Empowerment means, here are the tools, what are you going to do with it. And, believe me, we still have not done everything we should for all of our cities, for our Nation's Capital, for all of our people. There will still be more work to be done. You will be doing a lot of it one on one, as mentors helping people. But at least the tools will be there.

Now, our people must do what Whitney Young said, and every one of them has to be prepared to take advantage of these opportunities. So I hope you'll go back to your communities and enlist more people in the Urban League's mission, more people who will make sure that this budget will come alive -- hiring someone off welfare, helping a child find his or her way, building partnerships with business to strengthen schools and create jobs, and reaching out across the lines of race and class and gender to find common ground, and build our common bridges to that bright new century.

Thank you, and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

4:04 P.M. EDT

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To: _____

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Elizabeth R. Newman
09/12/97 01:35:06 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Dr. David Satcher named Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary
for Health

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate
Release

September 12, 1997

PRESIDENT CLINTON NAMES DAVID SATCHER AS SURGEON GENERAL
AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HEALTH AT
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

President Clinton today announced the nomination of Dr. David
Satcher to serve as Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health at
the Department of Health and Human Services.

Dr. Satcher, of Tennessee, is a renowned physician, scholar, and
public health leader. He has been the Director of the Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention since November 1993. As Director of CDC, Dr. Satcher spearheaded initiatives that have increased childhood immunization rates, upgraded the nation's capability to respond to emerging infectious diseases, and laid the groundwork for a new Early Warning System to detect and prevent food-borne illnesses. During Dr. Satcher's tenure, the CDC has also placed a greater emphasis on prevention programs, including the CDC's comprehensive breast and cervical cancer screening program which was expanded from 18 to 50 states as well as the landmark Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health. Dr. Satcher also serves as Administrator of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Health and Human Services agency created by the Superfund law to prevent or mitigate adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life resulting from exposure to hazardous substances in the environment. Dr. Satcher was President of Meharry Medical College from 1982 to 1993. Prior to that, he served as professor and chairman of the Department of Community Medicine and Family Practice at the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta.

Dr. Satcher has received wide recognition during his career. In 1996, he received the prestigious Dr. Nathan B. Davis Award from the American Medical Association in the category of Executive Branch Member Serving by Presidential Appointment for outstanding public service to advance the public health. In 1986, he was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of his leadership skills. Dr. Satcher received a B.S. degree from Morehouse College and an M.D. and Ph.D. degree in Cytogenetics from Case Western Reserve University.

The Surgeon General serves as administrator and chief spokesperson for the Commissioned Corps and is the principal advisor on public health to the nation, providing national leadership and guidance for developing public health strategies. The Assistant Secretary for Health conducts broad assessments designed to anticipate future public health issues, and coordinates population-based, minority health, and women's health initiatives.

-30-30-30-

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Elizabeth R. Newman
09/12/97 05:19:43 PM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Proclamation: National Hispanic Heritage Month, 1997

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release
1997

September 12,

NATIONAL HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH, 1997

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

Throughout our history, America's promise of individual freedom and opportunity has drawn millions upon millions of immigrants from across the globe. As these newcomers arrived, they gradually wove their own traditions into the tapestry of our Nation's culture and society. The world's economy is becoming ever more interdependent and competitive, and these changes and others brought on by the revolution in communication technologies are lowering many of the old barriers to economic, cultural, and intellectual exchange among nations. In this new global community, we benefit greatly from the contributions that Hispanic Americans bring to our economy and our society.

As the youngest and fastest-growing segment of our population, Hispanic Americans are an increasingly vital part of our economy. In the first 3 years of our Administration, more than 220,000 Hispanic-American-owned businesses were created, and in recent years the number of companies owned by Hispanic women, in particular, has grown at three times the overall rate of business growth. Our citizens with roots in South and Central America, the Caribbean, and Spain have inherited an entrepreneurial spirit and an intense work ethic that have helped energize the strongest American economy in a generation. The new head of the Small Business Administration, Aida Alvarez, is a symbol of that spirit and its importance to America. Along with Secretary of Energy Federico Peña, Under Secretary of Agriculture I. Miley Gonzales, and Ambassador Bill Richardson, the United States Representative to the United Nations, Administrator Alvarez reflects my Administration's continuing commitment to bring highly qualified Hispanic Americans into the highest levels of Government.

Our Hispanic citizens also are vital to America's success in expanding trade and developing closer ties with nations throughout the Western Hemisphere. Sharing a rich cultural and linguistic heritage with Hispanic Americans, these nations are already among our closest trading partners, and we hope to further expand our relationships with them at the Summit of the Americas next March.

The contributions of Hispanic Americans to the life of our Nation are much more than economic. Their strong commitment to family, community, and country sets a shining example for all our people. Generations of Hispanic Americans have served and sacrificed in America's Armed Forces to defend liberty and advance democracy throughout the world. And Hispanic culture continues to deeply enrich our social, intellectual, and artistic life.

To meet the challenges of the 21st century, we must create a society that offers opportunity to all Americans, requires responsibility from all Americans, and nurtures a community of all Americans. Hispanic Americans throughout our country are working to build such a society. To honor them for their

more

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dedication to this endeavor and for their many contributions to our Nation and our culture, the Congress, by Public Law 100-402, has authorized and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation designating September 15 through October 15 as "National Hispanic Heritage Month."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 15 through October 15, 1997, as National Hispanic Heritage Month. I call upon all government officials, educators, and the people of the United States to honor this observance with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities, and I encourage all Americans to rededicate themselves to the pursuit of equality.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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----- Forwarded by Sharolyn A. Rosier/WHO/EOP on 04/29/98
02:48 PM -----

Brenda M. Anders
09/14/97 08:53:38 AM
Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Remarks by the President at the CBCF Gala 9/13/97

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release September 13, 1997

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS FOUNDATION GALA

Union Station

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much. Congresswoman Waters, every time you get up to speak I'm always all ears. When you introduce me I'm certainly all ears, I'm never quite sure what you're going to say --(laughter) -- but I'm absolutely sure you will say what you

think.

Maxine Waters is my kind of public official. I've been to her district several times with her. She knows the people in the street, the people on the corners. She cares about the people that other people forget. Her district is the first one where I met young men who had been in gangs, who were walking the streets with her to save the lives of other young people. That's the kind of thing she's done, and America owes Maxine Waters a debt of gratitude and I thank her. (Applause.)

I want to congratulate Congressman Clyburn and LeBaron Taylor and all of you who are responsible for this event tonight. I was glad to be here, too, with Congressman Gephardt, and with all the distinguished members of the audience. I see Kweisi Mfume there and Mrs. King and Mayor Barry, Dr. Height. Reverend Jackson, I'm always glad to see you. And I think I speak for many of us here when we say that you and your family and your mother are in our prayers, sir, God bless you. And thank you for the magnificent job you did leading, along with Secretary Slater, the American delegation to the African Economic Summit in Zimbabwe. (Applause.)

Let me also congratulate the award winners -- Major Owens and Eva Clayton, Bill Lucy and Danny Bakewell, Laura Murphy and William Brooks, Myrlie Evers-Williams, Coretta Scott King, the late Dr. Betty Shabazz and my good friend, the chairman of our Racial Reconciliation Advisory Board, Dr. John Hope Franklin.

And, finally, let me say one other word of introduction. One of your members is not here tonight because he had to go home to dedicate his new cathedral. But I want to wish Congressman Floyd Flake well as he leaves the United States Congress and goes home to his mission, where his heart is. (Applause.) Floyd Flake in his church has helped to start 11 businesses, employing hundreds of people in inner city neighborhoods who would not have jobs otherwise. That's the sort of partnership I'd like to see us make with African American churches all across the United States of America, so everybody who wants a job has one. So, even though he's going home, I want him to be a model that all of us here in Washington can continue to follow.

I want to say one serious thing. If you don't remember anything else tonight, remember this one sentence: I am profoundly grateful to the Congressional Black Caucus for making a dream of a lifetime come true -- I am the opening act for James Brown. (Applause.) In one of James Brown's songs he says, "I don't want nobody to give me nothing. Just open up the door, I'll get it myself." I think that's the motto of the CBC. And for four and half years we've been working together to open up those doors.

Today we see the results: unemployment below 5 percent, lowest African American unemployment in 24 years; 13 million new jobs, family incomes up, African American family income is up \$3,000 in three years; the lowest poverty rate among African Americans ever recorded; violent crime down five years in a row, record drops in welfare. That is the progress that I could not have possibly made if it had not been for the support of the Congressional Black Caucus, and I thank you very much for that. (Applause.)

MORE

And let me say that progress should spur us on, for there is still too much poverty, still too much lack of economic and educational opportunity. There is still too much discrimination. There is too much to do. And I come here today to say that, down to the last day of my presidency I will be there with you, working with you, fighting for a tomorrow that we can all share together.

I also want to thank the members of my administration who are here. Many have been noticed, but I'd like to say a special word of thanks to all the African Americans who work in the White House. And to Bob Nash, Goody Marshall, Ben Johnson, Minyon Moore, Terry Edmonds, Ann Walker, Tracy Thornton and Andy Blocker -- I know they're here -- there may be more. But I want to thank them for helping me to be a better President.

I also want to thank the CBC for its strong support of the man who will be the next Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, Bill Lee. He's here tonight and I thank you for sticking by him. (Applause.) For much of his career, Bill Lee's been a civil rights lawyer with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. He was not born into a position of leadership; instead, he's a Chinese American who worked his way out of poverty in Harlem to become a national leader in the fight for social justice. We need your support to ensure his confirmation. He will do a magnificent job.

I also want to ask your support for the man whom I nominated this week to be the next Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary of Health, Dr. David Satcher. (Applause.)

Finally, let me say, as the Congress comes back after its recess, I ask for your support to get from this Congress the money that was promised for the priorities we fought so hard for in the balanced budget agreement: the largest increase in aid to education since 1965, the biggest increase opening the doors of college to all -- and aid to college -- since 1945, and the biggest increase in health care for poor people and children since 1965. Now we've got to make good on the promises of that agreement. And I need your help to do that.

Finally, let me say that as we approach a new millennium, we must decide that we can never be what we ought to be unless we get there together. I was, just the other day, at American University in Washington. There are students from 140 different national and ethnic groups at American University. We don't have time for or room for discrimination. And we can no longer ignore the unfinished business of our past. We cannot continue to grow economically as long as there's a single soul in this country who needs a good quality education who can't get it and who is denied access to a job for which he or she is plainly qualified. We cannot do that.

And we have to decide, as a country, that we can't afford our past

baggage or our present blinders -- we've got to embrace a future in which we're all going forward together. Look around this room tonight -- you are the future of America. Your children and grandchildren are the future of America. And we are going to have the most exciting future that this country has ever had if we just make up our mind to make sure everybody has a chance to walk through that door together. (Applause.)

I ask for your support for Dr. John Hope Franklin and Judy Winston. I thank you for the National Town Hall Meeting on Race Relations in the New Millennium that you held. I ask you to remember this: Everybody who gets to serve in Congress, certainly someone who gets to serve as President, has had a chance -- all those folks -- we've had our chance to live our dreams; but there's still a lot of people our age that were denied that chance. There are huge numbers of people our parents' age who never had that chance. We should promise that there will be no one our children's age who will be denied that chance to walk through the door of their dreams. That is our mission and I promise to pursue it with you hand in hand until my last day as your President.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

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Julia R. Green
09/22/97 10:52:25 AM
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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Proclamation:Minority Enterprise Development Week

THE WHITE HOUSE

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

For Immediate Release

September 22, 1997

MINORITY ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT WEEK, 1997

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

The American economy today is the envy of the world. Since the beginning of my Administration, our economy has created nearly 13 million new jobs, unemployment has declined to 4.9 percent, and America has once again become the world's leading exporter.

Minority entrepreneurs have played a vital role in this success story. With their faith in our free enterprise system, their determination to overcome any barriers to success, their willingness to work long and hard and to make the most of every opportunity, they epitomize the American can-do spirit. They create jobs in communities where jobs are most needed, and they set a powerful example of achievement

for young people seeking to make the most of their lives.

In the years ahead, these minority business men and business women will become increasingly important to our Nation's competitive edge in the global economy, which will offer great rewards to those who truly understand life beyond our borders. Because of their racial, linguistic, and cultural diversity, minority entrepreneurs are uniquely positioned to meet the needs of this dynamic international marketplace.

Recognizing the contributions that minority enterprises make to the social and economic fabric of our Nation, we must continue to remove any barriers that prevent talented men and women of every racial and ethnic background from participating fully in America's economic mainstream. Working in partnership, government and private industry must ensure that minority-owned firms have equal access to capital, technical assistance, new markets, and opportunities for growth. We must attract new entrepreneurs to the marketplace and encourage existing firms to expand. By doing so, we can ensure that America's promise will continue to shine brightly for all our people.

As we observe Minority Enterprise Development Week, let us honor the energy, determination, and optimism of our Nation's minority entrepreneurs, whose hard work has done so much to help keep America strong, prosperous, and full of hope for the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do

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hereby proclaim September 21 through September 27, 1997, as minority Enterprise Development Week. I call on all Americans to commemorate this event with appropriate ceremonies and activities in acknowledgment of the many contributions that minority entrepreneurs bring to our national life.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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Julia R. Green
09/22/97 10:53:38 AM
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To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message
cc:
Subject: Proclamation: National Historically Black Colleges and
Universities Week

THE WHITE HOUSE

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

For Immediate Release

September 22, 1997

NATIONAL HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES
AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK, 1997

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A PROCLAMATION

We are a few short years away from the dawn of the 21st century, yet much of the challenge and change we have been anticipating is already upon us. We are competing today in a truly global economy, an economy based on information and technology as well as agriculture and industry. We are living in the age of the information revolution, the era of the World Wide Web, of daily advances in communications technology where a universe of knowledge is only a keyboard and a modem away. We are crossing the frontier into a new world, and our only map and compass in that world will be education.

We must build an educational system that prepares our young people for the jobs of the future. We must empower them with the values, experiences, and self-confidence to succeed in our diverse society. We must provide them with the knowledge and motivation to reach their full human potential -- and we must leave no one behind. In devising such an educational system, we need only look to America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) for a model of excellence.

This extraordinary network of institutions, more than a century old, has created a legacy of unquestioned accomplishment in fostering student success. Founded to educate African Americans in a segregated society, these colleges and universities have flourished and built an enviable record of achievement in educating America's black scientists, doctors, teachers, lawyers, artists, entrepreneurs, community and religious leaders, and other professionals. They have provided generations of students with access to highly supportive environments for learning. The experience and expertise of HBCUs make them an invaluable resource to our Nation during this period of significant change.

America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities daily demonstrate effective leadership in a multitude of ways: they develop and practice innovative academic approaches to ensure student success; they create campus programs that offer new solutions to critical social

problems; they produce cutting-edge research with practical applications; and they forge strong global relationships from a myriad of international activities. Moreover, against formidable financial odds, they have persisted in keeping education affordable for the constituencies they serve, without sacrificing quality. They have never allowed scarce funding, poor educational preparation, or societal disadvantage to get in the way of their mission to educate and nurture the intellectual potential of the black community.

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Historically Black Colleges and Universities have done more to make the American Dream a reality for African Americans than has any other set of institutions in our country. These institutions are poised to enter the 21st century, ready to build on this tradition of excellence, achievement, and reverence for education. We can count on them to continue to make vital contributions to our Nation's success and to ensure that America lives up to our fundamental values of equality and opportunity.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 21 through September 27, 1997, as National Historically Black Colleges and Universities Week. I call upon the people of the United States, including government officials, educators, and administrators, to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities honoring America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their graduates.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this nineteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

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COGDELL_C @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
Lawrence J. Haas/OMB/EOP
INFOMGT @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
JOHNSON_WC @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
LIZIK_C @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
SULLIVAN_M @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
SUNTUM_M @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
WOZNIAK_N @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
backup @ wilson.ai.mit.edu @ INET @ LNGTWY
newsdesk @ usnewswire.com @ INET @ LNGTWY
usia01 @ access.digex.com @ INET @ LNGTWY
usnwire @ access.digex.com @ INET @ LNGTWY
wh-outbox-distr @ clinton.ai.mit.edu @ INET @ LNGTWY
GRAY_W @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
NAPLAN_S @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
WEINER_R @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
GRIBBEN_J @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
RILEY_R @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
ROBINSON_C @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
RONNEL_S @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
tnewell @ ostp.eop.gov @ INET @ LNGTWY
Roger V. Salazar/OVP @ OVP
Joseph P. Lockhart/WHO/EOP
Elizabeth R. Newman/WHO/EOP
Carolyn Curiel/WHO/EOP
Jordan Tamagni/WHO/EOP
HEMMIG_M @ A1 @ CD @ LNGTWY
Serena C. Torrey/WHO/EOP
Kevin S. Moran/WHO/EOP
Ashley L. Raines/OA/EOP
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Kevin S. Moran
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10/08/97 04:59:40 PM
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Special Envoy for Promotion of Democracy in Africa

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

For Immediate
Release
1997

October 8,

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

Appointment of Reverend Jesse Jackson as Special Envoy for the
President and the Secretary of State for the Promotion of Democracy in
Africa

The President today announced the Administration's intent to
appoint Reverend Jesse Jackson to be Special Envoy for the President and
the Secretary of State for the promotion of democracy in Africa.

Reverend Jackson will undertake specific projects to further the
President's and the Secretary of State's objectives to bolster
democratic progress, promote good governance, and build and sustain
democratic reform in Africa. In these special projects, Reverend Jackson
will also undertake to encourage greater respect for human rights and the
improved functioning of democratic institutions throughout the continent,
and build bridges to further cooperation with Africa.