

**Remarks to Delegates to the 18th Annual American Legion "Boys Nation."
July 24, 1963**

The Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy 1963, Pg. 597, Item 312, July 24

Gentlemen:

I want to introduce to you members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who are visiting here this morning. I knew that you would want to say hello to them and they would want to say hello to you: General LeMay, who is head of the Air Force; Admiral Anderson, who is head of the Navy, General Wheeler, who is head of the Army; and General Shoup, who is head of the Marine Corps.

The Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy 1963, Pg. 598, Item 312, July 24

I want to welcome all of you to the White House. I read about your meeting last night. It seemed to me that you showed more initiative in some ways than the Governor's Conference down in Miami and we are impressed by it. And I want to congratulate Mr. Stratton on his overwhelming majority. Those of us who just skim by are properly admiring.

The Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy 1963, Pg. 598, Item 312, July 24

We want to welcome you to the White House particularly because this belongs to all of you and because it is so intimately connected with the best in American history. These trees which are just behind you were planted by Andrew Jackson when he was here in the White House. The tallest tree over there was planted by the first President who came to the White House, John Adams. So all around you is the story of the United States and I think all of us have a pride in our country.

The Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy 1963, Pg. 598, Item 312, July 24

I recently took a trip to Europe and I was impressed once again by the strong feeling that most people have, even though they may on occasions be critical of our policies; a strong feeling that the United States stands for freedom, that the promises in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence while they may not be fully achieved we are attempting to move to the best of our ability in that direction, that without the United States they would not be free and with the United States they are free, and it is the United States which stands on guard all the way from Berlin to Saigon.

The Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy 1963, Pg. 598, Item 312, July 24

So I think as citizens of this country you can take pride in it. I want to congratulate the American Legion. This is only one of the many good things the American Legion does--ball, athletics, working with youth. I think the fact is the American Legion looks to the future as well as the past. So we want to express our thanks to them and I want to welcome all of you to the White House. No group could be more appropriately visiting here now. We want you to feel very much at home.

Thank you.

The Public Papers of the Presidents, John F. Kennedy 1963, Pg. 598, Item 312, July 24

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:45 a.m. in the Flower Garden at the White House. During his

remarks he referred to Richard J. Stratton of Leland, Ill., who had been elected President of Boys Nation the previous evening.



Laura K. Capps
07/22/98 04:32:51 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Jeffrey A. Shesol/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: boys nation draft

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
BOYS NATION
JULY 24, 1998**

REMARKS TO
Acknowledgments: George Blume, Boys Nation Legislative Director; Ron Engel, Boys Nation Director; Jack Mercier, Director of Activities; Sean Stephenson, Boys Nation class of 1996, now an intern in IGA; Fred Duval, Deputy Assistant to the President

a little more on how it felt - how we got there - bus trip? (see margin)
Thirty-five years ago, ^{I was 16.} I sat where you are today and I believed that anything was possible. President Kennedy spoke to us about the future and made me believe that, together, we could change the world. I think that is certainly no less true for you and your generation. You will live in the time of greatest possibility in all human history.

signpost: today, I want to talk about..
Just think of how the circle of opportunity has been widened in America over the course of your ~~short~~ lifetimes: The Cold War, which cast a shadow over your parents and older siblings' childhoods, has ended. Our budget deficit in 1981 was 79 billion, then rose to a record high of 290 billion, and now ^{we have} ~~has been~~ eliminated ^{it} altogether. Technology has advanced at a breathtaking pace --fundamentally altering the way we all live, work, and learn. A typical laptop computer today has more computer power ~~in it~~ than the world's largest supercomputer did in the year you were born. And access to technology has expanded. When you first entered elementary school there were was one computer for every 80 students. Now, there is a computer for every 8 of our country's elementary students. And we are working to connect every classroom to the Internet.

can't wait... down to
More and more of America's children are making the most of the American dream by extending their education past high school. When I was ~~a~~ ^{25%} your age, ^{one quarter} of high school students dropped out of school and less than half went on to college. Now, the dropout rate is about 5%, ^{while} ~~and~~ nearly 70% of the class of '99 will take their education further. With the help of the HOPE Scholarship tax credits of \$1,500 a year for first two years of college, continuing education tax credits, and increased PELL grants, we have opened the doors to college wider than they ever have been before.

here, as I was 35 yrs. ago
→ Like me, many of you are ~~sitting where you are today~~, in part, because of our public education system. America's public schools are a cornerstone of our democracy. And over

the past five and a half years we have begun a revolution of high standards and high expectations, of genuine accountability and real choice in education. We ^{have} done so based on the principles that every child in every community must master the basics with national standards in reading and math. Every child must have the chance to learn in small classes, especially in the early grades. That's why I proposed a national effort to hire 100,000 more teachers and distribute them in a way that will lower the size of classes ~~down~~ to an average of 18 in the first three grades. Every child should have more public school choice and the opportunity to learn in a modern, safe, state-of-the-art school. And no child in any community should be passed from grade to grade, year after year, without mastering the material.

gen

We strongly support expanding choice in public education. Some of you here know just how important those choices are, having gone to public schools of choice yourselves: Sean McGuire of Tennessee [↑] attends the Brentwood Academy in Brentwood, Tennessee. And David Haller attends a school close to my heart, ^{↑ my home} the Arkansas School of Math and Science in Hot Springs, Arkansas - which I helped start as Governor.

trans. to choice

Before this: something about wanting as a nation, all students to have the choice D. + G. did.

→ our This administration is doing all we can to enable families across the nation to have the choice that David and Sean had by developing ~~of~~ new charter public schools. When I was elected President, there was only one charter school in the country, in Minnesota. Hillary and I had spent a lot of time on school reform in Arkansas, and were very excited about the prospect of charter schools. This year, I set forth the challenge for 3,000 charter schools by the year 2002. I am happy to announce that this fall there will be more than 1,000 charter schools, serving 250,000 children across the land. We are well on our way to meeting our goal.

- then, trans to charter - begin w/ gen state-ment of value

To help us get there, we are learning all we can about what has makes these schools so successful. According to new data from the Department of Education, we know that parents choose charter schools because of their small, safe, and nurturing environment. And because ~~of their academic program and high standards of excellence~~. We know that charter schools tend to be small, an average of 150 students, enabling them to provide a more personal environment. We also asked the starters of charter schools about the obstacles they face and learned that their number one challenge is finding the funding needed to plan and start them. I'm proud to say that our current budget provides \$80 million in start-up funds. I am calling on Congress to increase this funding to \$100 million in next year's budget.

well as

We know that charter schools, as all schools, have a fundamental responsibility to the students, parents and the communities they serve. These schools must be models of accountability for public education, "chartered" only if they meet high standards of quality and only stay open as long as this standard is met. To help make this happen, the Education Department has released a guidebook for the public agencies responsible for approving charters. This guidebook draws on lessons learned from around the country to help determine if a proposed school will have a rigorous academic program, sound management practices, and clear measures by which the school is held accountable. Working together we will help chart the right course for the future of charter schools, [↑] and for American children.

Charter schools are driving the renaissance of the public education. They are formed

will drive the renewal

- by the power of their new ideas

out of specific needs and strong commitments from parents and communities. They foster flexibility, creativity and innovation. And charter schools are resolutely public with open enrollment, reaffirming our obligation to educate all our children.

redundant
- use up top rhetorically

In the past few years, a lot has been done to improve our schools by dedicated teachers, fine principals, supportive parents, other committed reformers, and our students. Our public school system is the best in the world, but we can make it better. The boys of Boys Nation are clearly committed to serving their country and serving their communities. I urge all of you to think about what you can do for your schools. Some of you may go on to become teachers and professors, and some of you may work at public educational institutions. But all of you can find a link to the public schools where you will live. If you work at a business, you can forge a partnership to strengthen that school. If you learn a trade you can donate your services and pass on your expertise. If you make the time, you can volunteer in programs like "America Reads" and help young children learn all the things you just accomplished.

stay in school, stay w/ school, even after grad.

With 90% of America's children attending public schools, now is not the time to drain precious resources away from our public school system. Now is the time to reaffirm our commitment and find ways to enhance and improve the quality of public education. We live in an economy of ideas. That means all the opportunities of tomorrow are those that are in the minds of our children waiting to be brought out. It is up to all of us to ^{nurture them, to} bring them ^{to life} out. As President Kennedy said, "Education is both the foundation and the unifying force of our democratic way of life -- it is mainspring of our economic and social progress -- it is the highest expression of achievement in our society, ennobling and enriching human life. In short, it is at the same time the most profitable investment society can make and the richest reward it can confer. Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education."

trans?

Better beginning? This 4. CAN't go else- where?

that day in 1963 (?)

too long... pare down to 2 sentz, probably

more exhortatory rhetorical

CENTER FOR EDUCATION REFORM:

A driving force behind the implementation of charter laws in a number of states has been the desire to increase the amount and variety of schools available to educate disadvantaged children. In fact, a study of over 100 operating charter schools by the Education Commission of the States and the Center for School Change found that half of them specifically serve at-risk students. The study also reports that another compelling motive behind the creation of charters is the opportunity to provide "better teaching and learning for all kids." A study by the Hudson Institute found that 19% of the 8,400 students in charter schools they surveyed had disabilities or impediments that affect their education, indicated that charter in fact serve proportionately more disabled youngsters than traditional public schools. The following is just some evidence of how and where this student-centered innovation is happening:

The Charter Schools of San Diego, with 16 separate store-front locations, serves 900 students who have failed in traditional public schools. A study by The San Diego Chamber of Commerce Business Roundtable for Education and Charter Schools Consortium found that overall, California charter schools enroll 53% minority students, as well as large numbers of students from low-income families.

Minnesota's Metro Deaf charter school has served hearing-impaired students and their families since 1993, and Central Minnesota Deaf School opened this September. In Minnesota, charter schools enroll 45% minorities, compared to the 16% enrolled by their host districts.

According to a study by the Pioneer Institute, 48% of Massachusetts's charter school students are minorities (the state average is 21%); 39% qualify for the free lunch program (7% of Massachusetts families live in poverty); and 18 % speak a language other than English as their primary language (the state average is 7 %).

11 of Texas' first 20 charters expressly serve at-risk students; 72% of the state's charter school enrollment is designated "at-risk," compared to 39% for the entire state. For example, SER-NINOS in Houston enrolls 154 students, 88% of whom are Hispanic, 84% LEP (limited English proficiency), and 90% at-risk. A 1997 amendment to the charter law provides for the approval of an unlimited number of charter schools that serve at-risk students.

The charter school movement is bringing new educational hope and opportunity to some of the communities and families who need and want it most. Because of the increased freedom and flexibility of charter schools, teachers, parents and communities can establish schools that more directly address the special needs of their children, and provide new outlets to children who might truly benefit from a school that operates outside the traditional factory model.

Still, obstacles and opposition abound. Those with a vested interest in the status quo seek to stop charters before they even get started, by killing legislation or watering it down to

ineffectiveness, or by controlling, and in many cases denying, approval to charter applicants. In addition, financial and technical difficulties beleaguer charter school operators who struggle to launch a viable institution, both operationally and academically, with few financial, physical or managerial resources, often in a very short time, and under greater public scrutiny and against higher standards than most traditional public schools ever encounter.

Nevertheless, the impressive growth in number and scope of charter schools in the last half decade gives testimony to their success. The Vaughn Next Century Learning Center serves perhaps as an archetype of the trials and triumphs that characterize the charter school movement. The conversion charter school, located in the Los Angeles Unified School District, serves 1,140 students, of whom nearly 95 % are Hispanic, and 83 % limited English proficient. In the last five years, student achievement has gone up 330 %, bringing student performance close to the national median in math and language; attendance is 99.4 %; and the number of students who are now proficient enough in language to be taught in English has tripled. The school realized a \$1 million surplus in its first year of operation as a charter, and with the budget control gained through its charter has made a wide range of improvements: in its first year, the school reduced class sizes, hired new teachers, and added a computer lab and a teacher resource center; more recently, the school bought and plowed under a neighborhood crack house to make way for building expansion. Vaughn's successes, however, have not been won without occasional battles with the district's various power brokers, including a number of conflicts with the school board over funding, and with the teachers' union over health care coverage.

"The success of Vaughn Next Century Learning Center, and more especially the success of its students — and of all the charter schools that have improved the educational experience for children, families and educators in their community — has been an inspiration to and an aspiration for charter advocates from state to state. With the chance to design and run schools that are accountable for educating students, but not bound to follow endless government dictates, parents, educators and citizens across the country are taking advantage of the opportunity to create new, truly neighborhood schools."

-----Angela H. Dale
Director of Research
October, 1997

Draft 07/23/98 2:00pm
Jeff Shesol and Laura Capps

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO BOYS NATION
THE WHITE HOUSE
July 24, 1998**

Acknowledgments: Sec. Riley; Ron Engel, Boys Nation Director; George Blume, Boys Nation Legislative Director; Jack Mercier, Director of Activities; Joseph Caouette [COW-ette] Natl. Chairman for the American Legion; Kevin Sladek, Boys Nation President; Jeff Rogers, Boys Nation Vice President; Sean Stephenson, Boys Nation Class of 1996, now an intern in Cabinet Affairs; Fred Duval, Dep. Asst. to the President, Senator at Boys Nation Class of 1972.

Thirty-five summers ago, I came to Washington as a Senator of Boys Nation. Like you, I debated the issues of the day, built party platforms, and crafted legislation. On July 24, 1963 -- exactly 35 years ago today -- President Kennedy spoke to us about the future and made me believe that, together, we could change the world. I still believe that, and it is no less true for your generation. You live in the time of greatest possibility in all human history. Today, I want to discuss the ways to make the most of those possibilities, and, specifically, to strengthen the education system that has helped make you the student leaders of today, and the national leaders of tomorrow.

Just think how the world has changed, how the circle of opportunity has been widened in America over the course of your lifetimes: The Cold War, which cast a shadow over much of this century, has ended. Our budget deficit ballooned to a record high of 290 billion; and now we have eliminated it altogether. Technology has accelerated at a breathtaking pace, transforming the way we live, work, and learn -- and endowing a laptop computer today with more computer power than the world's largest supercomputer possessed in the year you were born. Access to technology has expanded. When you entered elementary school there was one computer for every eighty students; now, there is one for every eight. Meanwhile, we are working to connect every single classroom in America to the Internet.

For America to sit back now, and bask in the sunlight of our prosperity, would be to squander a great opportunity. The challenges of the 21st Century -- your century -- are many; and they demand attention and action. We must save Social Security and Medicare, programs which give dignity and strength to America's families; and must work to bring the benefits of the new economy -- the strongest in a generation -- to all our people. We must build the best health care system in the world, and pass a Patient's Bill of Rights -- to ensure that medical decisions are made by medical doctors, not accountants or insurance agents. We must recognize our environmental challenges as real and global, and join together as nations to resolve them. We must continue to be engaged in the world, forging partnerships of security and prosperity with our neighbors, far and near. And here at home, we must continue to come together, across boundaries of race and culture, living and thriving as One America in the 21st

Draft 07/23/98 5:00pm
Jeff Shesol and Laura Capps

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Just consider how America, how the world has changed since then: The Cold War, which President Kennedy called a "long twilight struggle," has ended, with a triumph of the forces of freedom over totalitarianism. Back then, a subject of real debate within Boys Nation was whether racial segregation should be legal in the United States. For all the distance we have left to travel, there is no denying we have come a very long way. Technology has accelerated at a breathtaking pace, taking man to the moon and back, transforming the way we live, work, and learn. The American economy was prosperous in 1963, but slid into a long period of deficits and decline; but we balanced the budget and now have the strongest economy since that time.

For America to sit back now, and bask in the sunlight of our prosperity, would be to squander a great opportunity. The challenges of the 21st Century -- your century -- are many. They are big challenges and they demand attention and action. We must save Social Security and Medicare, programs which give dignity and strength to America's families; and must work to bring the benefits of the new economy -- the strongest in a generation -- to all our people. We must build the best health care system in the world, and pass a Patient's Bill of Rights -- to ensure that medical decisions are made by medical doctors, not accountants or insurance agents. We must recognize our environmental challenges as real and global, and join together as nations to resolve them. We must continue to be engaged in the world, forging partnerships of security and prosperity with our neighbors, far and near. And here at home, we must continue to come together, across boundaries of race and culture, living and thriving as One

America in the 21st Century.

Today I want to speak about something a little closer to home for all of you: our nation's schools, and the opportunities only a first-class education can bring. The achievements of you and your generation are testament to that. When I was in Boys Nation, one quarter of America's high school students dropped out of school; less than half went on to college. Now, the dropout rate is down to 5%, while nearly 70% of the class of 1999 will take their education further. With the help of HOPE Scholarships, continuing education tax credits, and increased PELL grants, we are opening the doors of college wider than ever before.

Many of you are here, as I was 35 years ago, in part because of a special teacher, a great class, a strong public school. America's public schools have always been a cornerstone of our democracy. At a time of increasing immigration, they bind us together. Ninety percent of America's children attend public schools; and in an age of information and ideas, a strong public education system is more important than ever. Now is not the time to drain precious resources from this sacred public trust. Strengthening public education for the 21st century must be America's first priority. It is my first priority.

There can be no question: if America's schools are to succeed in the next century, we must raise standards for teachers and students, we must heighten accountability, and must widen parent choice in education. We must expect more of everyone: of students, who must master the basics and behave with respect; of teachers, who must instill an ethic of discipline and responsibility in our classrooms; and of schools, which should be safe and state-of-the-art.

That is why my administration is working to strengthen America's public schools. I have called for smaller classes and 100,000 new teachers to fill them -- teachers that pass rigorous competency tests before they set foot in the classroom. I have called for an end to social promotion, so that no child is passed from grade to grade, year after year, without mastering the materials. I have called for the modernization of our schools, and we are working to connect every classroom to the Internet. These are important investments. We must not, as a nation, shortchange what should be the world's finest system of public education. As President Kennedy said, "Our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education." It is time, then, for Congress to put progress above partisanship, leave politics at the schoolhouse door, and strengthen America's public schools.

We know that public schools are strengthened by the competition, and innovation, brought by public school choice. Public school choice gets parents and communities involved in education -- not just helping with homework, not just attending parent-teacher conferences, but actually in shaping schools. Some of you, having gone to public schools of choice, may know this from experience: David Haller, for example, attends a school close to my heart and my home, the Arkansas School of Math and Science in Hot Springs -- which I helped start as

Governor.

Across our nation, public school choice and, in particular, charter schools, are renewing public education with the power of their new ideas. Charter schools are creative schools. Charter schools are innovative schools. They are resolutely public, with open enrollment, and are strengthened by the commitment of parents and educators in the communities they serve. They can be models of accountability for public schools, "chartered" only when they meet rigorous standards of quality, and remaining open only as long as they meet those standards.

According to new data from the Department of Education, parents are choosing charter schools because they are small, safe, and nurturing, and building records of academic excellence. For instance, the Los Angeles Accelerated Charter School in South Central L.A. was founded by two teachers with strong will and a clear vision, Jonathan Williams and Kevin Sved, whom I met with last year in California. They have a lot to be proud of, and so do their students. At L.A. Accelerated Charter School, students whose math scores were in the 29th percentile last year are in the 40th percentile this year -- that's a 37 percent jump.

If all families are to reap the rewards of educational choice, America must develop more charter schools. When I was elected President, there was only one charter school in the country, in Minnesota. I am pleased to announce that this fall there will be more than 1,000 of them, serving nearly a quarter of a million children across the land. And this year, I have set forth the challenge to create 3,000 charter schools by the year 2002.

Across the nation, communities are learning from each other's success, sharing important information: The Department of Education has released a guidebook to help determine whether a proposed school will meet high standards of academics, accountability, and management.

But charter school pioneers still face an important challenge: finding the funds to start a school. Those who have launched charter schools have told the Education Department this was the chief obstacle they had to overcome. To make it easier for parents and educators to innovate, I have proposed to increase the \$80 million for start-up funds in this year's budget to \$100 million in next year's budget. Again, as I have said, it is time to strengthen America's public schools, not to drain their precious resources.

Many of you are preparing to graduate and to leave your hometown schools. In the years to come, I urge all of you to think about how you can give back to those schools. Some of you may do so by becoming teachers and professors. But whatever you do, wherever life's travels take you, every one of you can find an enduring connection to education. Forging business partnerships. Volunteer your time. Share your trade expertise. My message to you today is not to just stay in school until you graduate, but to stay with school after you

graduate. By making that commitment, you will provide for your country the most important public service you could possibly imagine, and you will do your part for the future of America.

The New York Times, June 14, 1998

Charter schools do more with less. In our first year, North Star received an average of \$7,480 in basic government aid for each of its students, or roughly 83 percent of what was spent on their Newark peers. (That rate is slated to go to 90 percent next year. The remaining 10 percent stays at the district -- even for charter-school students it is no longer educating -- to cover its operating expenses.) Given that the state mandates that the aid follows the child to the charter school, many smaller, middle-class communities -- Red Bank, Teaneck, Matawan -- have tried to keep charter operators out, arguing that they plunder public schools.

In truth, charter schools may be the last, best hope for public education. Quality charters can stem the exodus of students to private schools and attract residents to the towns where they are located, thereby bumping up tax revenues (and funds for public schools). Nationwide, wise superintendents are incubating charter schools as a tool to foster innovation and generate increased parent choice. They use economies of scale to sell classroom space and janitorial, cafeteria, music and counseling services to the start-ups.

Charter schools are no panacea, but they can play the role of public education's R & D arm. They don't presage the collapse of public schools, but their renaissance. After all, the great educational philosopher John Dewey once said that "democracy as an ethical ideal calls upon men and women to build communities." Charter schools represent the best opportunity today for citizens to reach for and fulfill such a civic imperative.

GRAPHIC: Photo: North Star Academy, a charter school in Newark, has a waiting list of 250 students. (Photographs by Linda Rosier for The New York Times)

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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May 11, 1998

SECTION: No. 19, Vol. 21; Pg. 4; ISSN: 0164-5935

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HEADLINE: Education savings accounts pass Senate; bill stirs debate over federal education role; bill ignores financing for public school repair and construction while supplying tax breaks for parochial and private school expenses; includes related information on bill's provisions; Brief Article

BYLINE: Shafroth, Frank

BODY:

The Senate narrowly passed a controversial bill sponsored by Sens. Paul Coverdell (R-Ga.) and Robert Torricelli (D-N.J.) to provide federal tax breaks for private and parochial elementary and secondary school expenses and tuition after rejecting proposals by the White House to provide more than \$ 22 billion in assistance to local governments for public school construction and repair work. The actions increased the chances of a Presidential veto while dimming any chance for federal assistance to meet more than \$ 100 billion in public school construction and repair needs.

The bill was adopted on a 56-43 vote after days of rancorous debate demonstrating deep divides on the federal role in education. The issue is how the 7 percent of education funds provided by the federal government should be used--the bulk of public school financing is almost evenly divided between state and local governments. Republicans want federal funds to be available to expand opportunities for public school alternatives, while Democrats fear any subsidy that would reduce the commitment to public schools. They also want funds block granted to states or local school boards instead of targeted towards low income families.

The House passed similar legislation last year. The House and Senate will now have to work out a final compromise to send to the President for his signature or veto.

After the Senate action, President Clinton reiterated his veto threat, "I will veto it because it weakens our commitment to making America's schools the best they can be in the 21st century. The bill would disproportionately benefit highest-income taxpayers. Families who are struggling to make ends meet would never see a penny of it."

The bill would allow family members, charitable groups, or private donors to contribute up to \$ 2,000 a year for each elementary or secondary student into special savings accounts that could be used for education-related expenses, including tutoring, computers and private school tuition. The interest on the

Nation's Cities Weekly May 11, 1998

money and withdrawals from the account would be tax free and could be rolled over for college expenses. The new tax breaks would cost the federal government \$ 1.6 billion over 10 years. The tax break would be phased out for individuals who make more than \$ 95,000 a year.

In addition, the bill as adopted on the Senate floor, includes two provisions virtually guaranteed to kill any chance of the bill ever becoming law. By a vote of 50 to 49, the Senate adopted a Coverdell amendment to convert nearly all federal money for education programs into block grants for participating states.

The accounts would cost the Treasury \$ 1.6 billion over 10 years.

RELATED ARTICLE: Major Provisions of HR 2646 as passed by the Senate

* Tax-free savings accounts would be allowed to cover expenses or elementary and secondary education including that of children in private schools and those taught at home. Qualified expenses would include (1) tuition, tutoring, books and supplies, computers and equipment and (2) room and board, uniforms, transportation and supplementary items (including after-school care).

* Up to \$ 2,000 a year could be contributed by parents, other relatives, charities, foundations, corporations, or employers. The bill would expand on tax-favored savings accounts enacted last year to allow tax-free savings of \$ 500 a year for college and university.

* Withdrawals and accumulated interest would be tax-free, but contributions would not be deductible the savings accounts would be phased out for individuals earning more than \$ 95,000 a year and families making more than \$ 150,000.

* Companies would receive a tax deduction for employee education assistance.

* Prepaid college tuition plans would be completely tax deductible.

* About \$ 10.3 billion in education programs would be converted into block grants, if state vote to choose block grants over federally administered programs.

* Voluntary national tests in reading and mathematics would be prohibited, under an amendment approved by the Senate, unless specifically approved by the Congress.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

IAC-CREATE-DATE: June 11, 1998

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choose to go to the Moon and to do other things not because they're easy but because they're hard, because the challenges are ones we are willing to accept, unwilling to postpone, and ones we intend to win."

We should be willing to accept this challenge.

unwilling to postpone it, and let's intend to win. Thanks for listening, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 8 p.m. on July 22 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 24.

Remarks to the American Legion Boys Nation July 24, 1993

The President. Thank you very much, and please be seated. I told the Vice President what I was about to do, and he wanted to come out and say hello to you. But he has another meeting; he's trying to pass our economic plan, so he has to go. He just wanted to say hello. So I'm going to let him come up here and say a few words to you, so he can go back to work while I have a good time with you.

The Vice President. Thanks very much. I know this is a very exciting day for all of you. And I want to wish you well. And if there is anyone here who has in the back of his mind any notion at all of going into public service or politics, I only have one word of advice. If you can manage somehow to get a picture of you shaking hands with President Clinton here today, it might come in handy later on. [Laughter]

The President. Thank you very much, and welcome. I want to acknowledge the presence here of the national commander of the American Legion, Roger Munson; and the national chaplain, James Wagner; the executive director, John Sommer; and the director of activities, Jack Mercier, who was at Boys Nation 30 years ago when I was here—he started I think 31 years ago; George Blume, the legislative director; and a number of people here from my time of involvement, including one Member of Congress, a Republican from Minnesota, Congressman Jim Ramstad. Where are you? Stand up there. I think all of you know that we're also having a 30-year reunion here this weekend, those of us who were here with me. And the organizer of that was Judge Pete Johnson from Alabama. Pete, where are you? Stand up over there. Gary Sammons, the chair of the National Americanism Commission, is here, the policymaking body that oversees Boys Nation. He was a Michigan Boys Stater in 1963. And I'm just curious.

Would all the people who are here from our reunion class of '63 please stand up. See, they look pretty good, don't they? None the worse for the wear. [Applause] Thank you.

Let me say to all of them, we're going to have this ceremony, I'm going to take pictures with the young men who are here as delegates, and then afterward I hope all of you here for the reunion will hang around a little and we'll have a chance to visit, too.

For those of you who are here, I say welcome, and those of you who were here 30 years ago, I say welcome back. All of us share a common bond. We owe a great deal of gratitude to the American Legion for the exceptional chance they have given us and so many others over the last many, many years to learn so much about the responsibilities as well as the rights we have as American citizens.

Three decades to the day have passed since my group and I were here in the Rose Garden to meet President Kennedy. But I think that all of us probably remember exactly how we felt then. It was a very different time for America. There was virtually no cynicism. None of us had any doubt that our country could solve its problems, meet its challenges, bridge its gaps. Nor did we have any doubt that our President, our Congress, the people whom we elected, could faithfully and fully represent us in meeting the great challenges of that day.

One of the most important moments at Boys Nation is the debate about resolutions. And 30 years ago when we were here, believe it or not, we always assumed that President Kennedy would be running for reelection, that Senator Goldwater would probably be his opponent, although there was a lot of turmoil within the Republican Party at that time about who the nominee would be, and that the great issue

would be civil rights. Our Boys Nation group passed a resolution against racial discrimination. Many of us had grown up in segregated societies. We understood the pain, the cost, the incredible waste in human potential that that had caused. And so we voted for it.

I was very proud to be one of the southerners that voted for it, and I think that two others that I remember were my two colleagues from Louisiana. I think they're both here today, and they both voted for it. I remember clearly the discussions we had late at night in the dorms discussing it.

The Nation's Governors had just met that week, and they broke up their resolution conference so they wouldn't have to deal with civil rights. So when we showed up here, President Kennedy said that we had shown more initiative than the Nation's Governors. Now, we loved it, but the Governors didn't like it very much. And it got him in a lot of hot water with them.

Sixteen weeks later, President Kennedy was taken from us before he was able to fulfill his commitments in civil rights. But when President Johnson and the civil rights movement carried it through, it was the greatest domestic achievement of my lifetime, and it helped to make possible so many good things for so many people over the last 30 years, even though, to be sure, the work is nowhere near over.

Most of you now attending Boys Nation were born in 1976, the bicentennial year of our independence. And you will live your entire lives in the third century of America's life. I think about that often because my daughter will soon be your age, and everything that we are working on that really matters is designed as much to help you and your tomorrows as to improve the lives of Americans today.

We have a covenant with you which requires us to make some very tough choices. We have some of the same problems we had in 1963 but some very different ones as well. From the time we became a nation until 1980, we had amassed over that entire life of this country a national debt of only \$1 trillion. As a percentage of our income, it seemed to be quite manageable, and we were still free to invest in those things we ought to invest in. In the last 12 years, partly because of misguided policies, partly because of gridlock, partly because of people trying to outbid one another, we have gone from \$1 to \$4 trillion in national debt. The estimated annual deficit when I took office was well over

\$300 billion, although we've gotten it down some this year. And clearly, we have unmet needs that we don't have the money to invest in.

As compared with many other nations, just for example, we spend too little money on new technologies for the 21st century which will shape the jobs that you and your colleagues will have. We spend too little money on the continued education and training of our work force. We have all kinds of other challenges occasioned by the build-down of the reduction in defense spending. We owe it to the people who worked hard to help us win the cold war not to leave them out in the cold, and yet we don't have all the funds we need to spend on that. And yet, we have this enormous debt. It is a terrible dilemma for this country.

We have whole sections of America where unemployment is too high and poverty is too high and the major source of income is drugs and the major organizations that works in society are gangs. We have to change all that. But we have to also free ourselves economically of the paralysis that this enormous annual deficit and the accumulated debt impose. And so we are trying to do that here for you as well as for your parents and your grandparents.

In your lifetime, communism, the great threat of my childhood, has been defeated. I can still remember going to high school assemblies and junior high school assemblies and sitting there being given instructions about how to find the nearest bomb shelter and what we would do if a nuclear war occurred. I can still remember hearing people speak about what communism was like in the Soviet Union and how there would be a lifelong struggle between the forces of freedom and the forces of communism. Well, in 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell, it was a stunning reaffirmation of America's commitment to freedom and democracy and to free market economics and the right of individuals to seek their own way as long as they didn't hurt their communities. That is an incredible achievement. In all probability, you will be able to raise your children without any threat of the annihilation of this society or this globe on which we live.

On the other hand, as we have learned from every source of wisdom beginning with the Scriptures, there will never be an end to problems, never be an end to challenges. It is part of human nature that as new opportunities develop, new problems do, too. We have to do

something about our debt here. We have to invest. We have to compete. We have to create opportunities for your future. We also have to recognize that the world remains a dangerous place, and there are people running governments who desperately want to develop weapons of mass destruction and have very little concern what is done in retaliation to their own citizens. That is a deeply troubling thing. We still face the threat of terrorism from people who honestly believe that the best way to achieve their political objectives is to kill, even if they kill innocent people. And we still have the terrible, terrible burden of knowing that in spite of all the progress we have made, there are millions of Americans who do not have the chance to grow up to live to their God-given potential. And until that happens, we will never be as secure, as strong, as full as we need to be.

We are trying, among other things in this administration, to make people believe again that their collective efforts can make a difference. Until the American people can overcome their cynicism and believe that if they act, it can matter, it is going to be very difficult for us to solve the problems of this country. I believe that every Member of Congress, without regard to party, would admit that the National Government has a responsibility to set up a framework within which opportunity can be seized, but that many of our problems have to be dealt with person to person, family to family, school to school, job to job, community to community, at the grassroots level. We have to create a climate in which people are challenged to take responsibility for themselves, their families, and their communities; given as many opportunities to do so as possible. But the nature of the problems we have today require the concerted action of millions of Americans.

The good news about that is that all of you can make a difference. That's why I have worked so hard since becoming President to create this program of national service, which would open the doors of college education on better terms to millions of Americans and then give hundreds of thousands of them—hundreds of thousands of people like you, I hope—the opportunity to pay all or a portion of their college loans back with work for their country, in their communities or in other communities here at home, rebuilding America from the grassroots up and doing it either before, during,

or after college. This national service program can make a fundamental difference to the way we view ourselves and our country. It can make more and more people have the same kind of enthusiasm I saw on your face when the Vice President and I walked in here today. We know you're connected to America. We need to connect everyone else to America, as well.

Right now there's a little bit of political maneuvering going on in the Congress about national service. It's sad to me because we have good Republican and Democratic support for this bill. And I earnestly hope that this whole idea will be saved from becoming a political football. It is too important to America. It has nothing to do with partisan politics and everything to do with giving people a chance to serve their country and, in so doing, to help to build a belief in their country again.

People my age remember President Kennedy starting the Peace Corps. Our fathers and mothers remember when President Roosevelt launched the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression and gave people a chance to build their way out of that depression. In my State I could take you to community after community after community where there are still CCC projects that older people today point to with pride, their hearts swelling, because they, with their own hands, at a time when 25 percent of the American people were unemployed, were given a chance to rebuild their country. We just had a big reunion out in California of the Peace Corps volunteers, and I have named a former Peace Corps volunteer to be the first ex-Peace Corps person to run the Peace Corps. They are swelling with pride to this day for what they did 25 and 30 years ago. And so it will be with national service if we can do it.

I want to say one last thing to all of you. Thomas Jefferson, whose memorial is right back over there and was built 50 years ago this year, was fond of saying that the Earth belongs to the living in trust; that all of us have to balance our lives between doing what is good for us today and what is good for our country, our families, our friends, and our children and grandchildren tomorrow. That means that for all the opportunities you will have, and you young men will have more than most Americans, you have an immense responsibility to give something back to your country. One day you will understand that even more clearly than you

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do today, although I wish that Americans twice your age understood it as well as you clearly do at this moment.

Regardless of what you do, remember this: It is not enough in life to have feelings. It is not enough in life to have convictions. You must act on them. You must act on them. You must move. You must do. You must make things happen. That is surely the ultimate lesson of Boys State and Boys Nation. We were given a system by the Founding Fathers which permitted people in every generation of Americans to the end of time to join together and to act, to deal with the challenges, seize the opportunities, and beat back the problems of the day. That is the legacy that you have been given. And that is the responsibility that you must assume.

I can tell you that, to me, it seems only yesterday that I was your age, standing here. It doesn't take long to live a life. But it can be very rewarding if you have convictions, if you believe in your feelings, and if you act.

I wish you well, and God bless you. [Applause] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you very much.

I'd like now to ask Roger Munson to come forward, and ask the rest of you to sit down. It won't be much longer. I know it's hot out here. When Girls Nation was here a couple of days ago, it wasn't so warm. But it's still a nice day.

[At this point, Arkansas delegates Traftin Thompson and James Welch presented the President with a 1963 photograph of himself with President Kennedy.]

Thank you very much. I think now we're going to take the pictures over here. Is that right? No, we're going to do—we've done that. Oh, they're coming to speak? One of the things that happens to you when you become President is you sometimes don't get good instructions.

[Laughter] Then you just have to fall on the sword.

Who am I supposed to introduce? Pete, are you coming up here? And Jeff Keyes, is he here? Come on.

Let me say, I saw Pete again during the course of the Presidential campaign. And until that happened, I had one Boys Nation person who went to Georgetown with me who was in my class; the two guys from Louisiana, one who went to Georgetown with me, one who went to law school with me, those two guys I had stayed in close touch with; and one other person who was a delegate from Virginia who I stayed in touch with over the years. Now, when I ran for President, I met so many of them again.

And I wanted to make one other point. It wasn't in my notes, but I'd be remiss if I didn't. It is a very great thing to be given the chance to serve this country as President. But it is a very great mistake to think that that is the thing that counts the most in America. The thing that counts the most in America is the contributions that are made by all Americans who work hard, play by the rules, raise their children well, make their communities stronger. And I was so terribly impressed by learning about the life stories of the other people with whom I was here, the struggles that they'd had, the tragedies they'd faced, the triumphs that they had created. And I want you to remember that, too. Each of you has to serve, and each of you can serve, and each of you can make a difference. And the collective efforts we make are far more important than the individual achievements of any person.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:11 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. Following his remarks, 1963 Boys Nation delegate Jeff Keyes presented him with a plaque and a second photograph with President Kennedy.

Remarks to the Conference on the Future of the American Workplace in Chicago, Illinois July 26, 1993

The President. Thank you very much. Senator Simon, Senator Moseley-Braun, Mayor Daley, President Gross, and my friends and colleagues

Secretaries Brown and Reich, and to all of you in the audience, my old colleague Governor Caperton and the distinguished business and

In his remarks, he referred to Connie Chung, luncheon emcee; Nancy Maynard, cofounder, Maynard Institute; and Wilma Mankiller, chief, Sioux nation.

Remarks to the American Legion Boys Nation July 29, 1994

The President. Thank you very much. Good afternoon. Welcome to the White House. I want to say a special word of welcome to your president, Thomas Whitehead, and your vice president, Robert Mattivi, and to Jack Mercier, George Blume, and Ron Engel. And to all of you, welcome and congratulations.

I have a special treat for you today. This has been a remarkable week for America, a great week for you to be here. We had the signing of the agreement between the King of Jordan and the Prime Minister of Israel ending the state of war between them, the announcement that Russia would withdraw all of its troops from Central and Eastern Europe, for the first time since the end of World War II, by the end of August. We had the announcement today that our economy grew 3.7 percent in the last quarter, that jobless claims are down, that the robust growth is continuing. It's produced now 3.8 million new jobs in the last year and a half.

And yesterday we had the historic agreement by the Senate and the House on what will be the toughest and smartest crime bill in the history of the country, that will put 100,000 more police officers on the street, ban assault weapons, provide a "three strikes and you're out" law, and provide billions of dollars to young people for activities to give our kids something to say yes to as well as to punish people who do the wrong thing.

And then today we had an historic event just about an hour ago, where a new Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Stephen Breyer, was confirmed. And I thought it would be a nice thing if Mr. Justice Breyer, accompanied by Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch, would come here and make his first public appearance to you. So I'd like to ask Justice Breyer and Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch—[ap-
plause].

I wanted to say just a word about this, and then I'd like to ask Justice Breyer to come up here and speak to you for a moment or two, and then they'll all have to go back to work.

Let me thank Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch and Chairman Biden and the other members of the Senate Judiciary Committee who recommended Judge Breyer by a unanimous vote to the Senate as a whole.

This gentleman has set a standard of excellence and fidelity to the law and the Constitution of which every American can be proud. When he came before the Senate, there was a very broad spectrum of praise for his appointment among Democrats and Republicans alike, among people who consider themselves liberals and people who consider themselves conservatives.

I have now had the honor to appoint two people to the United States Supreme Court. Justice Ginsburg and Justice Breyer have now shown that we can have excellence on the Supreme Court that unites the American people, rather than divides them.

Let me say that—we were joking a little out here—the Founding Fathers in their wisdom said that there had to be somebody hanging around to resolve these fundamental constitutional disputes, and so they created the Supreme Court. And they didn't want the Supreme Court to be subject to undue pressure, so they gave the Justices of the Supreme Court a lifetime term, so they could say no to everybody, including the President. And we were laughing on the way out that Senator Kennedy and Senator Hatch are running for reelection, and of course, the President gets a 4-year term. Now Justice Breyer has a lifetime term. You are looking at the only man in America that you've met lately with total job security. [Laughter]

There is a reason for it. Someone needs to be free to decide what the Constitution requires

of the rest of us without the pressures of day-to-day politics. But that imposes on the President and on the United States Senate a very heavy responsibility to pick someone with the character and wisdom to use that awesome power and that lifetime guarantee in the interests of our Constitution, our values, and all the American people, without regard to their race, their income, and their background. I believe Justice Breyer will be that kind of person, and it's an honor for me to introduce him to you at this time.

[At this point, Justice Stephen Breyer made brief remarks.]

The President. Well, I am glad we were able to do that, and I hope you enjoyed it.

As all of you know, we share a common bond. I sat where you are 31 years ago, and Senator Kennedy's brother was here as President. Ironically, Senator Kennedy pulled out the record of what President Kennedy said to us when I was here where you are, and on that day he happened to be meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff. So he brought them out to meet the Boys Nation delegates. And so you'll now always be able to remember this, and I think as Justice Breyer goes on to a long and distinguished career on the Supreme Court, when you read about him or you hear some decision that he's written, I hope you will always remember this day with pride and with some amount of joy.

I was thinking a little today about how different the world is now from what it was like 31 years ago when I was here. We were in the middle of the cold war; Russia was still the Soviet Union; our troops faced each other, divided, in Berlin. We still had huge amounts of legal segregation in large parts of the United States. There were all kinds of problems. But at the same time, we had enormous faith in the capacity of our economy and our people to solve those problems.

Now the cold war is over. We had all those good events I told you about this week. We have been working very, very hard to try to deal with the horrible tragedy in Rwanda. And again, I have been so impressed with and grateful for our military in their capacity to move quickly over there to take a terrible situation—we have delivered 20 million packets of oral rehydration therapy to try to help the people with cholera. We've gone from zero to 100,000

gallons of water a day to serve the people there almost overnight.

We have all these things going on. And yet we know that there's still a sense of foreboding, of worry in our country because we do have a lot of problems. There's still a lot of people that want jobs that don't have them. There are people who have jobs who are insecure in those jobs. We have people who are growing up in mean streets and tough neighborhoods where there's too much crime and violence. There was a study last week which showed young people between the ages of 12 and 17 are 5 times more likely than people younger than or older than them to be victims of violent crime, that even in cities where the crime rate is going down, often it's going up among young people.

So there is a disturbing as well as a hopeful atmosphere in the country. The thing I always love about Boys Nation is that I can look out and be guaranteed I'll see 96 optimists. And that's a very important thing for our country because a great deal of how we live and whether we go forward depends upon our willingness to view the future with possibility and hope. And a big part of the battle I fight around here as President every day is to try to keep people's spirits up and their eyes on the future and thinking about big things, not little things, and believing that we can make a difference. And I believe that.

I ran for President because I was very concerned about the direction of the country. We had the economy going down and the deficit going up, middle class people being burdened more, while we weren't investing enough in our young people, in our future. The country was coming apart when I thought we ought to be coming together. And my simple mission is to make sure that the American dream is there for you in the 21st century and to do it by restoring the economy, rebuilding our sense of community, empowering individuals to take responsibility for themselves and to do it by putting the power of Government on the side of ordinary Americans.

The first thing I tried to do was to get our economic house in order. We had quadrupled the debt of the United States in 12 years. You were facing a prospect, by the time you were my age, we'd be spending a third or more of all your tax money just paying off our deficit.

Now, we've had the biggest deficit reduction program in history. We have reduced the size

of the Federal Government dramatically. By the end of this decade, your National Government will be under 2 million people in size for the first time since I came here when President Kennedy was President—smallest Federal Government in 30 years. We will have 3 years of deficit reduction in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was President of the United States. And it's produced 3.8 million jobs and a 1½ percent drop in the unemployment rate. Last year, we had the largest number of new businesses started in the United States since the end of World War II, in any year. So we're moving the economy in the right direction.

What else do we have to do? We've got to make sure young people are ready to compete in it. We need a system of lifetime learning in which a young person, who will change jobs on average seven or eight times in a lifetime, will know that he or she can always, always get the training, the skills, the knowledge that you need if you have to make a change.

You know, when you make changes in life, they can either be very frightening or very exciting. And usually, changes are a little bit of both, aren't they? Usually changes are a little bit of both. And what keeps our country going is knowing that changes always have more hope than fear in them, that there's more excitement than there is reservation. And every time in our country we come to the end of one era and start another, there's almost a mental war that goes on inside the American people: Are we going to be scared, or are we going to be hopeful? Because we've always had problems, and we're always going to have problems. The Scripture says we'll have problems until the end of the Earth. It's part of our human nature, right?

So when we come to the end of one era and we start another, the issue is, will our dominant feeling be fear or hope? In the 20th century, when World War I was over, the American people said, we do not have any more energy for the problems of the world. We withdrew from the world. We elected a President who said he would take us back to normalcy, whatever that meant, and give everybody a good lettin' alone. And there was this huge uprising of the Ku Klux Klan right after World War I and a huge uprising of a Red scare—you know, there was a Communist under every bush.

At the end of World War II, the same thing happened, but we had a President named Harry

Truman who said, "We're not going to walk away from our problems at home; we're not going to walk away from our obligations abroad." He passed the GI bill to give the soldiers coming home housing and education and a way to support their families. He put in motion the system that allowed us to stop communism and win the cold war. He passed the Marshall plan to restore Europe and Japan after World War II so that even our former enemies could become our allies and our trading partners. Today, America has a very close relationship with both Germany and Japan, our bitter enemies in World War II, fighting for democracy, fighting for economic growth.

But all the time, there were people who said, "Oh, I'm more scared than full of hope." There were people who said Harry Truman was radical, incompetent, unfit to be President, too liberal—accused him of being soft on communism. At that time—some of you will read about this when you go to college—not long after that, Senator Joseph McCarthy from Wisconsin started saying every third person he met was a Communist. It's interesting, because Wisconsin has historically been one of the most progressive States in America. But what it shows you is, at the end of one time and the beginning of another, when people are used to looking at the world through this set of glasses and then they haven't put on another set of glasses yet, anybody can be confused.

And that's what we're seeing today. We've come to the end of the cold war, and I can no longer be President and just tell you that we'll view everything in terms of our competition with the Russians, because it's not true anymore. We're cooperating with the Russians. I just was elated the week before last when the United States Congress passed by overwhelming majorities our continuation in the international space station project which now is not an American project to put a space station in the sky, it's an American, a European, a Japanese, a Canadian, and now a Russian project. We're going into the future together. And that's good.

But what it means is, when you're trying to get people to build the future and when there's not an obvious enemy and when you have a lot of responsibilities, there's a big question out there in the country. Are we going to be dominated by our hopes or our fears? Are we going to be builders or dividers? When we look at

America's problems and promise, is the glass half empty, or is the glass half full? You wouldn't be here if you didn't think the glass was half full, if you didn't believe in yourselves, your communities, and the future of your country.

What I want to say to you goes way beyond any kind of partisan politics or issue. It is that this country has now been around for a very long time, 218 years since the Declaration of Independence, 11 years less than that since the Constitution. We have been around for a very long time. And the way we have survived is by believing in the future and by coming together, not being driven apart. And we've had to redefine over and over and over again what coming together means. Upstairs in the next floor up here, in 1863, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, in this house, liberating the slaves. Before that, coming together meant what all the white folks decided to do. He redefined that forever. It took us another 100 years and more to figure out how to live together. We haven't quite got it all worked out yet, but we've made a lot of progress.

Now what we have to do is to figure out, how are we going to restore our economy? How are we going to make it work for all Americans? How is all this racial and other diversity we have in our country going to make us stronger and more united? How do we stand up for what we believe in our religion and our politics and still respect people who are totally different from what we are? How can we live together? Los Angeles County alone has 150 different racial and ethnic groups, one county. Can we be an American family?

I can tell you this. If we figure it out, nobody can stop this country because in a world where the global economy gets smaller and smaller and smaller, having somebody in your country who's

an American first but who understands every other culture in the world is a huge plus. It is a big deal we should be happy about.

So, can we be a community again? How can we rescue all these kids that are in trouble? How can we drive the crime rate down and the graduation rate up? How can we empower people so that they don't think the Government's doing something for them but the Government is doing something with them to give them the skills to take responsibility for their own lives? These are the great questions. How can we live in a world where we promote peace and prosperity by taking care of the remaining nuclear threats, stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, promoting democracy, and at least trying to limit chaos and human suffering as we are doing in Rwanda?

And it is clear, as we move toward the next century, to me, that a major, a major, major, major factor in what it looks like, whether the American dream is alive for you and your children, is whether we believe we can do these things.

And so, that's what I want to leave you with. Whatever your politics, whatever your philosophy, whatever your party, do not participate in this movement that happens at the end of every great era to be cynical, to be negative, to be divisive, to look down on your friends and neighbors, to see the glass as half empty, not half full. This is America. The glass is half full, and you can fill it up the rest of the way if you are determined to do it.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:08 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jack Mercier, director of activities, and Dr. George Blume, legislative program director, Boys Nation; and Ronald A. Engel, deputy director for Americanism, American Legion.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Health Care Reform Legislation

July 29, 1994

Hard working middle class Americans have moved a step closer to real health security today. House Speaker Foley and Majority Leader Gep-

hardt said they would put forward a bill that achieves universal coverage and controls costs.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 18, 1996

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT CEREMONY FOR BOYS AND GIRLS NATION

The East Room

1:33 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very, very much. I want to welcome all of you here. And before I begin the program let me say I'm sorry I'm little late today, but we have been working, as I'm sure you understand, all day long on the plane crash last night. I want to talk to you about your future, but before I do I'd like to say just a word about the people that were on that plane.

I'm determined that we will find out what happened, but I want to urge all the American people not to jump to any unwarranted conclusions about the tragedy. We should focus today, our thoughts and our prayers, on the families of the victims of that terrible, terrible tragedy last night. And you should know that everybody in our country that we believe can make a contribution to finding out what happened is on the job, working overtime.

I want you to know if you if you haven't heard that there were 16 high school students from Pennsylvania on that flight. Any tragedy like this is made deeper if young people's lives are lost, people who haven't yet had their chance to live up to their God-given promise. These young people were from the Montoursville High School French Club in Pennsylvania. They were young, committed, filled with excitement about the prospect of visiting France. Our country will be poorer for their absence. And the rest of you will have to work a little harder to live up to your promise and to theirs, as well.

The Mayor of that small community was just on television, and I had a visit with him a few moments ago. And he said, you know, this is a big hurt that's going to last a while. I'm sure that's true. So I'd like to ask you before we begin the formal program today to join me in a moment of silent prayer for those students, for the other victims and for their families. (A moment of silence is observed.) Amen.

I would like to welcome our leaders here from the American Legion -- Joe Caouette, Lawrence Sperry, Judge Pete Johnson, a member of my Boys Nation class back in the Dark Ages.

(Laughter.) I welcome Peggy Sappenfield; Katherine Morris, the Director of Girls nation; Ron Engel, the Director of Boys Nation; Jack Mercier, the Director of Activities who was also there and was a counselor to my class; George Blume, the Legislative Director.

I'm sure all of you know this is always a special day for me. It's the 50th anniversary of Boys Nation, almost my 50th anniversary on Earth here in a few weeks. (Laughter.) This is only the second time ever, the first being the Bicentennial when Boys Nation and Girls Nation have come to the White House together.

I remember a lot of things about my visit here in 1963, not only my much-heralded shake of hands with President Kennedy and the meetings we had with other leaders, but I remember very vividly the young men I was with from other states, the conversations that we had about the kind of world we would inherit and about what we had to do about it. Our obligations were focused, I think, especially on the issues that dominated our nation more than 30 years ago now. We talked a lot about the struggle for civil rights and equal opportunities for all Americans. We talked a lot about the struggle against communism and the Cold War.

To be sure, we wanted the first generation of Americans to have those conversations. They have been constant in our history. And we know that many of those who founded our nation more than 200 years ago were themselves very young.

I'd like to ask you think, because we are now on the verge of a new century, about what it was like the last time we stood on the edge of a new century. There's a magnificent portrait right over there in the corner of Theodore Roosevelt by the great American artist, John Singer Sargent. Teddy Roosevelt became Vice President in the election of 1900 and was soon elevated to the presidency when President McKinley was assassinated. He was our President for seven years, in the beginning of what became known as the Progressive Era. He was the youngest person ever to become President of the United States. And as we stood at the dawn of a new century, he was infectious with his optimism and absolutely contagious in his determination to take on the problems of America and to make the new era we were then entering work for all Americans.

That was a time, like this, of enormous change. We were around the turn of the century moving from being primarily an agricultural country to being primarily an industrial country. We were moving from being primarily a people who lived on farms, in small, isolated areas or in small communities, to being a people who lived primarily in towns and in cities. And it changed dramatically the way we work, the way we live, the way we related to each other. There were enormously good things happening, but a lot of things that weren't so good, that required a vigorous response by our nation. And so Teddy Roosevelt led our nation in that response and started, as I said, what became known as the Progressive Era.

He and Woodrow Wilson -- one a Republican, one a Democrat, both former governors -- were instrumental in kind of breaking out of the pattern of past thinking that had dominated our political life and taking America in a new direction.

It falls to your generation to do something like that now, because we are changing in ways that are, to some extent, more profound than we changed a hundred years ago. Instead of moving from the agricultural to the industrial age, we're now moving into an information age where every form of human endeavor will be dominated by the profound computer chip.

Bill Gates said in his book, *The Road From Here*, that the digital chip was the most profound revolution in the way human beings communicate with each other since Gutenberg printed the first Bible in Europe 500 years ago. It won't be very long, especially if we succeed in hooking up every classroom and library to the Information Superhighway, before people in remote mountain communities or the poorest urban neighborhoods of America can go to school, hook into a computer, and do research on volcanoes in Australian libraries, for example. This is going to have enormous implications for the whole nature of work, how we learn, how we relate to each other. And it is a fascinating thing.

We're also moving -- as people then moved from rural areas into the cities, we now are primarily an urban and suburban people. But people will be able to live in rural areas more easily than they used to because of the computer, and to do different things. And no matter whether we live in rural or urban areas, we will have to identify ourselves more and more as citizens of the world, as well as Americans.

We're not dominated by a Cold War world anymore where every country is either in the camp of democracy or the camp of communism, where we worry about the imminence of a nuclear war that could take the lives of the whole country away. But we do have a whole set of new problems in the world that directly relate to the fact that the Cold War is over and things are more open now, and it's easier for people and ideas and money and technology to move around and cross national boundaries.

And when people become more open to new ideas and new information it means that there are also more opportunities for the organized forces of destruction to take advantage of that openness. That's why terrorists can put poison gas on a subway in Tokyo, or blow the World Trade Center up or the Federal Building in Oklahoma city, or set bombs in London or the Holy Land, or do all the other things that you've read about in the last few years. The more open we are to moving around and working with each other, the more we'll have to be vigilant in dealing with these problems.

It's why we're all more vulnerable to organized crime and drug running that crosses national lines. It's why we have to be more vigilant in dealing with the problems of the proliferation of small-scale nuclear weapons or biological or chemical weapons.

All of these things are the new security threats. And interestingly enough, there's also a very old problem that's rearing its head all over the world as the big threat of communism recedes. And that is the tendency of people everywhere to look down on each other, ultimately hate each other,

and maybe even kill each other because of their racial, ethnic or religious differences. That is at the heart of what is going on in the Middle East. That is at the heart of what is going on in Northern Ireland. That is at the heart of what is going on in Bosnia.

We have the most vigorous, vibrant, multiethnic democracy in human history, but that is at the heart of what is going on in these church burnings and that is at the heart of what led some mean-spirited people to paint swastikas on the doors of African American Special Forces personnel at Ft. Bragg in the last couple of days. The most patriotic members of a minority you could imagine still being subject to that.

Why is that? Because all throughout human history you see people being told that they should evaluate themselves not based on who they are, what they stand for and what their values are, what's in the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, but on who they're not, what color they're not, what religion they aren't.

So you have to fight all that. Your generation will have more opportunities than any generation in human history. You will have more chances to live out your dreams in more different ways than any group of people who have ever lived. We have a chance to extend opportunities to people who would have automatically been left in the backwater of history without a second thought, just a few decades ago, because of their gender or their race or because of their disabilities. Things that now we wouldn't think of doing used to be the ordinary run-of-the-mill thing just a few decades ago.

So, on balance, as I look to the 21st century, I think this is going to be a great time for you. It is going to be a great time for America if we meet our challenges and protect our basic values. No country in history has ever lasted so long as a free country, a free people, with so many different kinds of people in it. And the world is coming our way. But there are still these dark forces of destruction that we have to stand against. And you have to speak against it when you see it in a big horrible way, in a manifestation of terrorism. But you also have to stand and speak against it when you see it in subtle ways -- in your neighborhoods, on your street, in your schools. We've got to be able to treat each other with respect based on our shared values, not our essentially superficial differences.

Very interesting, don't you think, that this movie, Independence Day, is becoming the most successful movie ever? Some say it's because they blew up the White House and the Congress -- (laughter) -- and that may be. But, you know, you see story after story after story about how the movie audiences leap up and cheer at the end of the movie when we vanquish the alien invaders, right? I mean, what happened? The country was flat on its back, the rest of the world was threatened, and you see all over the world all these people have all of a sudden put aside the differences that seem so trivial once their existence was threatened, and they're working together all over the world to defeat a common adversary.

Why can't we work together to achieve common dreams? What is it about people that they

need to adopt creeds that will enable them to demean other people and look on them as subhuman and take their lives away? We have to fight that. You're living in a time where, literally, you're going to be able to do things that have not been invented yet. A lot of you will be in jobs within a decade that have not been invented yet. The patterns of work and life, of travel and learning will be unbelievable. And no nation is as well-positioned as the United States if we seize our opportunities, meet our challenges and protect our values.

You have to ask yourself -- and I hope you'll take the time before you leave here, before you leave the White House, before you leave the Capital City -- the whole history of your country is here -- and say, what kind of country do I want to live in? What do I want America to look like when my children are my age ? And what should I do to help America look like that? A simple question. Those are the questions I asked myself before I ran for President, because I knew that it's a rather rigorous enterprise and you have to have a high pain threshold today to do this sort of thing. (Laughter.)

And, to me, there are three simple answers. When my daughter is my age and I have grandchildren, I want America to be a place where the American Dream is alive for every person who's willing to work for it, no matter where they start out in life. I want America to be a place that is coming together, not being split apart; that really appreciates all the differences that are in this country and binds us together by the things that have held us together all this time. Just go back and read the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights.

And I want this country to continue to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity, because we are doing something in this country that needs to be done in the rest of the world. People have to be able to bridge their differences and find a way to work together.

Now, that's what I want -- fairly simple things; three things. And I work for it up here every day with a simple strategy: I think we have to create more opportunity for everybody, demand more responsibility from everybody, and do everything we can to build a community and make America stronger, and our families, our towns and our national community as well.

There are some very specific things that we've tried to do. Four years ago, our economic house was out of order. We quadrupled our debt in four years. We had a \$290 billion deficit. We had the slowest job growth rate since the Great Depression so we had to do some basic things just to put the house back in order.

And we had a very simple strategy: Drive down the deficit to reduce the burden of debt on future generations; lower interest rates and get investment back to put people to work; expand the trade in American products and services around the world because that creates more high-wage jobs here at home; and invest in education, technology, research and the preservation of the environment.

Four years later, it's obvious to me that that strategy is working. Our deficit is less than half of what it was. It was \$290 billion, it's going to be \$117 billion this year. This is the first time in

every year of a President's term that the deficit has been reduced since the 1840s. But we had to do it because we have never had a time in history when we built up so much debt so quickly. And the American people have responded -- our economy's created over 10 million jobs. So we're moving in the right direction. But that had to be done. It is not enough, but it's an important first step.

In terms of our leadership for peace and freedom, in many parts of the world we're better off today than we were four years ago and there are no nuclear weapons pointed at any one of the United States for the first time since nuclear weapons were developed. So we're moving in the right direction. We're finally beginning to build compacts and partnerships all around the world to combat terrorism and the other problems that I mentioned.

We've worked hard to give you cleaner air and cleaner water and to preserve the natural resources of the land. I think one of the essential ideas that has to dominate the thinking of both parties and all Americans as we move into the 21st century is that you can develop the economy without destroying the environment. In fact, you can enhance the development of the economy with the right sort of environmental strategy. And if we continue to believe that the only way we can grow our economy is by destroying our environment, some day there won't be any economy to develop. And we have got to do that now. We have to make that commitment now.

You know, it's amazing how many science fiction books and movies are all predicated on the fact that one day we won't have any environment left in America, we won't have any trees left, the air won't be fit to breathe. I'm amazed -- we've now got with this new sci-fi channel on one of our cables here -- it's amazing the percentage of movies that come on that thing that are predicated on the fact the we are determined to destroy our environment. We must not do it.

I also believe that we must now continue to tolerate the levels of crime and violence we have in our country. We have a crime rate coming down four years in a row now. We've got 100,000 police we're putting on the street in community policing. We've finally done something about putting guns into the hands of young people -- we have a zero tolerance strategy for guns in schools. We've abolished a few assault weapons -- 19 kinds -- and passed the Brady Bill. And I want to point out that a lot of people said some bad things when we did it. There's not a single hunter that's lost a rifle since we abolished the assault weapons and passed the Brady Bill. But there are 60,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers who could not get handguns because they were checked and their criminal record was found out and they did not get the guns. And America is safer as a result of that.

So we have to continue to work on the crime problem. And I want to make a personal plea to you. Citizens have a role to play in this. Yesterday, the Vice President and I had representatives from citizens patrol groups all over America here at the White House, and we announced that the Cellular Telephone Association is going to give 50,000 phones to these citizens patrol groups, so that when people are out here walking the streets and they find something wrong, they can immediately call the police department or the hospital, to the emergency room, or the fire department.

But in spite of all of our progress, the crime rate among people under 18 and the violence rate

among people under 18 is still going up in most communities in America. That's because there are too many young people out there on the street that are raising themselves, that are joining gangs doing bad things because they're not in good gangs doing good things. We all want to be part of something. I mean, look, you've got the same shirt on -- you're in a good gang today. (Laughter.) It's an important thing to know. And you do that. You can have more influence on a lot of young people than I can. So I urge you to deal with that issue.

And finally, and most importantly, if we want to see everybody do well in the 21st century, we've got to give everybody the tools to do well. And more important, more than ever before, that means education. We've worked hard to improve educational opportunities here, but we have more to do. And I want to encourage all of you to do what you can to support increasing access to high-quality education, from our initiatives to hook up all the classrooms to the Internet, to help the school districts that are hardest pressed in the country get some money to do rebuilding and repairs, to opening the doors of college education to everyone.

I hope that Congress will agree with me to give a tax deduction for the cost of tuition for college. I hope the Congress will agree with me to give a tax credit that will enable everybody to at least get a community college diploma, because we need to make at least two years after high school as universal for education as high school is today.

If you look at the economy, if you look at the census figures, if you look at the people that are doing well and the people that aren't, it is absolutely clear that in the information age the gains to education are far more profound than at any time in our history. And we have simply got to do more to make it universal, if we want America to grow together instead of drift apart. We can do it -- you can do it if you demand that it be done.

Finally, let me say that I believe we've got to do something more than we have done -- many things more -- to help strengthen the American family. And we have to recognize that families are in a different position than they used to be. I heard -- someone made a funny joke last night, making fun of, to some extent, the Congress, to some extent, me -- saying, you listen to people talk in Washington and they say the problem with people on welfare is that they want to stay home with their kids instead of going to work. And then they give a speech and say the problem with middle-class families is the mothers want to go to work instead of staying home with their kids. You know, and it's funny -- you think about it. (Laughter.)

What's the real issue? What's the real issue? The real issue is most people who are parents work; most people who are parents who work have to work. So what should our goal be? Our goal should be to help Americans succeed at home and at work.

I look at all of you -- and if you want to make a contribution to our future, I want you to be able to make it. But I also think the most important contribution you can ever make is to have children and raise them right and make them good and strong and good citizens and good people, like you are. So what we should be doing is to think about instead of making it an either-or, we

ought to ask ourselves over and over and over again, what can we do to help people succeed at home and at work.

That's what the Family Leave law was all about. That's what my efforts, which have been very controversial, to try to help schools with experiments that they want to adopt, including curfews, or even in some school districts, school uniform policy -- that's what that was all about. You may think it sounds bad but you're all here in one. (Laughter.) And we haven't sought to impose them, we just sought to give schools the opportunity to adopt them if they wanted. That's what our controversial efforts to prevent the advertising and distribution and sales illegally of tobacco to teenagers is all about, trying to help parents deal with the implications of being away from their kids a lot, working, but also trying to do a good job raising their children.

It's also a large part of what the Vice President and I have worked on in the area of television. You know, we passed a law, the telecommunications law, which will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, but it also required in new television sets that a V-chip be placed that would give parents more control over the programming their young children watch. And all the entertainment industry agreed to set up a ratings system for television, which we thought was a very, very good thing. And we're working on that, they're working on it.

The television today is very different than it was when I was 10 or 11 years old, or six or seven. We have hundreds of studies, literally hundreds of studies showing the staggering number of hours that young people have spent watching people get killed by the time they're 16 or 17, and showing clearly that it makes people more numb to violence, less sensitive to the impact of their behavior on others.

So we've worked hard on that. But I don't think that is enough. And I just want to mention this issue, because I think it's very important. We have been working very hard not only to have a ratings system and a V-chip, which is sort of a negative thing, but also to try to bring more positive educational programming for children to television. This month we're challenging members of the entertainment industry who have done a great job on this rating to come to the White House to talk about improving the quality and quantity of children's programming. So the industry is doing it's part.

The truth is that what we need now is for the government to do it's part. The Federal Communications Commission has had before it for a long time now a measure that would require broadcasters to put a minimum of three hours a week of quality educational children's programming on. If you think about all the hours the television is on a week, three hours a week doesn't seem like too much, at least doesn't seem to me. It's less than two percent of the nation's air time.

The initiative is stalled, and some people have opposed it. But the airwaves clearly, under our law, are designed to promote the public interest. I can't imagine anything we could do that would better promote it than to put more quality educational programming for children on television. So I'd like to ask all of you to support that. And I hope very much that the Federal Communications

Commission will finally act on it.

Well, these are some of the things that I think we're facing as we move into the 21st century. We've got a responsibility, those of us in my generation -- particularly those of us like me that had extraordinary opportunities to be in places like where you are over 30 years ago, to try to create opportunity -- to try to create a framework within which everybody will be expected to be responsible, and to try to bring this country together as a community.

But most of your lives are still ahead of you. And every one of you, if for no other reason than you're a part of this program, will have a disproportionate opportunity -- a disproportionate opportunity to exercise leadership. And, therefore you have a disproportionate responsibility to do a good job with it -- every one of you.

When you go back home, your friends will look at you a little differently. They'll listen to you a little more closely. They'll want to know what you saw up here. They'll want to know what your opinion is. And I am telling you, you have got to be thinking now in this rapidly changing world, what do you want the country to look like when your kids are your age. What do you want your work years to be like? How do you want to feel about your country? And what do you have to do to get there?

And I leave you with this. It's very fashionable for people today to say, well, it doesn't really matter what's going on in Washington, nobody can make a difference, why should I vote, it's all a bunch of bull. I'm telling you, in the four years I have been President, I now am more optimistic than I was the day I got here. I believe more strongly than I did the day I got here about the potential of all of us working together to make good things happen.

And this country is a very great country. There are 10 million more people working than there were four years ago; 8 million people have refinanced their homes; 3.7 million people have homes who didn't have them; hundreds of thousands of people have better college loans than they did; 45,000 young people are working to rescue their communities in our national service programs and earning money to go to college. Don't let anybody ever tell you that you can't make a difference in a democracy, that you can't change the course of the country, that you can't live people up, or pull people together. That is not true.

And the most important thing maybe you can do in the short run when you go home is tell people, this country works. That's why we have been around for 220 years. This country works. This is a great country. And you have to pull your weight and challenge your friends and family members to do the same. But I will say that if you do it, the best days of this country are still ahead.

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

END

2:02 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 24, 1995

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO BOYS NATION

The East Room

12:11 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. To all the delegates of Boys Nation, I'm delighted to be here, as you know, with many members of our administration who are involved in the setting of economic policy for our country; delighted to see Mr. William Detweiler, the National Commander of the American Legion, here; along with your other leaders -- Ray Smith, Ron Engel, Jack Mercier, who has been with Boys Nation for 31 years and I believe was there -- that would make 32 years -- when I was there in 1963 -- George Blume and others.

Let me say, as I'm sure you know, I am especially delighted to welcome all of you here to the White House. I don't have to tell you what an important event this is for me every year and how much I look forward to it. But this is an especially important time for all of you to be here.

The world in which you will live -- the world which I am sure many of you will help to lead -- can be America's greatest time. But it is a world being transformed to a degree seldom seen in all American history. Much of this change is good. But it's not all good. If you look at what is happening in America, we have more new businesses being formed, more Americans becoming millionaires, more people finding success than at any period in our history. But most Americans are still working harder for the same or lower pay they were making a few years ago, with greater levels of personal insecurity about their ability to take care of their parents if they get sick, their ability to educate their children, their ability to hold on to their own health care.

If you look at what's going on, most of our social problems are being addressed very well in many places. In most major cities the crime rate is down, but the rate of random violence and crime among our youngest teenagers is going up and there are still too many problems with crime and violence, with drugs and gangs.

If you look around the world, the Cold War is over and peace and freedom and democracy and world trade are all increasing. But still there are serious problems with what I call the organized forces of destruction -- ethnic, religious, racial hatreds leading to awful wars; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in tiny amounts, as you saw when the terrible bomb exploded in Oklahoma City or the gas was released in the Japanese subway. So we have both a great deal of good and a great deal of troubling change going on in the world today and in our country.

In recent weeks I have addressed those challenges in the face -- here at home: First, to restore the American dream of opportunity and the American value of responsibility; and, second, to bring our country together in a stronger community so that we can move forward together. I believe those two goals are inseparable. I believe the only way we can restore economic opportunity and solve our social problems is to unite our people more.

I can tell you that it would have been unthinkable when I was here in 1963 -- we had a lot of problems in 1963 -- we had severe racial problems still, the country was still largely segregated. But it would have been unthinkable if someone had told us in 1963 that 30 years from now the country would be as deeply divided as it is today, and that people would have lost faith in their institutions and would have the level of cynicism and skepticism that they have today.

My vision for your future is a very positive one. I want this country to be a high-opportunity, smart-work country with good jobs and safe streets, with a clean environment and excellent education and health care; a country in which diverse people live and work together, in which communities and families can solve their own problems, and in which people are given the chance as individuals to live up to the fullest of their God-given potential in a world that is steadily moving toward more peace and freedom.

When I say we have to restore the American dream of opportunity and the American value of responsibility, when I say we have to rebuild America's sense of community, that is simply a strategy to reach that vision -- a strategy rooted in an obligation Americans have always accepted, the obligation to give each successive generation a better life than the preceding one had. That is an obligation from which I benefited, and one from which millions of others have benefited as well.

Exactly 32 years ago, on July 24, 1963, I came here as a delegate to Boys Nation when John Kennedy was President. I would never have made it here, and gone from that day to this one, without the benefit of the shared beliefs and convictions and

opportunities that made up the America of my youth. I lived in a family where everyone worked hard and where children were expected to study hard. I also had a lot of opportunity given to me by my community. I had good teachers, good schools, and, when I needed them, scholarships and jobs to make my education possible.

I saw what happened, too, when good people had no opportunity. There were a lot of good people I grew up with who had no opportunity because they were of a different race, or because they happened to be poor and white and isolated in the poor communities in the hills and hollows of my state. I have lived my public life believing that everybody ought to have the chances that I had, and that if everybody did and we all worked together, this country would be able to go on indefinitely as the world's best hope for freedom and opportunity. My philosophy is rooted in these beliefs, and the experience of the United States bears out that they are the right ones.

I imagine the same is true in your lives. I'm sure a lot of you have been amazed at how very different your backgrounds are and yet how much you seem to have in common. Our nation's work must reflect what you have in common. And our nation's budget, which we're debating here with such intensity now, must also reflect those common values and our shared vision for the future.

The priorities of American families and their household budgets aren't all that much different than the priorities of our larger American family and our nation's budget. The way we spend our money as individuals, as a family and as a nation says an awful lot about who we are, what our values are and what our vision for the future really is.

We are at an historic moment, as I have said. For the first time in a long time, the leaders of both major parties agree on one thing we have to do consistent with our values, and that is to balance the federal budget and relieve our children and our grandchildren from the burden of a permanently increasing federal debt.

You know, we never had a structural or permanent deficit in our country until about 1981. But from 1981 until the day I took office, the national debt was quadrupled. When I came here I was committed to getting that deficit off our backs. In the first two years of our administration we cut the deficit by a third, and we are now reducing it for three years in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was President of the United States just after World War II.

But it is still such a problem, what happened in the previous 12 years, that the budget would be balanced today -- today -- except for the interest payments we make on the debt run

up between 1981 and the day I became President. And this debt is so great that next year interest on the debt could be larger than the defense budget. This is a very significant problem and there is more to do.

Therefore, it is good news that both the Congress and I have offered plans to balance the budget. Both plans involve significant spending cuts which will not be easy to meet. Both plans protect our ability to maintain a strong defense and the world's finest military. Beyond those similarities, however, there are profound differences -- differences that go to the heart of our ability to find common ground, to rebuild the American community around the old-fashioned values that I talked about just a moment ago. The commitment to our future I believe that we all have must be defined in large measure today in how this budget contest is played out.

The congressional budget balances a budget in seven years. My budget does it in 10. The congressional budget cuts taxes by about \$250 billion over seven years. Our budget cuts taxes, but by slightly less than half that amount. Why? Because our budget, by making those changes, enables us to increase investment in education and training by about \$40 billion over the next seven years, to help make sure all Americans have a chance to develop the fullest of their abilities and to compete and win in the global economy.

This is very important. About half of all the students in college today everywhere in America have some form of financial assistance. It is critically important to maintain it. It is critically important that everybody who wants to go to school has a chance to go and has a chance to finish. And it's a big part of what our national security will mean in the global economy.

Our budget strengthens health care coverage, especially for senior through Medicare, and provides families some help in caring for their elderly parents who don't go into nursing homes. Our budget protects the food we eat, the air we breathe, the water we drink. It rewards work, concentrating tax policies on helping working families to raise their children and to educate both their children and themselves -- because we know more and more adults will have to go back for job training over the course of their work lives. And it preserves our investments in science and technology, so that our workers and our businesses can compete the world over in a rapidly changing technological era.

Our budget achieves all the economic benefits of balancing the budget. It gives you lower interest rates, higher investment in private dollars. It reduces the amount we'll have to pay on the debt for interest in the years ahead. But it maintains these other priorities, which I believe are essential to rebuilding the American community and finding common ground.

These priorities are not Democratic or Republican priorities. They are common sense, national decisions that have served us very, very well over the last generation. They have stood the test of time. They have marked our character as a nation and they mark the road to the future we should take.

Now, some in Congress say we need to retreat from the common ground we have so carefully built on education, on Medicare, on the environment, on science and technology to balance the budget in seven years with these big tax cuts. They say we need to slash federal aid to the schools and to increase the cost of student loans. They say it is all right to make the elderly pay up to thousands more for their Medicare benefits and to dramatically reduce our ability to protect the environment to meet the seven-year time period with the big tax cuts. They say all this is necessary to balance the budget. But many would use the balanced budget as an excuse to do these things which they wish to do anyway.

I have shown we can balance the budget without retreating from our common ground on education, on health care, on the environment. So I invite senators and members of Congress from both parties to join me in balancing the budget while protecting our common ground. I will work hard to get their support. But if they refuse, I must continue to act, alone if necessary, to protect the common ground that brought every single one of you into this White House today. I will do that. (Applause.)

Thank you very much.

Let me say again, there is no question that we have to balance the budget. And the majority in Congress deserve credit for proposing a plan to do that. But we do not have to do it in seven years. We do not have to do it with massive tax cuts to people who don't really need it.

The haste of their schedule and the scope of their tax cuts are luxuries, and this is not a time for luxuries. Think again about your family's budget. If you can't afford luxuries right now, you don't sacrifice necessities to have them. Take education. I think it's a necessity. From the birth of the land grant colleges during the civil war, to the creation of the G.I. Bill 51 years ago this summer, we have understood that when we invest in the education of our people, it makes the whole country stronger.

We have understood that, regardless of party, right through the first two years of our administration. In 1993 and in 1994, we had bipartisan support for the most remarkable education agenda in the last 30 years. We had higher standards for our schools. We had more affordable college loans with better

repayment terms. We had a national service initiative, AmeriCorps, that now gives 20,000 young people a chance to serve in their communities and earn money for their college educations.

We had a dramatic expansion of Head Start, a program that has enjoyed bipartisan support for decades now. We expanded the age at which children were eligible, improved the quality of the program, and increased the number of kids in Head Start to make it more likely that more Americans will have a chance to be sitting where you're sitting today. But now, as a part of this balanced budget program, many in Congress are willing to cut 50,000 out of the Head Start program and block its expansion.

Another example is the commitment to educate and train all Americans. We know the global economy demands more skills and information than ever before. We know -- we know that the middle class in America today, including many of your parents, are either going up or going down economically, are either increasing their security or feeling more insecure, based directly on the level of skills they have. We know that. We know that is a reality for the lives of Americans all across this country.

So what did we propose? We proposed to do everything we could to increase the access of people to college and to increase the training available to adults. But again, many in Congress would cut the Pell Grant program by 300,000 slots a year. That's 300,000 poor people who won't get college degrees to become middle class people, maybe even rich people, and pay back far more to the tax treasury -- to the Treasury in taxes than they ever took out in the Pell Grants.

And the job training in some ways is the most troubling of all. I have proposed that we consolidate all the government's training programs into one big scholarship program for adult workers who are unemployed or who are underemployed, giving them a voucher worth up to \$2,600 a year to go back for two years to get further training, so they can increase their abilities to earn a good living. We should not reduce this. We should increase this. We shouldn't reduce it. People are in trouble out there today in this country because they don't have the education and skills they need to maintain family, wage, jobs in a global economy. These are very important. We don't have to get rid of this to balance the budget.

The same is true about health care. Thirty years ago we decided as a people that we would at least protect the elderly of this country from the fortunes of not having adequate health care. We did it with Medicare. We did this as an extension of the compassion we feel in our own families for the elderly in our individual families.

Medicare has worked well. It has low administrative costs. It has covered all people over 65. I might add that we are the only advanced country in the world that doesn't have some form of universal health coverage for everybody, but at least we do it for senior citizens. It's a basic American value. We help take care of people who raised us up and took care of us.

Before Medicare, half of the elderly people in this country had no health insurance whatever. Now, 97 percent of the senior citizens in America have access to health care. Of course, we have to reduce the rate of inflation in the Medicare program. I have said that from the first speech I gave to the Congress as President. But we can do this by reforming Medicare, not by ruining it. We can still maintain protections for every senior citizen in American, instead of deciding that some will do fine and other will get the shaft.

Some in Congress want to cut \$270 billion from the Medicare program, about the same amount they want to cut taxes. Their proposal would require our seniors -- maybe some of your grandparents -- to pay as much as \$5,600 more a couple in out-of-pocket costs. So we cut spending in one way and off-load the burden to others. That does not reflect the values of most American families. Maybe some people can afford to pay some more because they're upper income, but most seniors in this country hardly have enough to live on as it is.

If you look at the attack on the environment you see another example. The environment has been a bipartisan issue in America. The Environmental Protection Agency was established under the presidency of Richard Nixon, a Republican President. We have shared a common commitment to the environment. Perhaps our country's most outstanding environmental President was our first environmental President, Theodore Roosevelt -- again, a Republican. This has never been a partisan issue.

We have agreed for a long time as a people that the stewardship of our natural environment is a big part of maintaining the American Dream. With the first Earth Day, 25 years ago, Americans came together to say no to dirty air, toxic food, polluted water; and say yes to leaving our children a nation as unspoiled as their dreams. We recognize together that our business in creating jobs was not undermined and, in fact, could be enhanced by protecting the environment.

We all know that in the last two decades, there have been some rigid regulations and some unreasonable enforcement that have limited the effect of our laws and alienated people from the whole cause of environmental protection. So we should change the way our regulators do their work. We have worked very hard to do that. Right now, we have in motion an initiative that will reduce by 25 percent the amount of time people in the business

community spend complying with the environmental laws.

Right now, we are putting in place a small business program that says to every small business person in America, if you're worried about an environmental law, if you will call us and ask for help, you cannot be fined for six months. We will work with you because you asked for help. We're not interested in fining people; we're interested in protecting the environment. But that is very different from just walking away from our commitment to protect the environment.

Some in Congress want to slash funding for enforcement by almost 50 percent. It could put at risk the safety of the water we drink. It would increase the chances of raw sewage washing up on our beaches. It would excuse some polluters from having to clean up their mess. That is not our vision.

Believe it or not, some of these restrictions would actually undermine the ability of the United States to enforce the Clean Air Act. The Clean Air Act was last signed by President Bush, my Republican predecessor, who said it was his proudest legislative achievement. This has always been a bipartisan thing. It is now being put at risk in this budget debate. And I believe it undermines our ability to find common ground.

Others say we should cut science and technology, the most powerful engine we have to boost our economy. Finally, there are even proposals that would undermine our ability to make work more attractive than welfare.

I have worked now for 15 years, long before I became President, to move people from welfare to work. I have learned that most people on welfare want to go to work and that one of the things that we permitted to happen over the years was to build in too many disincentives to work. So that's why I've supported welfare reform proposals that would move people from welfare to work. We have given 30 states permission to get out from under federal rules and regulations, to come up with new and innovative ways to move people from welfare to work, including letting states take welfare checks and give them to employers as income supplements so they would actually hire people to go to work.

One of the things we have to do is to make sure we don't tax people back into poverty. And when people are out there working on low wages, what we did in 1993 was to say, if you're out there working 40 hours a week and you have children in your house, you should not be in poverty. The tax system shouldn't put you in poverty. We will lower your taxes. If necessary, we will give you a tax refund so that if you will work 40 hours a week you can raise your kids outside of poverty. There are even some people who want to erode that tax cut so that we can cut taxes for

people who don't really need it in this budget program.

There are a lot of things being done here which will violate and undermine our chances to achieve common ground. And they do not fall into the traditional partisan differences. Most of these things have been supported by Republicans and Democrats. The tax provision for working families was called by President Ronald Reagan the most important pro-family, anti-poverty initiative in the last 30 years. Now there are people in Congress who are trying to erode it. And it is wrong. And it undermines our ability to make common ground.

The seven-year time table and the huge tax cut, these are luxuries. To make room for them, some in Congress would slash necessities. I say, let's take 10 years instead of seven; let's have a modest tax cut targeted toward what people really need, which is help in raising and educating their children and knowing they can always get new education and training themselves; and let's keep on investing in the things that are our necessities. These things will create millions more American dreams if we continue them.

We can cut taxes. We can balance the budget. But we have to do it in a way that maintains what has been for decades and what clearly is now the common ground on which we can go forward together.

Your parents recognized that it was unacceptable to destroy the environment and created the environmental movement. My parents saw the pain of their parents and insisted that we create Medicare. Every generation has done something to build up and create the fabric that is what we know as the American Dream. We now have to create a system of lifetime education and training that all can have access to. And we now have to deal with these social problems that have been too long ignored. We can do it in a way that permits us still to balance the budget and lift that burden from your future.

So I say to the Congress, come back to common ground. We can do this. The Congress has recently passed the so-called rescission bill. You may not know what that means, but it -- basically it's a down payment on our balanced budget. It cuts from the budget that we are presently spending in this year.

This rescission bill, when they first sent it to me, caused me to veto it because it had unacceptable cuts in education, training and the environment. When we went back to the table to work together, Congress came up with a revised bill that reflects our shared values. It permits us to cut \$16 billion from this year's budget; to maintain our commitment to education, health care and the environment; to invest in helping those people in California who still are suffering from the earthquake; to deal

with the terrible tragedy in Oklahoma City; to keep our commitment to the Middle East peace process and a number of other things, and still cut even more spending to continue our work toward balancing the budget.

Now, we share, I hope and believe, a basic commitment that each generation must take account of the accumulated wisdom of generations that have gone before, as well as our new ideas. When we ignore the evidence of what has plainly worked in the attempt to fix what is plainly wrong, we pay a terrible price. We mustn't throw over, in a moment of partisan zeal, the common sense and bipartisan conclusions of our fathers and mothers, derived from lifetimes of experience, with problems that we will only have to suffer through again if we ignore that experience.

So I ask you as you come together in this wonderful Boys Nation experience and you debate these issues, imagine what you want your country to look like. Ask yourself what your vision of the future is like. Write it down on a piece of paper. What do you want America to look like in 20 years? What is your vision, and how will be achieve it? And what things do we have to do together? What things ought we to be for, whether we're Republicans or Democrats; whether we live in the Northeast or the far West; whether we're men or women, and without regard to our racial and religious background -- what are those things that we can say, this is what we want America to look like?

That, my friends, is where we must find our common ground. And that is what I am determined to protect in this great debate to balance the budget. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

12:41 P.M. EDT

Week Ending Friday, August 1, 1997

The President's Radio Address

July 26, 1997

Good morning. I am pleased to be joined here at the White House by the young men of American Legion Boys Nation, an outstanding youth organization that has inspired thousands of young people, including me, to serve our country by serving in our communities.

I want to talk with you today about what we must do to make citizen service a part of every American's life for his or her entire lifetime. As I said at the Presidents' service summit in Philadelphia this past April, the era of big Government may be over, but big challenges remain for America, and they require an era of big citizenship, an era with new partnerships between Government and business and labor, between wealthy, middle class, and poor Americans, between cities, suburbs, and rural areas and across all racial lines. At the Presidents' service summit, thousands of Americans pledged their commitment to service. As we prepare to go forward into a new century, every one of us must join them so that we can meet our challenges and come together as one America.

For the past 4½ years, my administration has worked to give every American a chance to serve. We want to spark a renewed sense of obligation, a new sense of duty, and a new season of service all across our Nation.

Of everything we've done to meet that challenge, I am proudest of AmeriCorps, our national service organization that has helped more than 70,000 young Americans all over the country to earn money for college while serving in their communities. AmeriCorps members do real work to address critical problems, from cleaning the environment to helping at-risk children learn to read, to working with police to keep our streets safe, to helping our Nation reach record levels of child immunization.

At the service summit, one of the goals for young Americans announced by the Presidents and General Powell was that every young American should be challenged and given the chance to do citizen service. To support that goal, I announced at the summit that our administration would provide 50,000 new AmeriCorps scholarships over the next 5 years to organizations that offer young people a chance to serve. I am pleased to say today that 77 organizations have answered that challenge by offering to sponsor 10,000 new AmeriCorps members next year alone. I thank them for their commitment.

The success of AmeriCorps proves that citizen service works. And it's only one of the many things the National Government is doing to work in partnership with citizens, businesses, and civic groups. Our administration is busy following up on the commitments we made in Philadelphia at the service summit. This fall, for example, the Department of Agriculture will hold a food recovery summit to help organize volunteers to distribute food to the needy. The Justice Department's new mentoring alliance will link children in need with volunteer mentors. And the Department of Health and Human Services' new partnership with the Girl Scouts of America will teach girls about the dangers of drugs. In all these ways, we are committed to encouraging service throughout American life.

Commitment to community should be an ethic that our children learn as early as possible, so that they carry it with them throughout their lives. That is why I have called on every State to make service a part of the curriculum in high school or even middle school. There are many creative ways to do this, including giving students credit for service, incorporating service into course work, putting service on a student's transcript, or even requiring service as a condition of graduation, as Maryland does.

In addition to the AmeriCorps scholarship program we announced at the service summit, last year we took additional steps to encourage our young people to serve in their communities while in high school. We said we would offer \$500 scholarships to high school juniors and seniors with the best record of service in their class if their communities and private service organizations would match that amount.

Just a year later, I am proud to say that some of our Nation's most prominent service organizations have answered that call. Today I'm pleased to announce that 1,600 high school students—some of whom are standing with me today—will receive scholarships of up to \$1,000 to help pay for college. The American Legion, the Kiwanis Club, the Rotary Club, the Elks Club, the Lions Club, the Junior Leagues, and the Miss America Foundations, these are community groups that are the glue that hold America together. And now they're giving our young people another reason to give something back to our communities.

This is just the first year of the national service scholars program. I know that next year it will be even bigger. Our goal is to make this program available in every high school, so that every high school principal in America can stand before a graduating class and announce the name of a national service scholar. And with the support of groups like those who have already committed to help, I am confident we can make it happen.

Something very important to our Nation occurred at the Presidents' service summit. There, people from all walks of life looked beyond their differences and came together around the common goal of serving our country, to give all our young people a chance to have a better life. This is the way we have to meet our challenges: business, working together with government and labor, religious and community groups joining forces, people lending a hand to help one another. Today we take another important step to build on that progress.

The spirit of the service summit is stronger than ever, and it's up to us, all of us, to keep it alive as we move forward together into a new century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:02 p.m. on July 25 in the East Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 26. In his remarks the President referred to Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Opening Remarks at the Lake Tahoe Presidential Forum in Incline Village, Nevada

July 26, 1997

Thank you very much. First of all, ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank all of you who had anything to do with these efforts in working with us over the last several months. The members of the Cabinet and the Deputy Secretaries have been acknowledged. The Members of the Congress have been acknowledged. The other distinguished State officials from California and Nevada have been acknowledged. But there are a lot of people who work for these Federal agencies at other levels who have just been out here killing themselves for the last few months to try to make this a good, successful 2 days. And to all the citizens who worked with them and to all the Federal employees who are here, I want to thank all of you for what you did to help these last 2 days be successful. In addition, there are four people who worked with us to help make these workshops and this forum a success: Katie McGinty, Jim Lyons, Tom Tuchmann, Phil Bayles. I can't count—six—Jeff Bailey and Dave Van Note. And I want to thank them.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to the Members of Congress from these two States who have proved that this is a bipartisan, perhaps even a nonpartisan endeavor, that we all have a stake, not just as Westerners, but as Americans, in not only preserving Lake Tahoe but, if possible, reversing some of the difficulties of the last 2 years.

But I would be remiss if I did not say a special word of thanks to the person who thought this idea up and got my commitment months ago—months ago—to show up, if you'll forgive me, come hell or high water. And here we are in the middle of the budget negotiations we're trying to finish today back in Washington, but I am here because I

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Lincoln, Massachusetts)

For Immediate Release

June 5, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY 1998 COMMENCEMENT

Killian Court
Campus of Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, Massachusetts

11:55 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Dr. Vest. I think you're the real thing. Chairman d'Arbeloff, Dr. Gray, members of the Corporation, the faculty, especially to the members of the Class of 1998 and your families, the Class of 1948 and 1973, Mayor Duahay, members of the City Council. I thank the Brass Ensemble for the wonderful music before.

Let me say I am profoundly honored to be here on the same platform with Dr. David Ho, and grateful for the work he has done for humanity.

When we met a few moments ago, in President Vest's office, with a number of the students and other officials of the university, I said you had a good representation of speakers today -- the scientists and the scientifically challenged.

But my administration has been able to carry on in no small measure because of contributions from MIT. Sixteen MIT alumni and faculty members have served in important positions in this administration, including at least two who are here today -- the former Secretary of the Air Force, Sheila Widnoll, and the Deputy Secretary of Energy Ernie Moniz. Four of your faculty members and your President have done important work for us. I thank them all.

And I come here today with good news and bad news for the graduates. The good news is that this morning we had our latest economic report: unemployment is 4.3 percent; there have been 16 million new jobs in the last five years; there are numerous job openings that pay well. The bad news is that you now have no excuse to your parents if you don't go to work.

MIT is admired around the world as a crucible of creative thought, a force for progress, a place where dreams of generations become reality. The remarkable discoveries and inventions of the MIT community have transformed America. Early in your history, MIT was known for advances in geology and mining. By mid-century, MIT pioneered X rays and radar. Today, it's atomic lasers, artificial intelligence, biotechnology. MIT has done much to make this the American century. And MIT will do more to make America and the world a better place in the

21st century, as we continue our astonishing journey through the information revolution -- a revolution that began not as our own did here in Massachusetts, with a single shot heard around the world, but instead was sparked by many catalysts -- in labs and libraries, start-ups and blue chips, homes and even dorm rooms across America and around the world.

I come today not to talk about the new marvels of science and engineering. You know far more about them than I do. Instead I come to MIT, an epicenter of the seismic shifts in our economy and society, to talk about how we can and must apply enduring American values to this revolutionary time; about the responsibilities we all have as citizens to include every American in the promise of this new age. From the start, our nation's greatest mission has been the fulfillment of our founders' vision -- opportunity for all, best secured by free people, working together toward better tomorrows and what they called "a more perfect union."

Americans believe the spark of possibility burns deep within every child, that ordinary people can do extraordinary things. Our history can be understood as a constant striving on foreign fields and factory floors, in town halls and the corridors of Congress, to widen that circle of opportunity, to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to perfect our union to make real the promise of America. Every previous generation has been called upon to meet this challenge. And as we approach a new century and a new millennium, your generation must answer the call.

You enter the world of your tomorrows at a remarkable moment for America. Our country has the lowest crime rates in 25 years, the smallest welfare rolls in 27 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest national government in 35 years, and the highest rate of home ownership in our history. Such a remarkable time, a period of renewal, comes along all too rarely in life, as you will see. It gives us both the opportunity and the profound responsibility to address the larger, longer-term challenges to your future. This spring I am speaking to graduates around the country about three of those challenges. Last month I went to the Naval Academy to talk about the new security challenges of the 21st century -- terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, global climate change, the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Next week at Portland State in Oregon I will discuss how our nation's third great wave of immigration can either strengthen and unite America or weaken and divide it. And I thank Dr. Ho for what he said about immigration and our immigrants.

Today, I ask you to focus on the challenges of the Information Age. The dimensions of the Information Revolution and its limitless possibilities are widely accepted and generally understood, even by lay people. But to make the most of it we must also acknowledge that there are challenges, and we must make important choices. We can extend opportunity to all Americans or leave many behind. We can erase lines of inequity or etch them indelibly. We can accelerate the most powerful engine of growth and prosperity the world has ever known, or allow the engine to stall.

History has taught us that choices cannot be deferred; they are made by action or inaction. There is no such thing as virtual opportunity. We cannot point and click our way to a better future. If we are to fulfill the complete promise of this new age, we must do more.

Already the Information Age is transforming the way we work. The high-tech industry employs more people today than the auto industry did at its height in the 1950s. Auto and steel industries in turn have been revived by new technologies. Among those making the most use of technology R&D are traditional American enterprises such as construction, transportation, and retail stores.

It's transforming the way we live. The typical American home now has much more -- as much computing power as all of MIT did in the year most of the seniors here were born. It is transforming the way we communicate. On any business day, more than 30 times as many messages are delivered by e-mail as by the postal service. And today, this ceremony is being carried live on the Internet so that people all over the world can join in.

It is transforming the way we learn. With the DVD technology available today, we can store more reference material in a 3-inch stack of disks than in all the stacks of Hayden Library. It is transforming the way our society works, giving millions of Americans the opportunity to join in the enterprise of building our nation as they fulfill their dreams.

The tools we develop today are bringing down barriers of race and gender, of income and age. The disabled are opening long closed doors of school, work, and human possibility. Small businesses are competing in worldwide markets once reserved only for powerful corporations. Before too long, our children will be able to stretch a hand across a keyboard and reach every book ever written, every painting ever painted, every symphony ever controlled.

For the very first time in our history, it is now possible for a child in the most isolated inner-city neighborhood or rural community to have access to the same world of knowledge at the same instant as the child in the most affluent suburb. Imagine the revolutionary democratizing potential this can bring. Imagine the enormous benefits to our economy, our society, if not just a fraction, but all young people can master this set of 21st century skills.

Just a few miles of here is the working class community of East Somerville. It has sometimes struggled to meet the needs of population that is growing more diverse by the day. But at East Somerville Community School, well-trained technology teachers with equipment and support from Time Warner Cable have begun to give 1st to 8th-graders and early and enormous boost in life. First graders are producing small books on computers. Sixth graders are producing documentaries. The technology has so motivated them that almost all the 6th graders showed up at school to work on their computer projects over winter break.

That small miracle can be replicated in every school, rich and poor, across America. Yet, today, affluent schools are almost three times as likely to have Internet access in the classroom; white students more than twice as likely as black students to have computers in their homes.

We know from hard experience that unequal education hardens into unequal prospects. We know the Information Age will accelerate this trend. The three fastest growing careers in America are all in computer related fields, offering far more than average pay. Happily, the digital divide has begun to narrow, but it will not disappear of its own accord. History teaches us

that even as new technologies create growth and new opportunity, they can heighten economic inequalities and sharpen social divisions. That is, after all, exactly what happened with the mechanization of agriculture and in the Industrial Revolution.

As we move into the Information Age we have it within our power to avoid these developments. We can reap the growth that comes from revolutionary technologies and use them to eliminate, not to widen, the disparities that exist. But until every child has a computer in the classroom and a teacher well-trained to help, until every student has the skills to tap the enormous resources of the Internet, until every high-tech company can find skilled workers to fill its high-wage jobs, America will miss the full promise of the Information Age.

We cannot allow this age of opportunity to be remembered also for the opportunities that were missed. Every day, we wake up and know that we have a challenge; now we must decide how to meet it. Let me suggest three things.

First, we must help you to ensure that America continues to lead the revolution in science and technology. Growth is a prerequisite for opportunity, and scientific research is a basic prerequisite for growth. Just yesterday in Japan, physicists announced a discovery that tiny neutrinos have mass. Now, that may not mean much to most Americans, but it may change our most fundamental theories -- from the nature of the smallest subatomic particles to how the universe itself works, and indeed how it expands.

This discovery was made, in Japan, yes, but it had the support of the investment of the U.S. Department of Energy. This discovery calls into question the decision made in Washington a couple of years ago to disband the super-conducting supercollider, and it reaffirms the importance of the work now being done at the Fermi National Acceleration Facility in Illinois.

The larger issue is that these kinds of findings have implications that are not limited to the laboratory. They affect the whole of society -- not only our economy, but our very view of life, our understanding of our relations with others, and our place in time.

In just the past four years, information technology has been responsible for more than a third of our economic expansion. Without government-funded research, computers, the Internet, communications satellites wouldn't have gotten started. When I became President, the Internet was the province of physicists, funded by a government research project. There were only 50 sites in the world. Now, as all of you know, we are adding pages to the Worldwide Web at the rate of over 100,000 an hour, and 100 million new users will come on this year. It all started with research, and we must do more.

In the budget I submit to Congress for the year 2000 I will call for significant increases in computing and communications research. I have directed Dr. Neal Lane, my new Advisor for Science and Technology, to work with our nation's research community to prepare a detailed plan for my review.

Over the past 50 years our commitment to science has strengthen this country in

countless ways. Scientific research has created vast new industries, millions of jobs, allowed America to produce the world's most bountiful food supplies and remarkable tools for fighting disease. Think of what today's investments will yield. Dr. Ho will unravel the agonizing riddles of AIDS. There will be a cure for cancer; a flourishing economy that will produce much less pollution and move back from the brink of potentially devastating global warming. High-speed wireless networks that bring distance learning, tele-medicine and economic opportunity to every rural community in America.

That is why, even as we balanced our budget for the first time in 29 years, we have increased our investments in science. This year I asked Congress for the largest increase in research funding in history -- not just for a year, but sustained over five years. It is a core commitment that must be part of how every American, regardless of political party or personal endeavor, thinks about our nation and its mission.

Thank you -- those are the people who received the research grants over there.

I want you to know that we are also working to address the threat to our prosperity posed by the Year 2000 Bug. I tried and tried to find out what the class hack project was for the Class of '98 and I failed. But I did learn that in the year 2000, the graduating class is proposing to roll all of our computers back by 100 years. And I am determined to thwart you. I will do my best.

The second thing we have to do is to make sure that the opportunities of the Information Age belong to all our children. Every young American must have access to these technologies. Two years ago in my State of the Union address, I challenged our nation to connect every classroom to the Internet by the year 2000. Thanks to unprecedented cooperation at national, state, and local levels, an outpouring of support from active citizens, and the decreasing costs of computers, we're on track to meet this goal.

Four years ago when you came to MIT, barely three percent of America's classrooms were connected. By this time next year, we will have connected well over half our classrooms including 100 percent of the classrooms in the nation's 50 largest urban school districts.

But it is not enough to connect the classrooms. The services have to be accessed. You may have heard recently about something called the e-rate. It's the most crucial initiative we've launched to help connect our schools, our libraries, and our rural health centers to the Internet. Now some businesses have called on Congress to repeal the initiative. They say our nation cannot afford to provide discounts to these institutions of learning and health by raising a billion dollars or so a year from service charges on telecommunications companies -- something that was agreed to in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 that passed with overwhelming bipartisan majorities in both Houses.

I say we cannot afford not to have an e-rate. Thousands of poor schools and libraries and rural health centers are in desperate need of discounts. If we really believed that we all belong in the Information Age, then, at this sunlit moment of prosperity, we can't leave anyone behind in the dark.

Every one of you who understands this I urge to support the e-rate. Every one of you here who came from a poor inner-city neighborhood, who came from a small rural school district, who came perhaps from another country where this was just a distant dream, you know that there are poor children now who may never have a chance to go to MIT unless someone reaches out and gives them this kind of opportunity. Every child in America deserves the chance to participate in the information revolution.

The third thing we have to do is to make sure that all the computers and the connections in the world don't go to waste because our children actually have 21st century skills. For five years now I've done my best to make education our number one domestic priority, creating HOPE Scholarships, expanding Pell Grants, to make the 13th and 14th years of education as universal as the first 12 are today. We've passed tax credits, reformed the student loan program, expanded work-study, created AmeriCorps to open the doors of college to every young person who is willing to work for it. We're working to make our public schools the best in the world, with smaller classes, better facilities, more master teachers and charter schools, higher standards, and end to social promotion. But the new economy also demands that our nation commit to technology literacy for every child. We shouldn't let a child graduate from middle school anymore without knowing how to use new technologies to learn.

Already, 10 states with an eye to the future have made technology literacy a requirement of graduation from high school. I believe we should meet this goal in the middle school years. I believe every child in every state should leave middle school able to use the most current tools for learning, research, communication, and collaboration. And we will help every state to meet this goal.

If a state commits to adopt a technology literacy requirement, then we will help to provide the training that the teachers need. I propose to create a team of trained technology experts for every American middle school in every one of these states, and to create competitions over the next three years to encourage the development of high-quality educational software and educational web sites by students and professors in commercial software companies.

All students should feel as comfortable with a keyboard as a chalkboard; as comfortable with a laptop as a textbook. It is critical to ensuring that they all have opportunity in the world of the 21st century.

Today I pledge the resources and unrelenting efforts of our nation to renew our enduring values in the Information Age. But the challenges that we face cannot be met by government alone. We can only fulfill the promise of this revolution if we work together in the same way it was launched together, with creativity, resolve, a restless spirit of innovation.

While this mission requires the efforts of every citizen, those who fuel and enjoy the unparalleled prosperity of this moment have special responsibilities. The thriving new companies that line Route 128 in Silicon Valley -- I challenge them to use their power to empower others, to invest in a school, embrace a community in need, endow an eager young mind with opportunity; not to rest until every one of our children is technology literate. Many of

you are doing such work already and many of them are; but America needs all such companies to participate.

And, finally, to the graduates of the class of 1998, I, too, offer my congratulations and, as your President, my gratitude for your commitment, for challenges conquered, for projects completed, for goals reached and even surpassed. You, your parents and your friends should be very proud today, and very hopeful, for all the possibilities of this new age are open to you. You are at the peak of your powers and the world will rightly reward you for the work you do.

But to make the very most of your life and the opportunities you have been given, you, too, must rise to your responsibility to give something back to America of what you have been given. As the years pass your generation will be judged and you will begin to judge yourselves not only on what you do for yourself and your family, but on the contributions you make to others -- to your country, your communities, your generation of children. When you turn your good fortune into a chance for others, you then will not only be leaders in science and industry, you will become the leaders of America. Twenty-first century America belongs to you -- take good care of it.

Thank you and God bless you. END

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NBC News Transcripts

SHOW: TODAY (7:00 AM ET)

July 16, 1998, Thursday 5:32 PM

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HEADLINE: JAMES LEVINE OF FAMILIES AND WORK INSTITUTE DISCUSSES PAID PATERNITY LEAVE

ANCHORS: MATT LAUER

BODY:

MATT LAUER, co-host:

This morning on TODAY'S PARENTING, paternity leave. In 1993, the Family and Medical Leave Act became federal law, requiring many employers to provide unpaid leave to both female and male employees with a new baby. But some companies have gone beyond the law and now are offering paid leave for both women and men.

Mr. BRUCE CORNELIUS: Yeah. Lunch time. Lunch time.

LAUER: Bruce Cornelius just had his second child, a girl named Paige, and for the next few months he'll be spending a good deal of time at home with his new daughter and his two-year-old, Grace.

Mr. CORNELIUS: Want any blueberries?

Miss GRACE CORNELIUS: No.

Mr. CORNELIUS: No blueberries?

(Answering phone) Bruce Cornelius.

LAUER: He works as an Internet specialist for Fannie Mae, a company in Washington, DC, that offers paid paternity leave.

Ms. JAMIE GORELICK (Vice Chair, Fannie Mae): Fannie Mae's paternity leave policy allows new dads to take up to four weeks off or to phase back into work and to spend a number of days a week with their children and then the rest of the week at--at work.

Mr. CORNELIUS: Oh, that's much better.

LAUER: Bruce has chosen to split his time between home and work for the next few months.

Mr. CORNELIUS: (In meeting) To what degree do you think electronic commerce is going to change the mortgage industry?

The big issue for me was not feeling like I was out of the loop at work. You know, when I take this time off, I need to be able to just know things are OK at work and I can be here and that's OK. And so--with my boss and my boss's

boss.

LAUER: That wasn't the case for Bruce two years earlier when his daughter, Grace, was born, and he was working for a different employer.

Ms. MARY CLARE CORNELIUS: With our first baby, it was very stressful, because as soon as we came back from the hospital Bruce felt that he had to go back to work.

Mr. CORNELIUS: And being torn between helping my wife and helping the baby and then trying to keep up with things at work, it's just too much.

(Looking at book with Grace) What kind of animal is this?

Miss CORNELIUS: It's a doggy.

Mr. CORNELIUS: What's the dog say?

Miss CORNELIUS: Woof, woof.

LAUER: Now he can have the best of both worlds.

Ms. GORELICK: Men who take paternity leave come to work feeling a much greater sense of loyalty and commitment to the company. And they also feel much better about their work.

Ms. CORNELIUS: A kangaroo, wow!

Mr. CORNELIUS: Not feeling torn between providing for my family and having a close relationship with my kids is really the fundamental issue for me. Fannie Mae's a place where I don't feel like I'm sacrificing my great job to be with my family.

Miss CORNELIUS: Simba!

Mr. CORNELIUS: Simba. Oh, my goodness.

LAUER: James Levine is the director of the Fatherhood Project at the Families and Work Institute and the author of the book, "Working Fathers."

Mr. Levine, good to see you again. Welcome back.

Mr. JAMES LEVINE ("Working Fathers"): Nice to see you.

LAUER: How unusual is it for a company to give a father a paid paternity leave?

Mr. LEVINE: It's actually very unusual. For every Bruce Cornelius, there are 99 other guys who don't have paid leave. Only 1 percent of fathers in this country have paid leave. This is actually unusual for two other reasons. Fannie Mae offers four weeks of paid leave, many other companies that offer paid leave offer at the most a week, maybe two.

LAUER: Right.

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Mr. LEVINE: And there's another aspect, is that the Fannie Mae leave is actually flexible, so Bruce doesn't have to take those four weeks right in a row, he can spread them out over a period of time. That flexibility turns out to be very important in dad's ability to take leave.

LAUER: What is the incentive for a company to offer that to a father? I mean, is it simply to make the employee feel good?

Mr. LEVINE: It's actually a very smart business decision. In our research, just came across a small software firm in Silicon Valley, a cutthroat business, where firms are trying to steal other people's software programs, you know, while they sleep practically. This firm just instituted paid paternity leave as a benefit to keep other companies from being predators. And in fact it's working. Guys are feeling, just like Bruce said, loyal to the company. If the company's going to do this, help me at the time of birth, they're going to help me at other times as well.

LAUER: Isn't there still, though, a stigma here? I mean, don't men feel pressure from other men in the workplace, don't they hear the Mr. Mom comments, and--and don't they possibly know that the leave exists but--but not take advantage of it?

Mr. LEVINE: All the time, absolutely. In fact, most leave, you know, even on--even on the Family Medical Leave Act, is still informal. Guys are still reluctant to take advantage of the formal policy for that fear. But the fear is not justified. Research does not show that men are penalized in their careers for taking paternity leave. It does show that men's fear of being penalized keeps them from taking it.

LAUER: But so a boss--your studies don't show that a boss sees that employee as less aggressive, less progressive?

Mr. LEVINE: Smart bosses--in fact, our research has shown that smart bosses see that men work to take care of their families, and that a smart--a smart boss will allow his employee to succeed both at being a worker and being a dad. It's a win-win.

LAUER: Role models are important in everything we do. Louis Freeh, director of the FBI, recently took a paternity leave. That has to help and filter down to men throughout the workplace.

Mr. LEVINE: Enormously important. What we hear again and again is I'm not seeing the leadership in my company taking this, show me the guys on top doing this. When leadership comes out either taking leave or supporting it, because guys don't--at the top, don't have to take leave, but if they stand up, as Hugh McCall did at NationsBank, and say I support this, guys take leave.

LAUER: Look into your crystal ball, you've been here before, if you come back in 10 years and we have this same discussion, what percentage of companies will be offering paid leave to men?

Mr. LEVINE: I think we'll move up to maybe 20 percent, 25 percent. This is not a revolution, this is an evolution. But it's very significant, we are seeing significant change, and it's going to make a difference for men and women and kids in this country.

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LAUER: James Levine, always good to see you.

Mr. LEVINE: Good to see you.

LAUER: Eight thirteen. In a moment, a question out of Kentucky, should preachers carry guns in church? That's after this.

LANGUAGE: English

LOAD-DATE: July 16, 1998

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March 15, 1998, Sunday CITY EDITION

SECTION: CLASSIFIED, Pg. 1H

LENGTH: 485 words

HEADLINE: PATERNITY LEAVE INCREASINGLY POPULAR

BYLINE: LISA BENAVIDES STAFF WRITER AND TENNESSEAN NEWS SERVICES

BODY:

More men are challenging cultural stereotypes by taking advantage of paternity leaves and company-sponsored parenting programs.

Last month, FBI Director Louis Freeh said he would go on paid paternity leave to care for a new son. Instead of prompting snickers, the announcement has been welcomed as a sign working fathers don't have to hide.

Yet dads still lag behind moms in taking leave when a new child arrives. The Department of Labor reported that 275,000 women were on maternity leave in an average month in 1997 while only 6,000 men were on paternity leave.

But look at stats from three years ago for some perspective: in 1994, 3,000 men took paternity leave in an average month.

For both genders, the leaves usually are without pay.

"I think it is more accepted," said Pat Brown, vice president of personnel strategic issues at First Tennessee Bank.

The Memphis-based company has offered unpaid paternity leave since 1988, and allows dads to take up to six months off.

"We've really seen our fathers wanting to be more and more involved in that, and the pay issue is the biggest issue to them not taking it more," Brown said. "We're looking into that issue of possibly offering paid leave."

Even though more companies are launching programs for fathers, many men still feel reluctant to take leave or stay at home full time.

"More and more companies are offering what they call parental leave, but there's a lot more that needs to change in the culture for men to feel comfortable," said Dana Friedman, senior vice president of CorporateFamily Solutions, a Nashville-based provider of workplace child care and other family-friendly services.

"Men fear negative repercussions to their career," Friedman said. "This has been going on with women for years, but for men, the sanctions are even stronger."

Many men use their vacation or sick days when they have a child, Brown said. New mothers are more likely to have paid time off because it's counted as

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disability leave, she said.

Beyond offering more paternity leave, the trend is for companies to create a generic time-off bank so that childless workers don't feel penalized, said Diane Huggins, CorporateFamily's director of corporate communications.

"We see a lot of our clients taking the direction of a general leave pool which employees can use any way they want to," she said.

Accrued leave can be used for teacher conferences, to care for a sick parent or to deal with a personal crisis.

The increased awareness by companies of the need to be family friendly comes as the tight labor market means increased competition for qualified workers.

"It's a retainment issue," Huggins said. "Employees are shopping around to see who has the best environment. And up-and-coming younger people are demanding more than we did coming up. So there's a higher expectation on the part of young professionals today."

LOAD-DATE: March 19, 1998