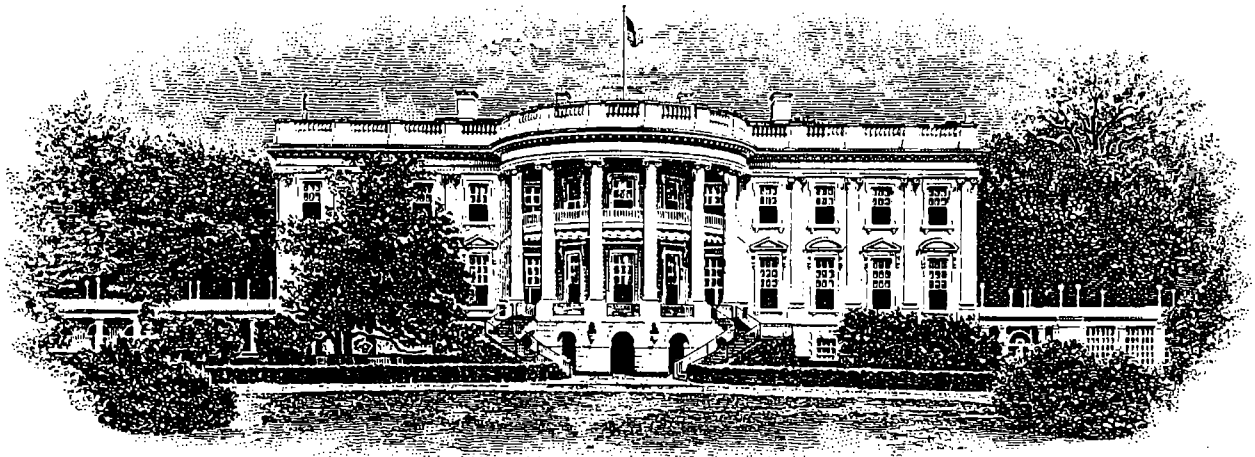




The White House



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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

CABINET MEETING
Thursday, June 29, 2000
Cabinet Room – 5:55 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Appropriations/Midsession Review
- II. Medicare Reform/Prescription Drugs
- III. China Permanent Normal Trade Relations
- IV. Foreign Policy

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MID-SESSION REVIEW



BUDGET OF THE
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Fiscal Year 2001

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 29, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN NORMAN MINETA
AS NOMINEE FOR SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

The Oval Office

12:11 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. I'm pleased to bring you here to announce my nomination of Norm Mineta to be the 33rd Secretary of Commerce, to carry on the successful work of Bill Daley, Mickey Kantor and Ron Brown.

I want to welcome Norm and his wife, Danealia, here. And I want to thank Secretary Daley for returning from his new duties to be with us, and for the truly magnificent job that he has done.

I also want to thank our Deputy Secretary of Commerce Rob Mallett for being here today, and for also being part of that same tradition of excellence -- his leadership in improving the way the department is run, and especially his efforts to open government contracting to women and to minority-owned businesses. We couldn't do it without you, Bob, and we thank you for your service.

Norm Mineta is a worthy addition to the Cabinet. He was, of course, a member of Congress for 21 years, representing Silicon Valley; serving as chair of the House Committee for Public Works and Transportation. He was a leader on trade and technology, and helping his colleagues understand and promote the emerging digital economy.

We worked closely together on trade issues, but on others as well, such as family and medical leave, where his support was absolutely pivotal. And he has ably chaired my Advisory Commission on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Now, Norm thought he'd left politics for good in 1995, when he left Congress to work for Lockheed Martin. But politics and public service have a way of calling the best back. Norm is one of the best -- a strong leader for the Department of Commerce, a highly skilled negotiator in Washington and throughout the world. He will play a crucial role in keeping our economic strategy on track, opening trade around the world, investing in our people, promoting high technology, bridging the digital divide.

He brings an in-depth understanding of American business, and a strong sense of the needs of our high-tech economy. But he also has a deep concern for people -- for the people in places who are not yet fully participating in this economy.

You see, Norm Mineta's family story tells a lot about the promise of the American Dream and the power of one person's devotion to opportunity and to justice. As a young boy during World War II, he and his family were forced from their home and held hundreds of miles away in a desolate internment camp for Japanese Americans. When he got home, young Norm vowed to work to make sure that kind injustice could never happen to anyone else.

He grew up, went to college, served the Army in Korea and Japan. Then he began a career of public service in the San Jose government, becoming the first Asian-Pacific American mayor of a major American city. He was elected to Congress in 1974, and became the first Asian-Pacific American to chair a major congressional committee. But he never stopped fighting for justice. His efforts led to the passage of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which provided an apology and compensation for every survivor of the wartime internment camps.

I am proud to add to Norm's string of firsts by naming him the first Asian-Pacific American ever to hold a post in the President's Cabinet; proud to have a man of his qualities as a member of our economic team, as we work to make the most of this moment of unprecedented opportunity.

Recently I received a remarkable book called, Asian American Dreams. It's author writes that Asian-Pacific Americans are "a people in constant motion, a great work in progress, each stage more faceted and complex than before. As we overcome adversity and take on new challenges, our special dynamism is our gift to America."

Well, that pretty well describes Norm Mineta's life, and why I decided to name him Secretary of Commerce. I am very grateful to him, and to his wife, for giving up the joys and the remunerations of private life to come back into public service. And I hope he will be swiftly heard and confirmed by the United States Senate.

Norm.

CONGRESSMAN MINETA: Mr. President, thank you very, very much. I really am honored to be your nominee for Secretary of Commerce. And I am honored to be a member of the Clinton-Gore administration, and its commitment to the development of new economic markets here and abroad. And I am honored and humbled to be walking across this very historic threshold with you, Mr. President.

Our nation is now in the longest period of sustained economic expansion ever seen in its history. And this expansion is an achievement, and it is not by accident. It was achieved by raising the productivity and competitiveness of our businesses and our work force. It was achieved in large measure through the policies and the determination of the President and his administration.

There can be no more important task than to further advance the policies that have brought us to this triumph of economic performance and prosperity. And you have another triumph here today. Mr. President, as you so well know, my parents came to the United States from Japan more than 90 years ago in search of the American Dream. And I am proud to be chosen by you to be the first Asian-Pacific American to serve in any President's Cabinet.

The substance of your actions today must never be underestimated or forgotten. Mr. President, you have the eternal gratitude of not just Japanese Americans or Asian-Pacific Americans, but I believe every American.

Mr. President, I know the new economy as well. Since the second world war, my home state of California has often led the way in national trends relating to growth and prosperity. And this was true throughout my 30 years of representing Silicon Valley, whether it was as mayor of San Jose, California, or in the Congress. And it is true today as the Clinton-Gore administration has led the new economy to sweep our great nation.

Now, some might say that the months remaining in this administration is not a lot of time to make a difference in the life of our nation. But I disagree. Six months is a virtual eternity in the new economy. And so, I intend to help you, Mr. President, to keep all the sectors of the economy strong and growing, because we owe that to the American people.

And so, again, Mr. President, thank you very, very much for the confidence that you have exhibited by nominating me for this position, and Danealia and I both step up to the plate to accept the challenge. Thank you very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Daley is leaving your Cabinet, but he's going to another important job, and I wonder if you have any advice for him as he moves to take over the Gore campaign, and also, if you think you're going to be offering advice regularly to him over the next couple of months.

THE PRESIDENT: My advice is not to discuss such advice in public, but just to listen and do what he thinks is right.

Q Mr. President, the industrial labor movement is none too pleased by Mr. Daley's movement over to the Gore campaign. I'm wondering if you think choosing someone from the corporate world will further antagonize the labor movement and cause difficulty for the Clinton-Gore administration generally, and for Vice President Gore and the campaign.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think, for one thing, anybody that looks at Bill Daley's lifetime record or his family's lifetime record would have a hard time finding someone who has been in the mainstream of Democratic politics who's been any more pro-labor.

You know, we all have a difference on these trade issues -- the Vice President does, and I do, and Secretary Daley does. But on virtually every other issue, I think you can

make a very compelling case that this has clearly been the most pro-labor administration since President Johnson, and maybe going back before that.

So I don't think so. And I think he and John Sweeney will get along well. They're just two good Irish boys that are trying to do right by their country.

Q Mr. President, while it's laudatory --

Q -- in the corporate world, sir, do you think that will have any effect on labor movement --

THE PRESIDENT: No. Certainly not. I mean, he's got a great record, particularly when he was chairman of the committee. I think labor supported what he did there, and I think they will receive him very well.

Let me just say this. I have to make one other announcement before you all go, because this is the only chance we have to talk about this. I want to talk about last night's vote on prescription drug coverage in the House.

As you know, the Republican bill passed by three votes. They would allow no vote on the Democratic bill. And I just want the American people to know that the bill that they passed is an empty promise to most of our seniors. The bill passed along partisan lines, and it offers a flawed, unworkable private insurance prescription benefit that the insurance companies themselves -- to their everlasting credit -- the insurance companies themselves have said, this will not work, these policies will not be affordable, most seniors who need help will not be able to take advantage of this bill.

Now, they have said it over and over. This provides more political coverage for the Republicans who voted for it than insurance coverage for the seniors who need to buy medicine.

Now, let me just say this. In a report that was made available only late yesterday -- too late to be of use in the debate, I might add -- Congress's own Budget Office concluded that more than half the Medicare beneficiaries who don't have drug coverage today would not be covered by the Republican private insurance plan. It also shows that their premiums would be 50 percent higher than those under our plan, and the coverage would be 20 percent lower.

So, for seniors with incomes over \$12,600 a year, or couples with incomes over \$16,600 a year, this plan doesn't do the job. And it certainly doesn't do the job for Americans with disabilities, who would also be covered by a real Medicare prescription drug plan. That's why the leading aging and disability groups across the country have supported our plan, and that's why the drug manufacturers and their allies have supported the Republican plan. And it's important that the American people understand the difference between the two proposals.

Again, I say we have a substantial budget surplus projected. If we can protect the Medicare tax receipts, I'm prepared to work with Congress on a real prescription drug benefit, and on marriage tax relief and other tax relief that will cost about the same amount of money that the Republicans say they want. But we're going to have to work across party lines on a bipartisan bill. We don't need the kind of one-party vote we had last night, especially without allowing us to even bring up our substitute and see how many Republican votes we could get for a real bill.

So I haven't given up, and we're still working.

Thank you all very much.

Q Mr. President, do you expect Secretary Albright to recommend a summit in the near-term, or are you just going to take a couple more weeks before that's a possibility?

THE PRESIDENT: I just don't know because I haven't talked to her. I want her to come back and visit. Obviously, I've been spending a major amount of time thinking about this, working on it, talking to all the parties. But I really wanted her to go there and get a sense of it, come back, and then we'll decide where to go from here.

But I actually don't know the answer to your question. This is not one of those deals where I'm just not ready to announce it; I just don't know. And I'm going to do whatever I can in the time I have left to help them make peace. So whatever I do or don't do will be based on my calculation that it will maximize the possibilities of ultimate success. But I don't know yet.

Q Do you expect any kind of decision today or tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

THE PRESS: Thank you

END 12:27 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 28, 2000

PRESS CONFERENCE BY THE PRESIDENT

The East Room

1:45 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. This has been a good week for the American people: first, the landmark breakthrough in human genomic research, which promises to eradicate once incurable diseases and revolutionize health care for a very long time to come; second, the release of the Midsession Review, which told us that the health of our economy continues its remarkable expansion.

Our budget surplus this year will be the largest in history -- \$211 billion. Over the next 10 years, after we lock away Medicare and Social Security surpluses, the remaining surplus is expected to be almost \$1.5 trillion. This progress exceeds even our own predictions just four months ago, another milestone in what is now the longest economic expansion in our history.

This is a tribute to the hard work of the American people and our commitment to fiscal discipline, expanded trade and investments in our people and our future. Now is not the time to abandon the path that has brought us here. We must use this moment of prosperity to make important investments in our most pressing priorities.

Chief among them is the need to provide affordable, reliable prescription drug coverage to our seniors. There is no question that this is a critical need. Just yesterday, a study released showed that prescription drugs shot up over 10 percent last year alone. That is too heavy a burden for our older seniors to pay and for our people with disabilities to pay.

There are some who say we can't provide affordable, accessible prescription drug coverage for all our seniors. I believe that's wrong. With millions of them without coverage, the absence of prescription drug coverage is a fatal flaw in our present health care system. Think about it: Because of breakthroughs like the Human Genome Project, in our lifetime there may be new life-saving drug treatments for many dreaded diseases. But they won't mean anything if our seniors and people with disabilities can't afford them. That's what this debate is really all about.

Today, the House is set to vote on a prescription drug plan that amounts to an empty promise for too many of our seniors. It's a private insurance plan that many seniors and people

with disabilities simply won't be able to afford. Insurers, themselves, say the Republican plan won't work. The bottom line is, their plan is designed to benefit the companies who make the prescription drugs, not the older Americans who need to take them. It puts special interest above the public interest.

Let me make it specific and clear: This plan would not guarantee affordable prescription drugs to single senior citizens with incomes above \$12,600 a year, or to senior couples with incomes above \$16,600 a year. And we have all heard countless, countless stories of those with crushing medical burdens, that if they could get these prescription drugs, would have their lives lengthened and the quality of their lives improved.

An article in today's paper reveals that a group calling itself Citizens for Better Medicare is running -- I give it points for chutzpa -- Citizens for Better Medicare is running millions of dollars in ads to kill our prescription drug proposal. You'd think a group with this name would be in favor of affordable Medicare prescription drug coverage for all seniors and people with disabilities. But this is one of those mysterious interest groups whose financial backers are cloaked in secrecy.

Now, just last night, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to force groups like this to open their books and disclose their fundraising sources to the American people. I applaud the House for this vote, and all those, Democrats and Republicans, who voted for it. With the vote on Medicare in the House, I call on Citizens for Better Medicare to respect the will of the Congress and reveal the sources of their support today. We should let the American people judge who is truly interested in better Medicare.

It is clear that this lobbying effort is part of a larger campaign to block real progress. In fact, the Republican leadership in Congress won't even allow our prescription plan to come up for a vote in the House -- I suspect because they're afraid it would pass.

I have offered a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is voluntary and affordable. My plan puts the interest of seniors first. Whether you're on a fixed income, live in a big city or a rural area, the plan is dependable, and it is affordable. This is particularly important for rural Americans. More than half of our oldest seniors in rural communities go the entire year without any prescription drug coverage at all.

Earlier this week, in an effort to break the logjam, I offered a compromise proposal to give seniors the relief they desperately need. I said we could pass a prescription drug benefit while providing real tax relief to married couples, something the majority in Congress say they want to do. And we could do both now within the framework of fiscal responsibility.

As the Vice President has proposed, the first thing we should do is to take the Medicare tax receipts we get off budget, so they are saved for Medicare alone and, meanwhile, used to pay down the debt. That will do more to protect and strengthen Medicare; it will help extend the life of the Medicare trust fund to 2023; it will put us in a position to pay down the debt completely by 2012, a year ahead of schedule. It will enable us still to set aside \$500 billion to reserve for

America's future, to be used after a full debate and after this year's elections to meet the country's key priorities.

Now, with less than 35 days left in the legislative year, time is running out for Congress to meet its obligations to the American people. They have to make the tough choices to get something done or continue to be dragged down by the weight of special interests.

So, again, I ask Congress, let's not waste these precious weeks. It's time to get down to business, to pass a strong patients' bill of rights; to raise the minimum wage by \$1 over two years; to pass the common-sense gun legislation; to hold tobacco companies, not taxpayers, accountable for the health care costs of tobacco; to pass hate crimes legislation; to finish the jobs of giving American businesses and farmers access to a huge new market by passing permanent normal trade relations with China; to open new markets to American investors here at home; to bring prosperity to people in places who have been left behind; and, most important of all, to continue to improve our schools, to demand more of them and invest more in them, including more teachers for smaller class sizes, after-school programs for all our kids who need them, and repairing or modernizing thousands of our schools that are today literally falling apart or so overcrowded they can't contain all the kids.

We can still do a lot of this if we work together in the days ahead. That's what the American people want us to do, even in an election year.

There's been some encouraging developments in this Congress. We lifted the earnings limit on Social Security; we passed the Africa Caribbean Basin trade bill. Apparently, the bill to aid Colombia is making good progress. And I think the China legislation will pass if we can get it up to a vote in a timely fashion. So the Congress can do a lot of things and I hope they will, and I'm looking forward to work with them.

Terry?

Q Mr. President, after seven months, the Elian Gonzalez case is coming to a conclusion, removing a thorn from U.S.-Cuban relations. And House Republican leaders have struck a deal to ease decades-old sanctions against Cuba. Would you accept that legislation? Is it time to normalize relations with Fidel Castro's government? What would that take?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me deal with the questions separately; first, on the question of the legislation proposed by Mr. Nethercutt. If I believe that the legislation essentially allows for the sales of American food and medicine to Cuba or to other countries, but has some protection for us for extraordinary circumstances that foreign policy might require, like Senator Lugar's bill does in the Senate, then I would be inclined to sign the bill and to support it. I've always wanted to sell more food and medicine, not only to Cuba, but to other countries, as well.

I have some concerns about it, and I just have to analyze the bill as it passed and whatever legislation finally makes its way to my desk, because, as I understand it, they put some new restrictions on travel to Cuba, which might undermine our people-to-people contacts, which had been more and more extensive over the last several months and which I believe to be very

important. And since no federal programs can be used to help finance these food sales, as they can be to other countries, we need an analysis of whether there actually will be more sales under the legislation.

So I guess what I want to know and I just haven't had time to get the analysis from our folks, is whether this will be a net plus in terms of our strategy, which is to reach out to the Cuban people without supporting the Cuban government.

Now, the second question you ask is whether it's time to move toward normalization. Let me just do a little history here. In 1992, when I was running for president, the Congress passed the Cuba Democracy Act and President Bush signed it, and I strongly supported the bill. The bill seemed to strengthen economic sanctions on Cuba, but actually provided a specific, step-by-step way for us to move toward normalizing relations. And we were in the process of doing that. We did it in '93, '94, '95. We were moving toward sort of -- we would do something, they would do something. It was working, I thought, quite well. And I thought the law was actually quite good.

And then, the Cuban Air Force shot the planes down and killed American citizens, illegally and deliberately. And so, since -- after that, the Helms-Burton bill passed, and it codified the embargo. So the real answer to your question is, I don't believe that we can change that law until there is a bipartisan majority which believes that there has been some effort on the part of the Cuban government to reach out to us, as well.

I like the old law, I thought it was working well. The killing of those innocent people in those two airplanes changed all that. And now we're in a position where until there is a bipartisan majority of Congress persuaded that there has been a fundamental change, we can't do more than what I've been doing, which is to try to aggressively expand people-to-people contacts.

That brings us back to the Nethercutt bill. If I think on balance, it allows the President -- not just me, my successor as well -- to pursue our foreign policy interest, and will, on balance, further that policy, then I would support it. But I want to analyze it for the reasons that I said.

Go ahead, Steve.

Q There are reports that Israel and the Palestinians will be coming to Washington next week for talks. Do you think enough progress is being made to arrange a Middle East summit, or are you discouraged? And secondly, should Israel stop the sale of radar systems to China?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me answer the second question first. That's a much clearer one. We're very concerned about that sale, and I've talked to Prime Minister Barak about it extensively. And as you know, there's a lot of concern in the Congress, so we're still working on that.

Now, in terms of their coming here for talks, there has been no date set. I do not believe that they can resolve the final, most difficult issues without having the leaders get together in

some isolated setting and make the last tough decisions -- or decide not to make them, as the case may be.

Of all the issues involved with regard to all the parties in the Middle East peace talks, the final status issues between the Israelis and the Palestinians are the most difficult. I do not, however, believe they're going to get any easier with the passage of time. I think that some foreign policy problems, the answer is to kick the can down the road and wait for them to get better, and hope time takes care of them. Some have to be decided sooner or later, and sooner is better than later. My own instinct is that the cluster of problems here would be better off being resolved sooner rather than later.

I've had Mr. Ross out in the Middle East, and then Secretary Albright went, and she's going to give me a report, and when she does, then I'll make a judgment about whether the time is right to ask them to come here. But I have not made that decision yet.

Go ahead, Paul.

Q A death penalty question, sir. Do you believe that Governor Bush made the wrong decision by allowing Mr. Graham to go to his death last week? And secondly, do you believe it's time for the American people to stop and reassess where we stand on implementation of the death penalty in this country?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, on the Texas case, I didn't read the file, all I know about it is what I've read about it in the press. But let me say generally what I think. I think that those of us who support the death penalty have an extra heavy responsibility to assure both that the result is accurate and that the process was fair and constitutional. And that means, to me, at least in modern terms, the broadest possible use of DNA evidence and the strongest possible effort to guarantee adequate assistance of counsel. That's a big issue. And I think those were two of the reasons that motivated Governor Ryan in Illinois to do what he did, and have driven a lot of other things in this debate. So that's where I think it is.

Now, I don't know that the American people have changed their position that it's still an appropriate penalty under certain severe circumstances, and I haven't. But I am concerned also, at the federal level, with the -- I don't believe that adequate assistance of counsel is an issue in the federal cases. And as far as I know, there are no cases in which the question of DNA is an issue. There may be, I don't know if there are some.

The issues at the federal level relate more to the disturbing racial composition of those who have been convicted and the apparent fact that almost all the convictions are coming out of just a handful of states, which raises the question of whether, even though there is a uniform law across the country, what your prosecution is may turn solely on where you committed the crime. I've got a review underway of both those issues at this time.

Yes, Bill?

Q Mr. President, as you know, for the third time, a Justice Department investigation has recommended that the Vice President's activities in fundraising during the last campaign cycle be looked into. Previously, on two occasions, the Attorney General has declined to do this. Would it be better for the Attorney General, for your administration, and for the Vice President's candidacy if he invited such an investigation?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first let me say, my understanding is -- I know this is true in the previous cases, and I think it's true here -- is that there are some people in the Justice Department that think there should be and some who think there shouldn't be. And the Attorney General, who has shown no reluctance to ask for a special counsel when she thought one was called for, didn't think one was called for in this case, and she reaffirmed that yesterday.

I think the fact that the Vice President released the transcript of his interview was a very good thing, because some Republican senators had made some assertions about it that just weren't so, they weren't true. And now that the whole thing has been put out in the public, it seems to me that the best thing to do is for the American people to make their own judgments about it. But I don't see any reason that the Attorney General shouldn't make a decision in this case, as she has in every other one.

Q Another question about your Vice President. A year ago when people looked at his poll numbers compared to the Texas Governor's, his supporters would say, oh, the election is a long way off. Six months ago, people were saying the election's a long way off with those same poll numbers, and today, his supporters are still saying that. And I wonder, do you think it's time to suggest that this might be a trend, that there is a reason why the Vice President is trailing the Texas Governor in the polls? And secondly, you have said that the Vice President will not be held accountable, that the American people will not hold him accountable for the scandals of this administration. Do you still believe that's the case, or is this, in fact, part of it?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I said -- no, let me say exactly what I said -- I said that the people would not hold him responsible for anything I did that they didn't agree with, or that was wrong, and that's clearly true. That's still true. There is no evidence of that in the surveys.

Secondly, let me remind you that a lot of these other so-called "scandals" were bogus. Mike Espy was acquitted; the Cisneros thing was a tempest in a teapot, totally overdone; and you all know that the Whitewater thing was bogus from day one, it had nothing to do with the official conduct of the administration, anyway.

Now, so the word "scandal," has been thrown around here like a clanging teapot for seven years. And I keep waiting for somebody to say -- I noticed there was one columnist in The Washington Post that had the uncommon decency to say, will no one ever stand up here and say that a whole bunch of this stuff was just garbage and that we had totally innocent people prosecuted because they wouldn't lie, we had totally innocent people's lives wrecked because they wouldn't go along with this alleged scandal machine? So let's be careful, let's be specific.

Now, I've already told you, my view is that the Vice President, on the only thing as far as I know that he's been in any way implicated in is this campaign finance thing. He put out the whole transcript of his interview, made himself available for questions, and I thought made a very compelling case and certainly demonstrated that a lot of the accusations against him with regard to that are not so.

There was also a very interesting article -- I think in the National Law Journal -- which basically went through all of the things and concluded that there was no basis for a lot of these criticisms of him, under these circumstances. And I think another magazine here -- maybe the New Republic, The Washington Monthly -- one of those other magazines had an analysis of it. So I think that we should be very careful in throwing that around.

Now, let me come back to the polls. First of all, I must say, I haven't seen any or done any lately, so I don't know. But I'm perplexed that I can't remember a time when we had two major polls coming out within a couple of days of each other that had 13 points difference. One said there was a 13-point difference in the race; the other one said it was tied -- and they came out, they were done within two or three days of each other. I don't think either one of those pollsters rigged the results, so my instinct is that people are still trying to figure out what they think about this race.

And all I can tell you is, I know three things -- and I've said this over and over again, I know three things -- one is, no person in the history of the republic has ever had the positive impact on this country as Vice President that Al Gore has had. That is a historical fact. We've had a lot of Presidents who were Vice Presidents who were great Presidents -- Jefferson, Teddy Roosevelt, Harry Truman were great Presidents, but not because of their service as Vice President. Nobody has ever done as much for America as Vice President as Al Gore has. Therefore, in my lifetime, he's the best qualified person to serve.

The second thing is I believe that he's right on the issues. I think his economic policy is right. I think it's far more likely to keep the prosperity of this country going. I think it's far more likely to include people that would otherwise be left out.

And the third thing is, I think it's important that somebody be elected that understands the future. We just announced this Genome Project yesterday. What are we going to do to make sure there's no genetic discrimination? A lot of people will want genetic discrimination in employment, in promotion, in extension of health insurance. What are we going to do to make sure it doesn't exist? What are we going to do to make sure, in the computer revolution, that there's no violation of people's privacy rights with their health and financial records? A lot of people will want to get that private health and financial information.

So I think that what will happen is, we'll come to the conventions, we'll have these debates, and somehow -- I've been amazed by an amazing volatility since the end -- you know, at the end of the primary campaign, most of the polls had him up a point or two. So there's been a lot of volatility in these polls, and my best judgment is that people are still trying to figure out what they're going to do. And sooner or later they will. I don't think they have, and I think they know those three things about Al Gore, and it's still more likely than not that he will win.

Q Mr. President, you've spoken to the congressional constraints that are attached to your ability to deal with Cuba, and yet, a hallmark of your foreign policy, sir, has been a commitment to engagement, the idea that American trade and investment, ideas and practices can be powerful engines of change -- China, Russia, Vietnam, now even North Korea. Do you think, sir, that it's in the American interest not to have those tools available in dealing with Cuba? Do you think there's any prospect at all that the current policy will actually work? And after 40 years and now nine presidents, do you think the time has come to reassess?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the next -- I like -- I'll go back. I like the system that exists under the Cuban Democracy Act. I think Congress has a role to play here, but I like the Cuban Democracy Act. I think it's not wise to take away from the President all the tools of diplomacy with regard to one country that he might have, or she might have, some day with another country. So I like that.

But I will say again, there was a reason for that. All these other countries you mentioned, none of them -- none of them -- by order of the leader of the country, killed, murdered two airplanes' worth of people. I think there were four people involved -- these people were killed, illegally. It violated the Chicago Convention. Even if you believe that those planes were in Cuban airspace -- which we believe they were not -- they could not legally be shot down.

That changed everything. The deliberate decision to murder those people changed everything. And it made me wonder whether Mr. Castro was hoping we never would normalize relations, so then he could use us as an excuse for the failures of his regime. But we are where we are here.

What have I done? I was aggressively moving to implement the Cuban Democracy Act before that happened. Since then, we have done everything we could -- and I noticed there was one article about it last week which pointed out how Secretary Albright had dramatically increased the people-to-people contacts and the travel to Cuba. We are doing what we can.

Obviously, I think that anything we can do to engage the Cuban people, to get them involved in the process of change, to get them to look outside the world, to get them to look beyond the present system they have is a positive thing to do. And that's why I answered in response to that very first question, to evaluate the legislation in the House on the food and medicine sales, I've got to really have an analysis of it to say, will the restrictions and personal contact, which the legislation imposes -- which I think are a mistake -- be outweighed by the increased sales of food and medicine, in terms of the ultimate benefit to the Cuban people. And I will look at it and see.

Yes, George.

Q Mr. President, does the closeness of today's abortion vote in the Supreme Court suggest to you that abortion rights are at risk in the next court? Or does it suggest that the fact that partial birth abortion can survive even a conservative court say that they aren't as threatened as some believe?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first, I think the court decision is clearly the only decision it could reach consistent with Roe v. Wade. So I think what you know there is that that's the vote for Roe v. Wade. You can't have a rule like the rule of Roe and then ignore it. So that's why -- if you remember, on this late-term abortion issue, a couple of years ago I pleaded with the Congress to adopt a broad limitation on late-term abortions, consistent with Roe v. Wade, but to make an exception for the life and health of the mother, as the Supreme Court decision required. They declined to do that, and so we've had a political impasse here, and then you've seen what's happened in all these states.

So the decision is, I think, consistent with Roe v. Wade. And as you pointed out, it was narrowly upheld. I think that's about what the vote for Roe is. And I think that in the next four years, there will be somewhere between two and four appointments to the Supreme Court, and depending on who those appointees are, I think the rule will either be maintained or overturned. And I think that it's very much in the balance, depending on what appointments are made in the next four years. That's what I believe.

Yes, go ahead, Larry.

Q Mr. President, Governor Bush has been critical of you and the energy policy of the administration, saying that you've failed to adequately convince OPEC to increase oil production. He also claims that if he became President, he'd be able to use personal diplomacy to persuade allies, like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to -- I believe he said, turn on the spigot. Do you find that kind of claim realistic? And do you have any reaction to his criticism of you?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I have spent an enormous amount of time on this in the last several months, and there have been two decisions by OPEC to increase production -- not as much as we would like.

If you look at the allocation of the production increases against the real capacity of those countries, most countries don't have the capacity to produce much more than their latest allocation, except for the Saudis. And it's clear that they were trying to maintain some sort of harmony within the OPEC family.

Let's go back. I think that these big increases in gasoline prices in America are the result -- as I said I think several weeks ago -- first and foremost, of the unfortunate decision of OPEC several months ago to cut back production at the very time the world economy was growing. They left production out there when the world economy sunk, which is one reason we had very inexpensive gas prices for a good period of time. And these two developments grated up against each other. So that's the first thing.

Then the second thing is, we had here, as you know, in America -- so we had a tight supply situation. Then we had some broken pipelines, which interrupted supplies, which caused a temporary spike. And then in the Midwest we did have, apparently some, but I think quite a modest impact on prices because of the intersection of the clean air rules with trying to mix the fuels in a different way -- particularly ethanol.

And I think what we have to do now is to keep doing what we can to get production up, to let this FTC investigation proceed -- I think the gas prices have dropped eight cents a gallon in the Midwest, and in the blended fuels area, 12.5 cents a gallon just since the investigation was announced. But the main thing I would say to you is, we need a long-term energy strategy to maximize conservation and maximize the development of alternative sources of energy, and also, maximize domestic sources of energy.

Now, let me just mention two or three things -- I've mentioned this before. The House, by the way, has reauthorized the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. And I compliment them on that; that's a good thing. We also need a home heating oil reserve for the Northeast. We need to do that, that's very important.

We ought to pass my proposal to provide tax credits to people who manufacture or buy energy-efficient homes, cars and consumer products. That ought to be done. We ought to pass my appropriations to help develop alternative sources of energy and energy conservation technologies.

Since I've been President, or since '95, anyway, the Congress has approved approximately 12 percent of my requests. And the House voted to zero our participation in the Partnership for New Generation Vehicles. This kind of research is just as important as the human genome research in terms of the role of the government in this. A lot of this basic research needs to be done by the government. We can be driving cars that get 80 miles to the gallon through fuel cells, through electric cars, through natural gas fuel, a lot of other options, within a matter of three or four years if we'll just get after it and treat this like it's important. So I think that's very important.

Let me just mention one other thing. I think it's very important to pass a comprehensive electricity restructuring proposal, because they also, the electricity companies also -- electric companies -- use traditional fuels, and if we can reduce their reliance on it, obviously it will lower the price for other purposes. I think there's \$20 billion a year in savings to the American people through electricity restructuring, which is also quite important.

Yesterday, the Vice President issued a number of other proposals, including what he said he felt should be done with some of the surplus, which dealt with energy efficiency in factories and power plants. And all the analyses there show that there are massive, massive savings there, again, which would not only cut their bills, but by freeing up supply would lower the overall price of the fuel that we need.

So that's the system we need. We need to -- it's all out there. It's not like we don't know that these technologies are there. It's not like we don't know we have options for conservation.

Some of you were with me, I think it was three years ago now, when I went out to San Bernardino, California, to a stop on the rail line outside Los Angeles, to a lower-income housing project where they promised 40-percent lower utility bills, using elemental solar reflectors that looked like just little shingles on roofs, better windows, better insulation. And I can tell you,

after three years, the average utility bills are 65 percent lower than they would be for that kind of floor space for those families in other places in California.

So it's out there. All we have to do is to make up our mind that we're going to accelerate this. That's what I think we should be doing.

Q Mr. President, does that mean that Governor Bush is oversimplifying things when he points to places like --

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I think that it's a -- we all rate our powers of persuasion differently, you know, and our powers of persuasion sometimes work when people's interests are involved, and sometimes don't. But it's not just a question of how much oil is being pumped. And, obviously, I have done what I could in the way I felt was most effective to increase production. I will continue to do that. But I think it's a simple answer to a complex problem and -- although I saw that story that one of you put out about his 1992 letter in which he was arguing for high energy prices. So I'm glad that he's changed his position anyway. It's amazing how a few years will do that to you. So I like that.

Yes, John.

Q Mr. President, supporters of Vice President Gores have been fairly blunt in raising questions about whether Governor Bush has the knowledge and depth to be President. On the other hand, many scholars have noted that Ronald Reagan managed to be effective by concentrating on a few big ideas and leaving the details to others. In your experience here, how important is command of facts and plain old brain power to being President? Are there other qualities that are more important? (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a dead-bang loser, isn't it? (Laughter) No matter what I say, I'm in a big hole.

Well, first of all, I don't think it's so much a question of intelligence, generically. I think it's more a question of curiosity and willingness to learn what you think is important, and learn -- I guess -- I think that no President can say, well, it should be enough for the voters if I get the best advisors in my party and they come up with a position and I take it.

So what the voters will have to analyze here is, how important is the fact that Al Gore spent 20 years working on arms control issues, for example, and dealing with all these things. How much of an effort -- see, I ran as a governor, although I had been a governor a lot longer -- but how important is what you know, what you've learned in the job you've got.

And I think this is a question that's more readily addressed, really, to the candidates than to me. I'm a different person. Everybody's different here. So I always felt that I needed to know as much as I could, not so I could make decisions without experts and without advisors, but so I'd be in the best position to evaluate the advice I was getting.

But it's very important for a president not to try to micro-manage the presidency. So what you try to do is to find a balance between -- because it's a deciding job, it's a deciding job. And a lot of our presidents I think have had some problems not because they knew too much, but almost because they worked so hard that they were so tired they maybe couldn't make really good decisions when they were tired.

But I think what you know counts, because I think the more you know, the better position you're in not only to draw your own conclusions, but to take advice. And so, I think what -- the best is a balance, obviously. It's like everything else in life, the best is a balance. The best is a president that's had broad experience and that knows a lot and that is curious. I think curiosity is profoundly important, but also a president who understands what the big important things are, and then can listen to the right people. You've got to have a blend of both if you want to make the best decisions. That's my view.

Mark.

Q Mr. President, what do you think of the Justice's ruling this morning that allows the Boy Scouts to bar gays as leaders? And if you disagree with it, can you justify your role as Honorary President of the Boy Scouts, which discriminates against gays and atheists?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, the court's ruling, I noticed with interest -- I haven't read it yet, but I did get a pretty good report on it -- I noted with interest that they seem to go out of their way to draw the ruling quite narrowly and to limit it strictly to the question of whether the Boy Scouts could pick the people who were going to be Scout leaders.

I, generally -- I have to tell you, I'm generally against discrimination against gays, and I think that the country has moved a long way. And I'm proud of the things that we've been able to do and I'm disappointed we haven't been able to do more in some areas, but I think we're moving in the right direction. And I think that's all I should say. The Boy Scouts still are -- they're a great group, they do a lot of good. And I would hope that this is just one step along the way of a movement toward greater inclusion for our society, because I think that's the direction we ought to be going in.

Go ahead, Jim.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. As you know, the Supreme Court declined to intervene today either to stop Elian Gonzalez from leaving the country or to overrule other courts, all of which have deferred to your administration. As you look back on this --

THE PRESIDENT: That's pretty rare, isn't it. (Laughter.)

Q As you look back on this, sir, do you have any sense, any regrets at all about the way your administration handled this matter? And in light of what you've said about Cuba here today, sir, do you have any second thoughts about Elian returning to Cuba?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if he and his father decided they wanted to stay here, it would be fine with me. But I think that the most important thing is that his father was adjudged by a people who made an honest effort to determine that he was a good father, a loving father, committed to the son's welfare.

And we upheld here what I think is a quite important principle, as well as what is clearly the law of the United States. Do I wish it had unfolded in a less dramatic, less traumatic way for all concerned? Of course, I do. I have replayed this in my mind many times. I don't know that we had many different options than we pursued, given how the thing developed. But I think the fundamental principle is the right one and I'm glad we did.

I was just in Germany, having a discussion with Chancellor Schroeder about some family reunification issues where we have serious differences with the Germans, who are our great allies, on this. And as I looked and reviewed some of these cases that I've tried to bring to the attention of the German officials, it made me even more convinced that we had upheld the proper principle here.

Yes, John.

Q Mr President, we hear increasingly from senior officials here and at the Pentagon that when it comes to national missile defense, your inclined essentially to split the difference, authorize the contracting, but leave the decision about whether to break from the ABM Treaty to the next President. Is that a fair reflection of your thinking?

THE PRESIDENT: The most important thing I can say to you about that today is that I have not made a final decision and that most of this speculation that is coming in the press is coming from people who have not talked to me about it.

Let me try to at least set up the thing, because I'm working hard on it now. Remember when we put out -- when Congress passed a law about this a couple years ago, you remember, and we had to sort of come up with some timetables, I said two things that I want to repeat today.

First of all, insofar as there might be technology available which would protect us and other people around the world from missile attacks with warheads of weapons of mass destruction, obviously, anybody would have a moral obligation to explore that technology and its potential. I believe that.

Secondly, whether I would make a decision to go forward with deployment would depend upon four things: one, the nature of the threat; two, the feasibility of the technology; three, the cost and, therefore, the relative cost of doing this as compared with something else to protect the national security; and, four, the overall impact on our national security, which includes our nuclear allies and our European alliance, our relationships with Russia, our relationships with China, what the boomerang effect might be about whatever China might do in South Asia, with the Indians and then the Pakistanis, and so on.

So what I have tried to do since then is to say as little as possible, except to explore what would have to be done in our relationships with the Europeans, our allies and with the Russians,

in the first instance, to keep our options open -- could we get an agreed upon modification to the ABM Treaty.

Even the Russians -- keep in mind, don't minimize -- everybody talked about how we didn't reach an agreement, Mr. Putin and I, when I was in Russia. And that's absolutely true, we didn't. But we did get a document out of there which I think is quite important, because the Russians acknowledged that there are new and different security threats on the horizon. That is, that it's quite possible that in the next few years, countries not part of the arms control regimes of the last three decades could develop both long-range missile delivery capability and weapons of mass destruction which they could put on warheads, and that none of this would be covered by, essentially, the mutual deterrence structure of the ABM Treaty and all the things we've done since then.

So they recognize, too, that we, in the new century, in the coming decades, are going to have to make adjustments. Now, what they don't say is they don't want America unilaterally building a missile defense that they think someday can undermine their deterrent capacity. That's kind of where they are now, and we're still talking about all that.

But, John, the truly accurate thing is that I have not yet formulated a position which I am prepared to go to the American people with, but I will do so some time over the next several weeks based on those four criteria and what I think is the right thing to do.

Q Mr. President, last Monday the IRA allowed inspectors to come in and see caches of their weapons. Would you like to see the other terrorist organizations on the Protestant sides allow inspectors to look at their weapons? And are there any words that you could say to the people of Northern Ireland who are facing the marching season, other than Colonel Crowley's oft "peace is good" position -- any personal -- (laughter) -- any words from the heart that you could ask as they approach this very tense time?

THE PRESIDENT: You know, one of the hardest things I've had to learn in life is that not every cliché is wrong. (Laughter.) Peace is good. Well, first, I think it would be a good thing for all the paramilitary groups that have secret arms caches obviously to follow the lead of those who are doing what's been done. I think this is a great deal. I think this is a very, very hopeful development.

And it ought to inform the marching season. That is, if people are going to do their marches, ought to do it mindful of the context in which they're doing it, and the diminished tension and the enhanced hope for long-term peace, and the institutions working again, and all of that.

This is America, we can't say -- anybody can march, anybody can talk, anybody can say whatever they want to say. But everybody ought to -- what I would hope is that there will be a new sense of responsibility and a new sense of possibility in Northern Ireland because of these developments.

You know, there's been lots of work done now over the last several years on this, we've come a long way since the first talk of then Prime Minister Major and then Prime Minister Reynolds, and I think that the work, particularly the things that have been done, the commitments that have been made and the actions that have been taken in the last few months, they ought to be cherished by the people of Northern Ireland, and we ought to have a marching season that unfolds, I would hope to the maximum extent possible, in recognition of all we have seen.

Yes, ma'am.

Q Mr. President, I'd like to know how you feel Al Gore is doing at being his own man. The reason I ask that question is so many of his policies seem to be extensions of your policies, and even last week in the handling of the renewed call for a special prosecutor, the press was full of reports of how his response was very "Clintonesque." So how do you think he's doing at establishing a sense of his own identity?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think he's done that very well. Let me remind you, when I asked him to become Vice President, there were some people who criticized me, who said what a dumb thing I did because we were the same age, we came from -- although he never lets me say that; he's a year younger than I am, and looks much younger now because he has no grey hair -- but anyway, that we came from the same part of the country and we basically came from the same wing of the Democratic Party. But I thought I was getting good balance because he knew things I didn't know -- about arms control, energy, environment, the way Washington worked.

So it shouldn't surprise you that having worked here for eight years, as we all have, that a lot of the new things he proposes would grow naturally out of what has been done, rather than being a departure from it. But I must say -- I read quite carefully those proposals he made yesterday, and while he did incorporate a lot of what I have proposed on energy efficiency, he went way beyond anything I'd ever proposed, too. I was kind of sorry I'd never thought of one or two of the things that were in there.

So I think he's doing fine on that. I think that -- if you just go back to the times when this has happened before to good effect and -- if you go back to when President Nixon ran in 1960, or when Hubert Humphrey ran in '68, or when President Bush ran in '88 -- it's a gradual process. But then one day, it reaches, in the words of that now-famous book that everybody is reading, it reaches a tipping point and people kind of get it, and they say, oh, there it is, there this person is. And I think that's happening with him. And I think after the conventions, it will be crystal clear. And the main players on the stage of American political life will be the two candidates for president.

Mara.

Q Mr. President, the proposals that Vice President Gore laid out yesterday on energy, and the proposals that you discussed today are all long-range solutions to the nation's dependence on oil. In terms of the problems that drivers in the Midwest are experiencing right

now, during the summer driving season, with high gas prices, what would be so bad about suspending gas taxes temporarily just to give those drivers a break?

THE PRESIDENT: First of all -- well, the federal gas tax is not that big. Most of the gas taxes come from -- are at the state level. But if it were done -- and Congress debated this before -- if it were done, they would just have to decide what they were willing to pay in terms of either the deferral or the cancellation of federal highway projects. And that's -- it's a tradeoff, and they would have to make that judgment.

It would -- even there, it would take sometime, and there was some question, as I remember, when it was raised before, whether all those price savings would be passed along to the consumers. So I think if the Congress was going to do that, they would want to have some assurance that that would be done.

But let me say, this is not such a long-term deal. First of all, the most important thing is to let the industry know we're running a serious investigation here -- and I would remind you, gas prices have dropped eight cents in the Midwest, a gallon, since we announced it, at the pump; more, much more, at the wholesale level; and the blended gas has dropped more than eight cents a gallon. So let's not minimize that.

The second thing we need to do is to make absolutely sure that everything that can possibly be done to make sure the pipelines are flowing properly and the refineries are working, that's done. You know, we had a small problem, you may remember, where I used the Strategic Petroleum Reserve recently because of a breakdown in supply available to a refinery in the South. So if I can find any other kind of backlogs like that where there is something I can do to get the flow going, I will do that as well.

But the most important thing I can tell you is, I think that this, as we get more production on line, this present price crisis will begin to abate. But we will have fundamentally higher prices, now that the rest of the world's economy has recovered, and now that virtually all of the OPEC members but Saudi Arabia are operating virtually at full capacity -- until we make up our minds that we're going to drive higher-mileage vehicles and do other things that use less oil.

And we are not talking about a long, long, long-term thing. You're talking about -- a lot of these cars could be on the road and available for sale within two years -- a lot of them. And it's just a question of whether we think it's a national priority, because -- we've treated the human genome like a priority every year because we all want to live forever. And that's good. I'm not minimizing that, I'm not being flippant about that -- we do. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. But we only get interested in this when the price of gasoline goes through the roof.

And this was inevitable. We were actually quite -- I expected it was going to hit sooner, but the Asian financial crisis dropped it down. Now, they went up more than they should have and more than any of us anticipated, including me. And I think part of that is perhaps not justifiable, and that's what we're seeing -- why we're seeing some price adjustments in the Middle West today.

But the only real answer for this is for us to develop alternative sources to oil and more efficient ways of using the energy we have. And we can do it in a hurry if we just put our minds to it.

Q If I could just follow up on that. The federal gas tax is 18 cents, which is not insignificant. Half of that was instituted originally for deficit reduction. Now that we don't have deficits and, in fact, we have record surpluses, what would be wrong with temporarily rolling back, say, 9 cents, or maybe even just the 4.3 cents that you instituted as part of your 1993 budget deal?

THE PRESIDENT: Inherently, there's nothing wrong with it. But you would want to know two things: first of all, the Congress should be satisfied that whatever the financial consequences are to the highway construction and repair program are consequences they're willing to pay, and they think their constituents are willing to pay, number one. And, secondly, they'd need some assurances that actually the people would benefit from it at the pump.

Q Sir, you know we're obligated to ask you about your post-presidential plans just in case you've made a decision since the last time we asked you. (Laughter.) I recall that many years ago, you were asked about, when you were still Governor of Arkansas, you were asked about your future political plans. And, interestingly, you didn't mention the presidency, but you did say that you had always wanted to be in the United States Senate. Is that on the table for you? Have you made any other decision that we need to know about?

THE PRESIDENT: No. But let me remind you what the context -- you go back and read that interview, I think you'll see -- what I said was when I was a young man, I always wanted to be a senator and I never thought about being a governor. But when I became a governor, I found that I liked being an executive better than I liked being a legislator. And I still feel that way. I think -- maybe I'll run for the school board some day. That's about the only thing I can imagine doing. I don't have any other plans. I just want to be a good citizen.

Go ahead, in the back.

MR. LOCKHART: Last question.

Q Republicans in Congress are seeking to pass the spending bills early this year, in an effort to get out of Washington and go campaign in the fall. And, yet, there are significant differences between what they want to spend and what you have proposed. I'm wondering, what do you see as the major points of disagreement at this time, and do you think that we're in for the same type of prolonged budget stalemate that have been featured in the past?

THE PRESIDENT: That's entirely up to them whether we're in for the budget stalemate. But if you just -- look at the education budget. I mean, how many times do we have to go down this road? You know, it's still not supportive of the 100,000 teachers and the smaller classes; it still not supportive of the dramatic expansion in after-school programs, which is critical to school performance; still has nothing in there for school construction; still is inadequate in terms of my

plan that people ought to either identify these failing schools and either turn them around or shut them down -- and lots of other problems with the school program.

If you look at the crime proposals -- this is unbelievable. When they wouldn't adopt the common-sense gun safety legislation, all I heard was this constant barrage about how, if only the administration would enforce the gun laws on the books, everything would be wonderful, we wouldn't have any problems in America.

So what I said -- look, why don't we do both? We have increased gun prosecutions under my administration, but we can do more. So please, give me some more money for people to investigate gun crimes, for people to prosecute gun crimes, to develop safe gun technology -- this whole -- it was nothing but a straight enforcement measure; exactly what they said they wanted, and no money for it.

Still no support for the 50,000 new police officers in the higher crime areas. And still the constant threat of these environmental riders, and underfunding of the Land's Legacy Initiative, and a number of other things.

So we still have some serious differences. Now, we've been doing this every year since 1995; we just sort of slightly change the script every year. And I'm more than happy to do it again, because, frankly, in the end, we normally wind up with an agreement that's pretty good for the American people.

But the timing in which we do it -- it depends more on them than me. I'm not going to give up my commitment to education as our most important domestic priority, and what we're doing to build the future of our children. And I think -- we've got the crime rate down now to a 25-year low; we can't stop the policy that works. And I hear -- I gave them a big proposal that is exactly what they say they want and believe in, and they don't want to fund that.

So we'll just have to see what happens. I'm kind of hopeful about it, though. It's just late June, here. This drama has several more acts before it's over.

Go ahead. We'll take one more. Go ahead, sir.

Q Mr. President, if I could return you to missile defense for a moment. The missile defense plan was based in large part on the threat from North Korea. You've now seen a first warming of relations between North and South. South Korea is not enthused about the missile defense plan. I'm wondering whether you now view it as urgent as you did -- the threat as urgent as you did a few months ago. I'm also wondering whether you would be willing to meet with Kim Chong-il of North Korea?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first let me say, I got a report both from President Kim on the phone and from his representatives in person about the Summit of the Koreas. And I thought it was a very, very important development, and a great tribute to President Kim's vision and courage and persistence. And I also think it justified the American policy, which is that we

would never allow ourselves to be put in the middle between the two Koreas, that we wanted them to meet and work together.

So we, I think, contributed to it; the Chinese and others did as well. I think this is good for everybody, and I'm encouraged by it. I'm also encouraged by the moratorium that the North Koreans have on testing. But they still have a missile program, and so it's still something that the United States has to be mindful of and to prepare to deal with and to keep up with. And, of course, I hope it will go away as a problem. I hope it for the people of North Korea, too.

All these countries that have a lot of people in great need that are spending vast sums of money on defense, it's one of the great tragedies of the world today. So, would I like it to go away? Of course I would. Do I think it's gone away because of this meeting? I don't. Do I think it might? It might, and I hope it will, but we don't know that yet.

Thank you.

END

2:45 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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June 26, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT,
PRIME MINISTER TONY BLAIR OF ENGLAND (VIA SATELLITE),
DR. FRANCIS COLLINS, DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL
HUMAN GENOME RESEARCH INSTITUTE, AND
DR. CRAIG VENTER, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF SCIENTIFIC
OFFICER, CELERA GENOMICS CORPORATION,
ON THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST SURVEY OF
THE ENTIRE HUMAN GENOME PROJECT

The East Room

10:19 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. I want to, first of all, acknowledge Prime Minister Blair, who will join us by satellite in just a moment, from London. I want to welcome here the Ambassadors from the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, France. And I'd also like to acknowledge the contributions not only that their scientists, but also scientists from China, made to the vast international consortium that is the Human Genome Project.

I thank Secretary Shalala, who could not be here today; and Secretary Richardson, who is here. Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, Dr. Ari Patrinos, scientists of the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Energy, who have played an important role in the Human Genome Project.

I want to say a special word of thanks to my Science Advisor, Dr. Neal Lane. And of course, to Dr. Francis Collins, the Director of the International Human Genome Project; and to the Celera President, Craig Venter. I thank Senator Harkin and Senator Sarbanes for being here, and the other distinguished guests.

Nearly two centuries ago, in this room, on this floor, Thomas Jefferson and a trusted aide spread out a magnificent map -- a map Jefferson had long prayed he would get to see in his lifetime. The aide was Meriwether Lewis and the map was the product of his courageous expedition across the American frontier, all the way to the Pacific. It was a map that defined the contours and forever expanded the frontiers of our continent and our imagination.

Today, the world is joining us here in the East Room to behold a map of even greater significance. We are here to celebrate the completion of the first survey of the entire human

genome. Without a doubt, this is the most important, most wondrous map ever produced by humankind.

The moment we are here to witness was brought about through brilliant and painstaking work of scientists all over the world, including many men and women here today. It was not even 50 years ago that a young Englishman named Crick and a brash even younger American named Watson, first discovered the elegant structure of our genetic code. "Dr. Watson, the way you announced your discovery in the journal 'Nature,' was one of the great understatements of all time. This structure has novel features, which are of considerable biological interest." (Laughter.) Thank you, sir. (Applause.)

How far we have come since that day. In the intervening years, we have pooled the combined wisdom of biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, mathematics and computer science; tapped the great strengths and insights of the public and private sectors. More than 1,000 researchers across six nations have revealed nearly all 3 billion letters of our miraculous genetic code. I congratulate all of you on this stunning and humbling achievement.

Today's announcement represents more than just an epic-making triumph of science and reason. After all, when Galileo discovered he could use the tools of mathematics and mechanics to understand the motion of celestial bodies, he felt, in the words of one eminent researcher, "that he had learned the language in which God created the universe."

Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. We are gaining ever more awe for the complexity, the beauty, the wonder of God's most divine and sacred gift. With this profound new knowledge, humankind is on the verge of gaining immense, new power to heal. Genome science will have a real impact on all our lives -- and even more, on the lives of our children. It will revolutionize the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of most, if not all, human diseases.

In coming years, doctors increasingly will be able to cure diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes and cancer by attacking their genetic roots. Just to offer one example, patients with some forms of leukemia and breast cancer already are being treated in clinical trials with sophisticated new drugs that precisely target the faulty genes and cancer cells, with little or no risk to healthy cells. In fact, it is now conceivable that our children's children will know the term cancer only as a constellation of stars.

But today's historic achievement is only a starting point. There is much hard work yet to be done. That is why I'm so pleased to announce that from this moment forward, the robust and healthy competition that has led us to this day and that always is essential to the progress of science, will be coupled with enhanced public-private cooperation.

Public and private research teams are committed to publishing their genomic data simultaneously later this year, for the benefit of researchers in every corner of the globe. And after publication, both sets of teams will join together for an historic sequence analysis conference. Together, they will examine what scientific insights have been gleaned from both efforts, and how we can most judiciously proceed toward the next majestic horizons.

What are those next horizons? Well, first, we will complete a virtually error-free final draft of the human genome before the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the double helix, less than three years from now. Second, through sustained and vigorous support for public and private research, we must sort through this trove of genomic data to identify every human gene. We must discover the function of these genes and their protein products, and then we must rapidly convert that knowledge into treatments that can lengthen and enrich lives.

I want to emphasize that biotechnology companies are absolutely essential in this endeavor. For it is they who will bring to the market the life-enhancing applications of the information from the human genome. And for that reason, this administration is committed to helping them to make the kind of long-term investments that will change the face of medicine forever.

The third horizon that lies before us is one that science cannot approach alone. It is the horizon that represents the ethical, moral and spiritual dimension of the power we now possess. We must not shrink from exploring that far frontier of science. But as we consider how to use new discovery, we must also not retreat from our oldest and most cherished human values. We must ensure that new genome science and its benefits will be directed toward making life better for all citizens of the world, never just a privileged few.

As we unlock the secrets of the human genome, we must work simultaneously to ensure that new discoveries never pry open the doors of privacy. And we must guarantee that genetic information cannot be used to stigmatize or discriminate against any individual or group.

Increasing knowledge of the human genome must never change the basic belief on which our ethics, our government, our society are founded. All of us are created equal, entitled to equal treatment under the law. After all, I believe one of the great truths to emerge from this triumphant expedition inside the human genome is that in genetic terms, all human beings, regardless of race, are more than 99.9 percent the same.

What that means is that modern science has confirmed what we first learned from ancient fates. The most important fact of life on this Earth is our common humanity. My greatest wish on this day for the ages is that this incandescent truth will always guide our actions as we continue to march forth in this, the greatest age of discovery ever known.

Now, it is my great pleasure to turn to my friend, Prime Minister Tony Blair, who is joined in the State Dining Room at 10 Downing Street by Dr. Fred Sanger and other world-renowned scientists. With the generous support of the Wellcome Trust, British scientists have played an invaluable role in reaching this milestone.

On behalf of the American people, I would like to thank the Prime Minister, the scientists, and the British nation for the brilliant work you have brought to this international effort.

And, Mr. Prime Minister, I would like to salute not only your unwavering support for genome research, but also your visionary commitment to sparking ever-greater innovation across the full spectrum of science and technology.

And, on a personal note, I can't help but think that the year of your son's birth will always be remembered for the remarkable achievements we announce today. I think his life expectancy has just gone up by about 25 years. (Laughter.)

PRIME MINISTER BLAIR: Well, thank you very much, President Clinton; Bill. It's a great pleasure to join you, and I think of my little boy, Leo, growing up and learning and knowing things that his grandfather, after whom he was named, could not even have dreamt of. And when you contemplate that, it's almost not like different generations, but different eras of human existence. And there are enormous possibilities for him and his generation, but also some dangers, and our job is to try and develop the possibilities and thwart the dangers.

Thank you also, Ambassadors and distinguished guests, for being with us here in London on this momentous day. And as we have this link, can I not for the first time, thank President Clinton for his role in a different topic, the Northern Ireland peace process. He's been an absolutely unstinting friend to me and to the process of peace in Northern Ireland. And as we continue progress with another important step forward today, I want, if I can, Bill, to underline our gratitude for your enormous contribution to that process. Thank you. (Applause.)

I would also like to pay tribute to President Clinton's support for the Human Genome Project, and for the huge role the United States has played in it. As befits an undertaking that can benefit the whole of humankind, this project has also brought together the best of the global scientific community. Many of the giants of our generation have been involved. Nobel prize-winners, like Fred Sanger and Max Perutz, who are here with me today, thank you for all that you have done.

Scientists from Japan and Germany, France, China, and around the world have been involved, as well as the U.K. and the U.S. And this undertaking, therefore, has brought together the public, private and non-profit sectors in an unprecedented international partnership. In particular, I would like to single out the Wellcome Trust, without whose vision and foresight, Britain's 30-percent contribution to the overall result would not have been possible. And I would like, too, to mention the imaginative work of Celera and Dr. Craig Venter, who in the best spirit of scientific competition, has helped accelerate today's achievement.

For let us be in no doubt about what we are witnessing today -- a revolution in medical science whose implications far surpass even the discovery of antibiotics, the first great technological triumph of the 21st century. And every so often in the history of human endeavor there comes a breakthrough that takes humankind across a frontier and into a new era. And like President Clinton, I believe that today's announcement is such a breakthrough -- a breakthrough that opens the way for massive advances in the treatment of cancer and hereditary diseases, and that is only the beginning.

Ever since Francis Crick and Jim Watson and other great Anglo-American scientific partnership made their historic discovery in the middle of the last century, we've known that DNA was the code to life on Earth. And yet, I guess for Crick and Watson, the process of identifying the billions of units of DNA and piecing them together to form a working blueprint of the human race must have seemed almost a superhuman task, beyond the reach of their generation. And yet, today, it is all but complete.

Nothing better demonstrates the way technology and science are driving us, fast-forwarding us all into the future. But with the power of this discovery comes, of course, the responsibility to use it wisely. As with the greatest scientific achievements, the ethical and the moral questions raised by this astonishing breakthrough are profound. We, all of us, share a duty to ensure that the common property of the human genome is used freely for the common good of the whole human race; to ensure that the powerful information now at our disposal is used to transform medicine, not abused, to make man his own creator or invade individual privacy.

For most of us, today's developments are almost too awesome fully to comprehend. They underline the extraordinary scale of economic, technological, scientific change that sweeps across the modern world. I'm proud that Britain has played, with others, a pioneering role in that. But I believe it says something very important about the process of change. We cannot resist change, but our job, indeed our duty, is to make sense of change, to help people through it, to seize the massive opportunities for better health and a better quality of life; and then, with equal vigor, to minimize the threats such developments pose.

The scientists have presented us with that opportunity that now we, all of us, accept the responsibility to make these advances work for all our people in all our countries for the common good of all humankind.

So, Bill, I believe that this underlines the fact that we do, indeed, as we've often said together, live in a global community, and the importance now of working across national frontiers to safeguard our shared values and put this remarkable scientific achievement at the service of all humankind. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Tony, if I could, I would like to pick up on your last remark. I think everybody genuinely is concerned about the issues you raised, the privacy issues, and the whole general set of ethical, social and legal issues.

And it strikes me that our scientists -- the British and the American scientists, our French, German, Chinese counterparts who worked on this -- were working toward a single, clearly-defined goal in all those countries and in the other countries of the world that will have to live with both the benefits and the challenges of these discoveries.

There are different legal systems, different social mores, but I think that it would be a very good thing if the U.S., the U.K., and anybody else that wants to work with us, could have the same sort of joint endeavor we've had with the Human Genome, to deal with the implications of this; to deal with the legal, the social, the ethical implications. We may have differences from

country to country, but I think that, if we work together, we'll give a higher sense of urgency to the project, and we'll get a better product.

And so I'm offering you another partnership. It's easy for me to do, because you'll have to do it, and I'll be gone. (Laughter.)

PRIME MINISTER BLAIR: Well, Bill, I entirely agree with that. And I think the fascinating possibilities of this scientific breakthrough is that it gives us a chance to do so much for our people, but it will raise really difficult ethical and moral and legal questions.

And the decision for us really as humanity is whether we are going to engage in the right cooperation across national frontiers so that we shape our destiny in a way that genuinely does benefit all our people, that makes the most of the possibilities, and faces up to the challenges and the dangers that it poses. And in a way, I think that the scientists that have been involved in this great undertaking have shown the spirit of cooperation that should now motivate the governments in taking this forward another step. They have given us this opportunity that we, all of us, are going to have a common responsibility in using it in the right way.

So as we now go to join our separate events on either side of the Atlantic, I think and believe that that spirit of cooperation, along with the scientific achievement, is something that we can all celebrate. And I'm, once again, proud to have taken part in this event with you, Bill. And all the very best to you and all your team for the work that you've done.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you very much, Tony.

Now, in a few moments, we'll hear from Celera President, Dr. Craig Venter, who shares in the glory of this day, and deservedly so because of his truly visionary pursuit of innovative strategies to sequence the human genome as rapidly as possible. And I thank you, Craig, for what you have done to make this day possible.

And now I'd like to invite Dr. Francis Collins to the lectern. I also want to congratulate him. From his development of some of the central methods for finding human disease genes, to his successful application of those methods, to the discovery of the cystic fibrosis gene in 1989, to his current leadership for the International Human Genome Project, he has combined the talents of rigorous science and a profound sensitivity to ethical, legal and social issues. He is a physician scientist of great faith, compassion, energy and integrity. And he has truly helped us, more than anyone else, to understand how the marvels of genome science will actually improve human health.

So Dr. Collins, please come up to the lectern. (Applause.)

DR. COLLINS: Mr. President, distinguished Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen. It is truly a humble -- humbling and profound experience to be asked to speak here this morning. First of all, I would like to thank, most sincerely, President Clinton for his remarkable leadership in getting us to this point.

His strong and consistent voice for the importance of innovative science and its responsible uses to better the human condition has been an inspiration to all of us. He knows that genomics is one of the truly interdisciplinary fields of science requiring vigorous and creative involvement from physics, chemistry, engineering, computer science and biology.

I have also had the privilege to witness time and again the President's personal conviction that we must apply just as much energy and attention to solving the ethical, legal and social issues as we do to the bench research, and you saw that demonstrated again a few moments ago. His effective leadership in this area has moved us substantially closer to the time when no American need fear that information about their genome will be used against them.

Science is a voyage of exploration into the unknown. We are here today to celebrate a milestone along a truly unprecedented voyage, this one into ourselves. Alexander Pope wrote, "Know then thyself. Presume not God to scan. The proper study of mankind is man." What more powerful form of study of mankind could there be than to read our own instruction book?

I've been privileged over the last seven years to lead an international team of more than a thousand of some of the best and brightest scientists of our current generation, some of them here in this room, who have been truly dedicated to this goal. Today, we celebrate the revelation of the first draft of the human book of life.

Now, this milestone could only have come about with the happy combination of vision, determination, creative innovation and teamwork, and we stand on many shoulders here today. Beginning 15 years ago, leaders in the Department of Energy, the National Academy of Sciences and the National Institutes of Health, began to dream this dream.

At first, many thought it unrealistic and unattainable; yet, inspired by visionaries such as James Watson, who is here with us this morning, creative geniuses, such as Waterston, Sulston, Lander, Branscomb, Gibbs and many others here with us this morning, entered the fray. The vigorous involvement of talented colleagues in other countries, now including China, France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, have made this project particularly gratifying to me. I would also like to recognize, publicly, the dedicated leadership of my friend and colleague, Ari Patrinos, of the Department of Energy, in moving this project forward so effectively here in the U.S.

Surely, the human genome is our shared inheritance, and it is fitting and proper that we are all working on it together. Now, thus far, every milestone set by the International Human Genome Project has been met -- on schedule or in some cases, ahead of schedule.

Today, we deliver, ahead of schedule again, the most visible and spectacular milestone of all. Most of the sequencing of the human genome by this international consortium has been done in just the last 15 months. During that time, this consortium has developed the capacity to sequence 1,000 letters of the DNA code per second, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. We have developed a map of overlapping fragments that includes 97 percent of the human genome, and we have sequenced 85 percent of this.

The sequence data is of higher quality than expected with half of it in finished or near-finished form. And all of this information has been placed in public databases every 24 hours, where any scientist with an Internet connection can use it to help unravel the mysteries of human biology. Already, more than a dozen genes, responsible for diseases from deafness to kidney disease to cancer, have been identified using this resource just in the last year.

So there is much to celebrate. But I have to tell you that this morning is also a bitter-sweet experience for me, personally. Less than 24 hours ago, I attended the funeral of my beloved sister-in-law, a wonderful marionette artist who brought magic and joy to thousands of children with her art. She died much too soon of breast cancer. The hope and promise of understanding all of the genes in the genome and applying this knowledge to the development of powerful new tools came just too late for her.

I think I speak for all of us in this room, and for the millions of others who have come to believe in the remarkable promise of biomedical research, that we must redouble our efforts to speed the application of these profound and fundamental observations about the human genome to the cure of disease. That most desirable of all outcomes will only come about with a continued powerful and dedicated partnership between basic science investigators and academia, and their colleagues in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries.

As the President has said, we still have much to do. Many tasks lie ahead if we are to learn how to speak the language of the genome fluently. Today is most certainly not the end of genomics, but perhaps it's the end of the beginning. Together we must develop the advances in medicine that are the real reason for doing this work. And with just as much vigor, we must provide the protections against potential misuses of genetic information. If there is anyone within the sound of my voice who has not seen that as a priority, I hope today's announcement is the necessary wake-up call.

It's a happy day for the world. It is humbling for me and awe-inspiring to realize that we have caught the first glimpse of our own instruction book, previously known only to God. What a profound responsibility it is to do this work. Historians will consider this a turning point. Researchers in a few years will have trouble imagining how we studied human biology without the genome sequence in front of us.

I particularly welcome the opportunity to celebrate this moment jointly with our scientific colleagues at Celera Genomics, and I wish to express my personal gratitude to Dr. Craig Venter for his openness in the cooperative planning process that led to this joint announcement. I congratulate him and his team on the work done at Celera, which uses an elegant and innovative strategy that is highly complementary to the approach taken by the public project. Much will be learned from a comparison of the two.

I'm happy that today, the only race we are talking about is the human race. (Applause.)

It is now my distinct pleasure to introduce to you Dr. J. Craig Venter, the President of Celera Genomics. Inspired by a life-changing experience as a medical corpsman in Vietnam, Craig charged into the field of human biology with remarkable energy and determination. Never

satisfied with the status quo, always seeking new technology, inventing new approaches when the old ones wouldn't do, he has made profound contributions to the field of genomics.

His development of the expressed sequence tag, or EST, approach for sampling the expressed part of the genome, reduced to practice the notion of considering the human genome as a bounded, but ascertainable set of information. Just a few years later, he electrified the scientific community by publishing, with his colleague, Hamilton Smith, the complete sequence of a free-living organism, the bacterium *hemophilus influenzae*. And just three months ago, using the innovative whole genome shotgun approach he developed, and working with Gerry Rubin of the University of California at Berkeley, he and his colleagues published a sequence of the fruit fly, *drosophila*, another remarkable milestone in biology.

Articulate, provocative, and never complacent, he has ushered in a new way of thinking about biology. Now under his leadership, Celera Genomics has accomplished a remarkable goal, their own first assembly of the human genome sequence.

It is an honor and a pleasure to invite him to tell you about this landmark achievement. (Applause.)

DR. VENTER: I'm shorter than the previous two speakers. (Laughter.)

Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, members of the Cabinet, honorable members of Congress, ambassadors and distinguished guests. Today, June 26, in the year 2000, marks an historic point in the 100,000-year record of humanity. We're announcing today, for the first time our species can read the chemical letters of its genetic code.

At 12:30 p.m. today, at a joint press conference with the public genome effort, Celera Genomics will describe the first assembly of the human genetic code from the whole genome shotgun method. Starting only nine months ago, on September 8, 1999, 18 miles from the White House, a small team of scientists headed by myself, Hamilton Smith, Mark Adams, Gene Myers, and Granger Sutton, began sequencing the DNA of the human genome using a novel method pioneered by essentially the same team five years earlier at the Institute for Genomic Research.

The method used by Celera has determined the genetic code of five individuals. We have sequenced the genome of three females and two males, who have identified themselves as Hispanic, Asian, Caucasian, or African-American. We did this sampling not in an exclusionary way, but out of respect for the diversity that is America, and to help illustrate that the concept of race has no genetic or scientific basis.

In the five Celera genomes, there is no way to tell one ethnicity from another. Society and medicine treats us all as members of populations, whereas individuals we are all unique, and population statistics do not apply.

I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Francis Collins and our colleagues in the public genome effort in the U.S., Europe and Asia, for their tremendous effort in generating a working draft of the human genome. I'd also like to personally thank Francis for his direct

actions in working with me to foster cooperation in the genome community, and to shift our collective focus to this historic moment and its future impact on humanity. I would also like to thank the President for his commitment to public-private cooperation, and for making this day even more an historic event.

Obviously, our achievements would not have been possible without the efforts of the thousands of scientists around the world who have gone before us in the quest to better understand life at its most basic level. The beauty of science is that all-important discoveries are made by building on the discoveries of others. I continue to be inspired by the work of the pioneering men and women in the broad array of disciplines that had been brought together to enable this great accomplishment.

I would like to particularly acknowledge Charles DeLisi from the Department of Energy, and Jim Watson from Cold Spring Harbor, both here, for their vision in helping to initiate the Genome Project. The completion of the human genetic blueprint would not have been possible without the continued investment of the U.S. Government and basic research. I applaud the President's efforts and the work of Congress during the last several years in producing the largest funding increases to fuel the engines of basic science.

At the same time, we could not overlook the investment of the private sector in research in America. There would be no announcement today if it were not for the more than \$1 billion that P.E. Biosystems invested in Celera, and into the development of the automated DNA sequencer that both Celera and the public effort used to sequence the genome. In turn, some of the investment was driven by the public investment in science.

Thirty-three years ago, as a young man serving in the medical corps in Vietnam, I learned firsthand how tenuous our hold on life can be. That experience inspired my interest in learning how the trillions of cells in our bodies interact to create and sustain life. When I witnessed firsthand that some men live through devastating trauma to their bodies, while others died after giving up from seemingly small wounds, I realized that the human spirit was at least as important as our physiology.

We're clearly much, much more than the sum total of our genes, just as our society is greater than the sum total of each of us. Our physiology is based on complex and seemingly infinite interactions amongst all our genes and the environment, just as our civilization is based on the interactions amongst all of us.

One of the wonderful discoveries that my colleagues and I have made while decoding the DNA of over two dozen species, from viruses to bacteria to plants to insects, and now human beings, is that we're all connected to the commonality of the genetic code in evolution. When life is reduced to its very essence, we find that we have many genes in common with every species on Earth, and that we're not so different from one another.

You may be surprised to learn that your sequencers are greater than 90 percent identical to proteins in other animals. It's my belief that the basic knowledge that we're providing the

world will have a profound impact on the human condition and the treatments for disease, and our view on our place in the biological continuum.

The genome sequence represents a new starting point for science and medicine, with potential impact on every disease. Taking the example, cancer, each day approximately 2,000 die in America from cancer. As a consequence of the genome efforts that you've heard described by Dr. Collins and myself this morning, and the research that will be catalyzed by this information, there's at least the potential to reduce the number of cancer deaths to zero during our lifetimes. The development of new therapeutics will require continued public investment in basic science, and the translations of discoveries into new medicine by the biotechs and pharmaceutical industry.

However, I am concerned, as many of you are, that there are some who will want to use this new knowledge as a basis of discrimination. A CNN-Time poll this morning reported that 46 percent of Americans polled believe that the impact of the Human Genome Project will be negative. We must work together toward higher science literacy and the wise use of our common heritage.

I know from personal discussions with the President over the past several years, and his comments here this morning, that genetic discrimination has been one of his major concerns about the impact of the genomic revolution. While those who will base social decisions on genetic reductionism will be ultimately defeated by science, new laws to protect us from genetic discrimination are critical in order to maximize the medical benefits from genome discoveries.

Some have said to me that sequencing the human genome will diminish humanity by taking the mystery out of life. Poets have argued that genome sequencing is an example of sterilizing reductionism that will rob them of their inspiration. Nothing could be further from the truth. The complexities and wonder of how the inanimate chemicals that are our genetic code give rise to the imponderables of the human spirit should keep poets and philosophers inspired for the millenniums.

Thank you. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you both for those remarkable statements. I suppose, in closing, the most important thing I could do is to associate myself with Dr. Venter's last statement. When we get this all worked out and we're all living to be 150 -- (laughter) -- young people will still fall in love, old people will still fight about things that should have been resolved 50 years ago -- (laughter) -- we will all, on occasion, do stupid things, and we will all see the unbelievable capacity of humanity to be noble. This is a great day.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

10:50 A.M. EDT

PRESIDENT CLINTON: OPENING THE DOORS TO COLLEGE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL AMERICANS

June 10, 2000

Today, President Clinton will address the graduating Class of 2000 at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. He will release a new report by the U.S. Department of Education, *Expanding College Opportunity: More Access, Greater Achievement, Higher Exceptions*. The report describes the importance of college and trade school educations, the Clinton-Gore Administration's initiatives to establish universal access to college, and the record-setting college enrollment rate. The President will also call on Congress to build on this progress by enacting his education proposals and not sacrificing federal investments in education for large tax cuts.

TODAY'S REPORT DESCRIBES INCREASES IN COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY.

College, trade school, and lifelong learning promotes good citizenship, enriched lives, and economic prosperity. According to evidence in today's report:

- Americans are attending college in higher numbers and at higher rates than ever before:
- Sixty-six percent of 1998 high school graduates enrolled immediately in college, compared to 60 percent in 1990.
- Thirty-two percent of 25- to 29-year-olds had earned a bachelor's or higher degree in 1999, up from 27 percent in 1990. In particular, white and black women have seen their college opportunities grow.
- SAT scores have risen over the past decade, especially in math, with a larger, more diverse group of test-takers.
- Fifty percent of adults participated in formal learning in the year prior to a 1999 survey, up from 38 percent in 1991.
- The economic benefits of college continue to grow. The increasing importance of education to our society's prosperity underscores the need to grow our national investment in education, not sacrifice it to a tax cut.
- College graduates can expect to earn \$600,000 more over a lifetime than high school graduates.
- Young men with a bachelor's degree earned 150 percent the salary of their peers with no more than a high school diploma-and young women with a college degree earned twice as much high school graduates.
- An investment in college earns a 12 percent return, nearly twice the historical average of the stock market.

COLLEGE OPPORTUNITY HAS EXPANDED UNDER THE CLINTON-GORE

ADMINISTRATION. President Clinton and Vice President Gore's commitment to opening the doors of college to all Americans has more than doubled student aid-the largest investment in higher education since the G.I. Bill-and contributed to the longest economic expansion in U.S. history. The Clinton-Gore approach is three-pronged:

1) MORE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS.

- The Hope Scholarship tax credit provides up to \$1,500 in tax relief for the first two years of college. The Hope Scholarship pays nearly all of the tuition and fees at an average community college, making college universally affordable. Proposed by President Clinton in 1996 and enacted in 1997, the Hope Scholarship saved 2.6 million families a total of \$2.6 billion in its first year, 1998.
- The Lifetime Learning tax credit-which provides up to \$1,000 in tax relief for juniors and seniors, graduate students, and adults seeking job training-gave 2.3 million families a total of \$800 million in 1998. The Lifetime Learning credit was also proposed by President Clinton in 1996 and enacted in 1997 in recognition of the growing importance of continuing education and training over a lifetime.
- Pell Grant scholarships now provide up to \$3,300 to each of 3.8 million low-income students, or \$1,000 more than in 1993. Maximum Pell grants increased by only \$630 during 12 years of Reagan-Bush Administrations.

2) MORE AFFORDABLE STUDENT LOANS.

- The Direct Student Loan program delivers loans to students more quickly, simply, and cheaply. Because it eliminates subsidies for banks, it has saved taxpayers over \$4 billion so far. It provides high-quality customer service, competing successfully to hold one-third of one of the largest financial markets in the nation and improving service for all students and schools through competition.
- Lower interest rates and fees-some paid for by savings from Direct Lending-have saved students \$9 billion.
- Pell More flexible repayment terms, including allowing graduates to repay loans as a share of income, to help students manage debt, pursue further education without fear of defaulting, and enter public service.

3) NEW PATHS TO COLLEGE AND SUCCESSFUL CAREERS.

- The GEAR UP initiative raises expectations and creates college opportunities for over 450,000 disadvantaged children. Proposed by President Clinton and Vice President Gore in 1998 and enacted that same year, GEAR UP supports mentoring, academic support, and college planning through partnerships between high-poverty middle schools, universities, and community organizations.
- AmeriCorps has allowed 250,000 Americans to earn \$400 million for college while serving their communities.
- The TRIO program to help low-income, first-generation students succeed in college has increased by two-thirds since 1993, to \$645 million.
- The School-to-Work Opportunities Act has provided seed money to help every state broaden young people's career options, make learning more relevant, and promote successful transitions to college and careers.
- Youth Opportunity grants make possible comprehensive employment and training assistance to 75,000 out-of-school youth in high-poverty communities.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WILL CALL ON CONGRESS TO ENACT HIS EDUCATION LEGISLATION:

- \$30 Billion College Opportunity Tax Cut to make college more affordable and accessible. The College Opportunity Tax Cut would give families the option of a tax deduction or a 28 percent credit for up to \$10,000 in tuition, when fully phased in after 2002, providing up to \$2,800 in tax relief per family for college and job training.
- \$25 Billion in School Modernization Bonds to help build and modernize 6,000 schools. Districts urgently need help accommodating record enrollments and repairing crumbling buildings. Because interest on the bonds would be paid by federal tax credits, the bonds allow districts to borrow interest-free.
- College Completion Challenge Grants to prevent college drop-outs through a comprehensive approach including pre-freshman summer programs, support services and scholarships for students. This \$35 million initiative will help nearly 18,000 students succeed in college. Nearly 40 percent of students that go on to post-secondary school drop out before they get a certificate or a degree, and the problem is especially acute for minorities.
- The Dual Degree initiative to increase opportunities for minority students to earn advanced degrees.

FINALLY, THE PRESIDENT WILL DEMAND CONGRESS PASS A BUDGET THAT INVESTS IN OUR SCHOOLS AND DEMANDS MORE FROM THEM. In February, the Clinton-Gore Administration sent the Congress a balanced and responsible budget that made investments in key educational initiatives to raise standards, increase accountability, and invest in what works. Congressional Republicans have passed a budget plan built on misguided priorities and insufficient resources. To pay for risky and irresponsible tax cuts, the Congressional Republican budget would cut investments in domestic priorities \$29 billion below the President's level, an average cut of 9 percent. The budget plan passed on a party-line vote by the U.S. House of Representatives appropriations committee:

- Denies nearly 650,000 low-income middle-school students the extra college preparation they need through the GEAR UP initiative. The House committee freezes GEAR UP at this year's level, denying the President's \$325 million request. Mentoring and early college preparation are key strategies to help at-risk youth succeed in college.
- Cuts Youth Opportunity Grants from \$250 million to \$175 million. The President requested \$375 million to provide comprehensive employment and training assistance to 75,000 out-of-school youth in high poverty areas.
- Denies help to 5,000 schools to make urgently needed repairs. The House appropriation ignores the President's \$1.3 billion plan to help states and localities make \$6.5 billion in emergency repairs to crumbling schools.
- Fails to create smaller classes for as many as 2.9 million young children. The House appropriation backs away from the bipartisan agreement to hire 100,000 new teachers and jeopardizes the federal commitment to continue support for the 29,000 teachers already hired. Research shows that small classes in the early grades help students master the basics and raise student achievement.
- Fails to improve teacher quality by ignoring the President's request for \$1 billion for standards-based professional development, recruitment, peer review programs, quality awards, and professional development for early childhood educators. Research shows that teacher quality is a key indicator of student performance.

- Refuses as many as 1.6 million children extended learning opportunities in safe, drug-free environments. The House committee provides only \$600 million for 21st Century Community Learning Centers. Extended learning time is an essential strategy to help all students master challenging academic material. The President's \$1 billion request would provide all students in low-performing schools the opportunity to reach high standards.
- Fails to narrow the digital divide through Community Technology Centers. The House freezes funding at \$32.5 million, \$67.5 million below the President, eliminating support for up to 1,000 centers in high-poverty areas.
- Denies hundreds of thousands of teachers training in modern learning technologies. The House provides only \$85 million of the President's \$150 million request for Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology.
- Fails to strengthen accountability by eliminating the Title I Accountability Fund, for which President Clinton requested \$250 million. States and localities use this funding to intervene in low-performing schools to turn them around and provide greater public school choice for their students.
- Denies more than 260,000 disadvantaged students Title I services to help them learn the basics and reach high standards. Title I is the cornerstone of state and local efforts to help all students learn challenging academic material.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 26, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON MIDSESSION REVIEW OF THE BUDGET

The Rose Garden

12:40 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good afternoon. This is a great day for America. First we had the announcement of the sequencing of the human genome; now I have just received a report from my Chief of Staff and other members of my economic team on our latest budget projections, and it's more good news.

In 1993, when I became President, the federal budget deficit was \$290 billion. It was projected to rise to \$455 billion this year. The American people wanted a better future, and we offered a new economic course of fiscal discipline, expanded trade, and greater investment in our people and our future.

The result has been the longest economic expansion in history, a fiscal turnaround that is stronger, frankly, than any of us had imagined. In fact, in each year since 1993, both economic growth and federal revenues have surpassed our forecast. And this year is no exception.

Today, as required by law, I am releasing the midsession review of the budget that shows that our overall budget surplus this year will be \$211 billion, more than a \$700 billion improvement over where we projected to be in 1993. And we're forecasting a surplus for the next 10 years that is over a trillion dollars larger than was forecast just four months ago.

The American people should be very proud of this news. It's the result of their hard work and their support for fiscal discipline. It's proof that we can create a better future for ourselves when we put our minds to it, and it provides a tremendous new opportunity to build an even brighter future if we sustain our prosperity by maintaining our fiscal discipline.

These new surpluses put us in a position to achieve something that would have seemed unimaginable in 1993. As this chart shows, we can now pay down the debt completely by 2012, a year earlier than we projected just four months ago. This is my last drawing as President. (Laughter.)

Now, why should we do this? Because by paying down the debt we can keep interest rates lower and free up more capital for private sector investment, creating more jobs and economic growth for years and years to come. We can eliminate the burden of paying interest on the debt, which today takes up 12 cents of every federal tax dollar. And we can use part of this savings, as I have suggested, to extend the solvency of Social Security to 2057, and of Medicare to 2030.

Now, think about what this means. A six-year-old today -- we may have some out here -- is living in an America that is \$3.5 trillion in debt. If we follow the course I'm laying out, we can eliminate that debt by the time the child enters college. The economy will be stronger, his parents' incomes will be greater, the interest rates on college loans will be lower. And 12 years from now people of my generation will be entering retirement knowing that Social Security and Medicare will be there for them.

Quite simply, an economic plan that invests in our people and pays down the debt is the wisest choice we can make to honor our values and ensure a better future for our children.

To that end, I propose that we follow Vice President Gore's recommendation and lock away that portion of the surplus that comes from the Medicare taxes people pay. Medicare payroll taxes should not be used to finance tax cuts or other spending. They should be saved for Medicare, and Medicare alone. There is already broad bipartisan support for saving the Social Security surplus for debt reduction. It's time to do the same for Medicare by taking Medicare off budget. By protecting both the Social Security and Medicare surpluses, we can lock in \$2.7 trillion of debt reduction in just the next 10 years, enabling us to get the debt entirely gone by 2012.

Before we make any other major budget decisions this year I ask Congress to come together across party lines to protect the Medicare surplus. Now, a lot of people are saying that because this is an election year Congress won't get much done. It does not have to be that way. Today I called House Speaker Hastert and Senator Lott with a proposal to break the logjam and do what we all say we want to do.

We all say we want to provide prescription drug coverage to the millions of senior and disabled Americans on Medicare who currently lack it. I have presented my plan; the Republicans have presented theirs. We all say we want to end the marriage penalty. I presented my plan; the Republicans have presented theirs. I believe their marriage penalty, standing on its own, and not part of an overall commitment to fiscal discipline, and also tilting, I believe, too much toward upper-income Americans, is too big and not targeted toward those who need it most.

But if we can all agree to take Medicare off budget and not use Medicare money for tax cuts or for other spending, then I've told the Republican leaders I would like to make a simple offer. If Congress will pass a plan that gives real, voluntary Medicare prescription drug coverage, available and affordable to all seniors and consistent with the principles of my plan, costing roughly \$250 billion over 10 years, then I will sign a marriage penalty relief law, which

also costs roughly \$250 billion over 10 years. This is a proposal for true compromise. It asks each party to accept some of the positions of the other party in the name of progress.

By adopting the Vice President's plan to save the Medicare surplus, we will achieve the most significant strengthening of Medicare since the proposal was created in 1965, and deliver the largest tax relief to families in decades. These are goals that both parties and all Americans agree on. It would be wrong to let politics keep us from seizing the opportunity to achieve them. We can take these actions and still have, according to our new budget projections, substantial resources left over for future budget priorities.

Now, I want to remind the people, however, that this is just a budget projection. It would not be prudent to commit every penny of a future surplus that is just a projection and, therefore, subject to change. Fiscal discipline helped to create these surpluses; fiscal discipline is what we should continue as we determine how best to use it.

In my Midsession Review, therefore, I propose to set aside a \$500-billion reserve for America's future -- a fund that could eventually be used for any number of key priorities from retirement savings to tax cuts, to investments in education, research, health care, and environmental protection, to further debt reduction.

We should set aside this reserve fund. At this late date in the fiscal year, with elections looming, it would be unrealistic and imprudent for those of us in Washington to decide what to do with this money. That's something that should be debated in the coming months, and decided on by the American people this fall. Our obligation is to move forward on those issues that have been fully debated, where there is bipartisan agreement for action.

So this summer let's set aside the Medicare surpluses and pay down the debt. Let's pass a voluntary prescription drug benefit for seniors and disabled Americans on Medicare, and marriage penalty tax relief for American families. When that's done, I hope we will also raise the minimum wage; pass a strong enforceable patient's bill of rights; pass a juvenile justice bill that closes the gun show loophole; hate crimes legislation and the New Markets legislation; and make key investments in education, health care and the environment.

Then in the election, let's have a vigorous debate about how the remainder of these new surpluses can best be used to advance our nation. It's the right debate to have and I think we can all agree that it's a debate we are very fortunate to be able to have.

How we use these surpluses in this moment of prosperity will determine America's future for decades to come. Nothing will more surely determine it than making the right choices, if we do the right things to keep our prosperity going, to extend its benefits to people in places not yet fully part of it, to help Americans balance the demands of work and family, to seize the remarkable potential and meet the challenges of globalization and the revolutions of science and information technology.

This is a good day for America. We ought to preserve it for the future and make the most of the moment. Thank you very much.

Q What did the Speaker and Mr. Lott have to say to you in response?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they were interested in it, and obviously, I've also talked to the Democratic leaders, Senator Daschle and Representative Gephardt. And I told them that I would send the review up today and that, obviously, everybody needs time for their staffs to look at it to see what the options are. But I think this is a very good-faith offer where I want to meet them halfway, I want them to meet me halfway. We can clearly afford this, and we ought to do it.

Q Mr. President, if in the course of four months these figures have changed a trillion dollars, how realistic is it to believe that these are sound figures that are going to last?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first, I think that they are reliable in the same sense -- I would just remind you, I've been here for seven and a half years and I have never yet overstated the numbers. So we've got a pretty good record on this. Now, this is what the numbers show. But as I said to you, I believe it would be a big mistake to commit this entire surplus to spending or to tax cuts.

That's one of the reasons I like the Vice President's suggestion so much. If you start by taking the Medicare taxes out, then you know you're going to have further debt reduction and you've got a big incentive for fiscal discipline right there.

The projections could be wrong; they could be right. That's why we shouldn't spend it all now. And moreover, we're having a debate in which the two candidates have very different notions about what should be done with this moment of prosperity, and the American people ought to have some say in this. But I think that it's my duty to tell you what I think the numbers are now, and my duty also to raise a little caution and say, let's don't go off and spend it.

If I asked you what your projected income is over the next 10 years and you told me, and I said, okay, now I want you to spend it all right now, I doubt if you'd do it. So I don't think the American people should do it. But neither should we be blind to the fact that we have an enormous opportunity here to build the future of our dreams for our children, and that should inform what we do in this year's budget and it should inform what we do, I believe, in making an agreement to get the right kind of Medicare prescription drug coverage in return for tax relief for American families.

Q Sir, even with this optimistic news, gas prices across the board continue to increase, threaten inflation, threaten to derail all of these projections. What can you do immediately to stop the spiraling cost of gasoline?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think, for whatever reason, in places where it's highest they seem to be dropping some. So I think that we need to keep up the pressure to make sure that there is no non-economic basis for these price increases. And that's what the Federal Trade Commission inquiry is all about. Then I think it is very, very important for us to accelerate our efforts to get high-mileage cars on the road and to develop alternative fuel sources.

And let me say, I've been trying for years to get more money into federal research on this. The United States government has been very active in our administration, in the Partnership for the New Generation of Vehicles that the Vice President's headed, in trying to develop alternative fuels from agriculture and other sources. The Senate did pass a bill last week on a bipartisan basis which should help us in the development of more biofuels. But we're not far away from being able to develop very high-mileage vehicles and dramatically different fuel options for the American people.

But I would say this -- I have not had the same level of support on a bipartisan basis for this kind of federal research and investment that we've had, for example, for the Human Genome Project. But the principle is exactly the same -- when you're breaking new ground, a lot of the basic research should be paid for by the American people as a whole, and then the industry should do its part. Just like we're doing with the Human Genome Project, we need to do more here.

And I think that you will see -- what we really need, and I think what the American people want to know is that we've got a plan that will move them away from being subject to these kind of radical swings. And we do have a plan. And we know that we can get cars on the road soon that can get 60, 80 maybe more miles to the gallon. We know we can get cars on the road soon using alternative fuels from fuel cells to biofuels, to natural gas that will cut the cost of transportation. That's what we need to be doing.

Q Forgive me, sir, but the question was what can you do immediately. Will you consider relaxing --

THE PRESIDENT: What we are doing immediately, what we're doing immediately is continuing this investigation. If the prices are being set for non-economic reasons, then we ought to do what we can to pressure them down. Now, if the Congress wants to consider some sort of relief on the federal gas tax it would be modest compared to the price increase, and they would have to be willing to defer substantial federal highway projects. That's something they have to come to terms with.

But I think that it's clear, over the next two years you're going to have all these cars that will then be coming out that will basically make this problem go away as we know it, and we need to do everything we can to accelerate it.

Q -- (inaudible) --

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know the answer to that. They'll tell you that. But it's \$211 billion for this year.

Yes, sir.

Q -- Republicans look at the \$500-billion fund as a goody bag for Vice President Gore to use throughout the campaign to make promises in programs. First of all, do you agree with that assessment? And second of all, is that the proper use for a surplus fund?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think -- let me say this -- that's a \$500-billion fund; I'll tell you what I would do with it. Later on I may make some suggestions what I would do with it. But Vice President Gore will say what he thinks should be done. Governor Bush will say what he thinks should be done. The Republican leaders and candidates will say what they think should be done. The Democratic leaders and their candidate will say what they think should be done.

In other words, my position is that the Congress and I should not commit all this money. We should let the American people decide what to do by the judgments they make in the election and by the debates that they hear. I don't believe that -- we're so close to the election -- we have such an enormously crowded agenda of things that we can do that have been fully debated, I think the responsible thing to do is to let the American people hear from those who are running for office who will be responsible for these decisions if they are elected say what they should be doing.

So Vice President Gore has no more opportunity as a result of this proposal of mine than Governor Bush does. All candidates running for office can say this is what they think about the \$500 billion. They can also say that they disagree with some of the things we're recommending now, if they choose.

Q Mr. President, your time is ticking away and we understand you're still working on your book on race. When are you anticipating having this book out and what can we expect to be in it?

THE PRESIDENT: You just have to wait to see it.

Q Is Taylor Branch working with you on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, this week, probably by Wednesday, the legal case of Elian Gonzales will probably come to an end. Do you feel the relations between your government and the government of Fidel Castro have gotten a little better because of this case -- relations between Washington and Havana?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That's the honest answer. I don't know.

Let me just say one other thing about the race book. You asked me a question about Taylor Branch. I did -- I have consulted with him on it, I've shown him some drafts, but he is not working with me on it. But I don't want to imply that I've never asked him to look at it. I did.

Q When do you think the book is coming out, though?

Q -- (inaudible) --

THE PRESIDENT: The Japanese Ambassador was here today for the human genome announcement and we had a brief conversation about it, and he said that he expected Prime Minister Mori to continue as Prime Minister and to host us at the G-8 Summit. And I expect that's what will happen.

Thank you very much.

END 1:05 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
(Santa Monica, California)

Embargoed For Release
Until 10:06 A.M. EDT

Saturday, June 24, 2000

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATION

Los Angeles, California

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. This week we mark the beginning of summer, another summer of national prosperity, continuing the longest economic expansion in our history. The big question now is what we intend to do with this economic prosperity. One of our most pressing needs, clearly, is providing voluntary prescription drug coverage under Medicare for older Americans. We should do it this year.

The American people have made their feelings clear. They know our seniors are paying too much for prescription drugs that help them live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives. Three in five older Americans don't have dependable insurance coverage for prescriptions, and too many seniors simply aren't getting the drugs they need.

Again and again I've said it should be a high priority to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare this year. But we must do it the right way, by making the benefit affordable and available for everyone who needs it.

I'm deeply concerned that the proposal House Republicans put forward this week will take us down the wrong road. What they have proposed is not a Medicare benefit; it's a private insurance program which many seniors and people with disabilities simply won't be able to afford. It will not offer dependable coverage to every American in every part of the country. Rural Americans will be at particular risk because private insurance is often unavailable to them or very, very expensive.

The plan doesn't ensure that seniors will be able to use the local pharmacist they trust. Insurance companies have already said this model won't work; it benefits the companies who make the drugs, not the older Americans who need to take the drugs.

There is a better way. I propose giving all our seniors the option of a prescription drug benefit through Medicare, wherever they live, however sick they may be. My plan would be affordable and dependable, and give every senior equal coverage.

Because our economy is so strong, and because we worked hard to put the Medicare trust fund back on sound footing, we have the money to do this now and do it right. We should use a

part of our hard-earned budget surplus to meet America's most pressing priorities, like paying down the national debt, strengthening Medicare, and providing a prescription drug benefit.

That's why next week I will propose using the surplus to improve my plan. I will unveil specific protections for catastrophic drug expenses, to ensure that no senior pays more than \$4,000 in prescription drugs and keeping premiums at \$25 a month. And I'll propose making that benefit in the full prescription drug initiative available in 2002, instead of 2003. To do that, I'll ask Congress to add about \$58 billion to our funding for Medicare over the next 10 years.

Providing a voluntary prescription drug benefit is only one of the challenges we must face to keep Medicare healthy for generations to come. We also have to increase payments to hospitals, teaching facilities, home health care agencies, and other providers, to make sure Medicare patients get high-quality care. Earlier this week I proposed that we use \$40 billion of the surplus to do that.

We should also follow Vice President Gore's proposal to take Medicare off-budget, like Social Security, so that the Medicare taxes you pay cannot be diverted for irresponsible tax cuts or other government spending that could lead us back to the bad old days of deficits and give us higher interest rates. This will protect Medicare and make a major contribution toward paying down the debt. And I propose using the savings from debt reduction to extend the life of the Medicare trust fund through at least 2030, when the number of Medicare people will be double what it is today.

We're fortunate -- very fortunate -- to live in a time of budget surpluses and remarkable prosperity, but we didn't get there by accident. We maintained our fiscal discipline, invested in our people, made good on the commitments that matter most. We can't let up now. And we have few responsibilities more important than helping our older Americans live out their lives with quality and in dignity.

We have the opportunity to meet that responsibility with a straightforward plan that all seniors can buy into. We have growing bipartisan agreement in the Senate that this is the way to go.

I hope as we mark the 50th anniversary of the Korean War tomorrow we'll remember that a generation of Americans who did not let us, their children and grandchildren, down. And in return, we owe it not to let them down.

Thank you for listening.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Santa Monica, California)

For Immediate Release

June 24, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATIONAL CONVENTION 2000 HOST COMMITTEE BREAKFAST

Private Residence
Los Angeles, California

11:10 A.M. PDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Mr. Mayor. And, Nancy, thank you for having us in your home. Since you said I had done pretty well for a young fellow from Arkansas, I can't resist -- I have a lot of friends here, but I cannot resist the temptation at this apt moment in history to introduce another contribution that my state made to your success -- Mr. Derek Fisher of the Los Angeles Lakers. (Applause.)

I was watching one of the Lakers games, actually, one of the games against Portland. And Derek comes in at the end, steals the ball five or six times and confuses everybody. And somebody says, God, that guy is aggressive. I said, if you come from Arkansas, you have to be. (Laughter.) It's just sort of our deal. You did us proud, and congratulations.

I want to thank the host committee, every one of you. And I thank my good friend, Terry McAuliffe. And I thank Secretary Daley -- I don't know why I'm thanking Secretary Daley for leaving my administration, he was doing such a great job. But he's doing -- it's a very important thing for us to continue our work, and I thank him for taking over the leadership of the Vice President's campaign.

I want to thank Joe Andrew and all the people here from the Democratic Party; and recognize two of my very old friends, Henry and Mary Alice Cisneros -- thank you for the help you've given us on the convention and thank you for being my friends -- and congratulations on being new grandparents -- most important thing. (Applause.) They will shamelessly show you the pictures if you ask. (Laughter.)

I also want to congratulate Governor Roy Romer on his new job here in Los Angeles and thank him. (Applause.) When this was announced I told -- Hillary and I were talking, I said, this is really what Romer's always wanted to do. He's the only guy I ever knew who ran for governor and served 12 years just so he could be a school superintendent. (Laughter.) But you could go all the way across the country and not find a single human being who wants to do the right thing by our children and prove that our schools can work for all kids more than Roy Romer.

And what I want to tell all of you is I've been in a lot of Los Angeles schools, and I've been in some that are working very, very well, indeed. And I've been all across this country, and when several of us who are involved in this -- and Secretary Riley and I, we go back to the '70s, we were involved in school reform, and Hillary and I rewrote all the school standards in Arkansas nearly 20 years ago now -- there was a long period of time when everybody thought they knew what the answer was to failing schools and how to help kids in poor neighborhoods, sometimes in very difficult family situations, or just people whose first language was not English, learn up to world-class standards. But the truth is we didn't know as much for a long time as we thought we did.

That's not true anymore, and we now have -- this is the most exciting and important time in modern American history to be involved in education of children from kindergarten to the 12th grade, for two reasons. One is, for two years we've had, for the first time, a group of school children bigger than the baby boom generation. It's the biggest group of kids ever in school. And those of us among the baby boomers -- which are basically people today between the ages of 36 and 54 years old -- we were the biggest group of people ever in school until this crowd. And this group is far, far more diverse -- racially, ethnically, religiously, culturally -- much more diverse. So, obviously it's important -- self-evidently.

But the second thing you need to know is, we actually do know how to provide excellence in education to all kinds of children in all kinds of circumstances. And so now the question is, how to replicate what works somewhere everywhere. But there's no excuse anymore; we really do know how to do it.

I was in a school in Spanish Harlem the other day, appearing on the Today Show for the VH-1 Music in Schools program. Some of you may have seen it, where I tried to help VH-1 get instruments donated, money donated to start school music programs again, because a lot of them were lost in the schools over the last 20 years, along with I might add, the physical education programs for people not involved in team sports.

And so, we were working on it. And in this school, I met this magnificent principal. Now two years ago, this grade school, P.S. 96 in Spanish Harlem in New York, had 80 percent of the kids -- 80 percent -- reading and doing math below grade level -- two years ago. Today, 74 percent of them are doing reading and math at or above grade level -- in two years.

I was in this little school in Kentucky the other day in this real poor area, where more than half the kids are on free or reduced lunches. Four years ago, it was supposed to be one of the worst schools in Kentucky. Today, it's one of the top 10 or 20 grade schools in the entire state. Listen to this, in three years this is what they did. They went from 12 percent of the kids reading at or above grade level to 57 percent; from 5 percent of the kids doing math at or above grade level to 70 percent; from zero percent of the kids doing science at or above grade level to two-thirds. Three years. And I can tell you there are hundreds of stories like this.

So I want all of you to support your school system. We need to put this beyond partisan politics, we need to put this beyond everything else. But you do need to know that it can happen.

And I have seen it with my own ideas in every conceivable different kind of circumstance. It can happen, and you can do it.

Now, in 1991, before I had decided to run for President, as chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council, I came to Los Angeles to look at an anti-crime program. And they had arranged for a young student who came from the east but who was studying out here in California named Sean Landress (phonetic) to drive me around. You might be interested to know he subsequently went to divinity school, got a graduate degree, studied in Romania, talked about how to rebuild the economies of Central and Eastern Europe. He's a remarkable young man. He was 20 years old at the time and had been in school at Columbia in New York.

So we're driving across Los Angeles on one of these beautiful days, when I then did not have the benefit of not having to stop for the traffic. (Laughter.) So this 20-year-old young guy that I'd never met before looks at me, he says, well, let's get right down to it, cut it out, are you going to run for President or not? I'd never seen this kid before in my life. I said, well, I don't know, maybe. He said, well, if you do, here's what your theme song ought to be. (Laughter.) So he puts this tape in the tape deck -- we didn't have CD players in cars back then. And it's Fleetwood Mac's "Don't Stop Thinking About Tomorrow."

And so we asked them later if we could do -- I said, that's sounds pretty good. So I decided to run for President and I asked Fleetwood Mac, and whoever we contacted had the same attitude that President Bush used to express, that I was just a governor from a small southern state, why should I use their song. (Laughter.) I was so naive I thought that was a compliment, being a governor -- and I still do.

But, anyway, eventually we found them, the Fleetwood Mac people, and they said, okay, so that became the theme song of the '92 campaign. And I just want to pick up on something Terry said about Los Angeles. The best elections are always about the future -- no matter how good a job you've done, they're always about the future.

I remember once when I was trying to decide whether to run for my fifth term as governor in Arkansas. I went out to the state fair, and I used to have a booth at the state fair and I'd just sit there and talk to people, anybody that wanted to come up. And everybody in the state comes to the state fair in a little state like that.

This old boy in overalls came up to me and he said, Bill, are you going to run for another term? And I said, well, I don't know; if I do, will you vote for me? He said, yes, I guess I will; I always have. And I said, well, aren't you sick of me after all this time? He said, no, but everybody else I know is. (Laughter.) And I said, well -- and I got kind of hurt -- I said, well, don't they think I've done a good job? He said, oh, yeah, they think you've done a good job, but you did draw a paycheck every two weeks didn't you? He said, that's what we hired you to do, a good job. (Laughter.)

And so I say that to make this point. I think the record of our administration is a relevant consideration in this election, but mostly because it's evidence of whether we will keep the

commitments we make to the American people, or whether the Vice President will, and what we will do in the future.

But one reason I wanted to be in the millennial year in Los Angeles is that you do represent the future. And you've got all the challenges and all the opportunities of the future within 20 miles of where we're having breakfast today. And that's what I want you to help us show America. I want America to see the future. The diversity, the youth, the vibrancy, the technology, the creativity, the whole nine yards.

I'm a little superstitious about things, and I'm -- one of the things I'm happy about is the Lakers won in the Staple Center, and four years ago, we met in Chicago right after the Bulls won in the United Center. So I think we can just keep this basketball-Democratic Party partnership going. (Applause.) We're in pretty good shape.

But I hope you will think about this. Many of you, in ways that you can't even imagine now, will come in contact with people from other states, people from other countries, the thousands of people that will be here for the media. And I hope that you will say that. Because the thing that's most important to me right now -- and I admit it's self-serving -- but the thing that's most important for me right now is that the American people make the right decision in trying to figure out what this election is about.

My experience in life is that a lot of you get -- the answers you get sometimes depend on the questions you ask. So when people say, well, who do you think's going to win this or that other election, I often say, well, what's the election about? What the election's about depends on -- will determine in large measure who wins.

And we've got this enormous opportunity now to give America a gift, which is an honestly positive election. Not a saccharine election, not a "let's all just kind of wander through in a fog" election, but an election that is a genuine debate about the future of the country, at the time of the greatest prosperity and social progress we have enjoyed in my lifetime, with the absence of dramatic internal crises, or external threats. And a time like this comes along once in 50 years, sometimes once in 100 years. And I think it is a very stern test of the judgment and character of the American people, what we do with this moment of prosperity.

You know, when I came here in '92 -- you heard the Mayor talking about it -- I mean the economy was in the tank, you'd had riots in Los Angeles, the people in Washington were -- had what I call the combat mentality -- I've got an idea, you've got an idea; let's fight, maybe we'll both get on the evening news. (Laughter.) And people didn't worry about what was going to happen.

So it was -- to be fair, you didn't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out we needed a new economic policy, a new social policy and a new way of doing politics. And we brought our ideas to the table and, thankfully, they worked pretty well for America. And I am very grateful for the chance I have had to serve.

But I, too, think this election is about tomorrow. And I've worked as hard as I could to help turn this country around and I'm very proud of where we are. And I'm proud of the Vice President for running, and I'm very proud of my wife for running for the Senate in New York, and I'm proud of all these people who want to keep doing, keep the direction going that we have worked on.

But for you, whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, what you should want now is for the American people to come out of Los Angeles, because it will be the second convention, thinking this is great, the country's in great shape, and we now have the opportunity and the responsibility to chart a course for the future, to think about the big issues.

Now, I'll just mention some of them. What are you going to do when all of us baby boomers retire, and there's only two people working for every one person on Social Security? What are you going to do to make sure all these kids do get a world-class education? What are you going to do to deal with the fact that we have a lot of people that have jobs in America today who still can barely pay their bills and have a hard time raising their children -- because our country does less than other countries to help people balance work and child rearing?

What are we going to do about the fact that global warming is real. These environmental challenges are real and we have to find a way to grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time. What are you going to do about the fact that we still do have hate crimes in America? We had kids shot at a Jewish Community Center here; a Filipino postal worker killed -- clearly, the person who went after him thought he had a two-fer, an Asian and a federal government employee; a former basketball coach at Northwestern, an African American man killed by a fanatic in the Midwest who then went and shot a young Korean Christian as he walked out of his church. The guy said he didn't believe in God, but he did believe in white supremacy and he belonged to a church that elevated it. So we still have these.

How are we going to build one America? How are we going to build a global economy that has a human face that gives everybody a chance to participate? How are we going to make sure that the people and places who have not fully been part of our economic recovery get a chance to share in the prosperity? That helps the economy grow and keeps the recovery going.

What's your position about what we should do with this projected surplus? They now say the projected surplus will be huge -- I'm going to talk about it the day after tomorrow. And the Republicans say we should spend way over half of it in a tax cut and spend the rest of it on the cost of partially privatizing Social Security and building a missile defense scheme and other things, and it will materialize.

We say -- even though I think our economic policy has produced this happy projection -- that we shouldn't spend our money before it materializes, that we ought to save a good portion of it, pay down the debt, keep interest rates down, protect Medicare, and give a tax cut, but keep it within bounds in case all this money doesn't come in. Because once you cut taxes -- if we don't have this projected surplus we'll be back in the soup -- old deficits, old interest rates, California 1991-1992.

Anyway, these are big issues. And when you're getting ready to do a convention you think about, well, who's going to do the party, what is the entertainment, how are we going to work out the security, what are we going to do if all the people who think the global economy is terrible show up and demonstrate. You've got all these practical problems to work out. But what I want you to remember is how they're worked out and the spirit in which you work them out, and what you say to people you come in contact with will determine what people think of Los Angeles, but also what people think the election is about right now.

I trust the American people to get it right; nearly always they get it right. Otherwise we wouldn't be around here after over 200 years. If the alternatives are clear and they have time enough to digest it and hear both sides, they nearly always make the right decision. And what my mission is going to be is to make sure people understand this is a very big election, that we have an enormous responsibility to deal with the big challenges and opportunities facing the country, that there are dramatic differences between the two parties and we don't have to bad-mouth our opponents to say that -- that we can just say, let's lay the differences out there and you decide what you want for the future of America.

And Los Angeles can help us do that. You can embody the future and clarify the choices to be made. And you can do it and have a heck of a good time doing it. I told the staff at the convention yesterday I've been to every Democratic convention since 1972 -- makes me feel kind of old. And what I think is important is that there be competence, a sense of mission, a sense of energy and a sense of joy and pride. Our country has got a lot to be proud of, this state and this community have a lot to be proud of. I want you to have a good time. I want you to help everybody else have a good time. But never let people forget it's still important to think about tomorrow.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 11:30 A.M. PDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 22, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
UPON DEPARTURE

The South Portico

10:00 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. Before I leave, I would like to make a couple of comments about two questions now before Congress; first, whether to provide a voluntary prescription drug benefit to Medicare beneficiaries; and second, whether to hold tobacco companies, not taxpayers, accountable for the costs of tobacco.

Both issues require a bipartisan response. Both are important to the health of our people. Both require Congress -- for the public interest, not the special interest.

That's especially true when it comes to our seniors and their need for affordable, dependable prescription drug coverage. I have proposed that all our seniors have that option through Medicare, wherever they live, however sick they may be.

Now, Republicans in Congress say they, too, want a prescription drug benefit. They've even had pollsters, according to your reports, to teach them all kinds of new words to convince the American people they are in favor of it. But the latest plan doesn't measure up to the rhetoric.

Last night, in a completely party line vote, the House Ways and Means Committee approved a private insurance benefit that many seniors and many people with disabilities simply will not be able to afford. It's a benefit for the companies who make the drugs, not the seniors who need them most. Moreover, their bill would do nothing for the hospitals, home health care agencies and other providers who clearly need extra help to provide quality care under the Medicare program.

I hope when the full House considers this issue, it will reject this false promise and vote instead for a proposal that provides a real and meaningful Medicare prescription drug benefit on a voluntary basis, but one that is affordable and available to all seniors who need it.

If the House acts to protect the public health, it would be following the fine example it set earlier this week when it permitted the Department of Veterans' Affairs to help to fund the Justice Department's litigation against the tobacco companies. This modest investment of VA

funds can help our veterans and other taxpayers recover billions of dollars in health care costs, a substantial sum that will improve health care for veterans and for all Americans.

This shows what we can accomplish when we put the public interest ahead of special interests, the public interest ahead of partisan disputes. But it's only a first step. Today, the House can move further ahead if it votes to allow the Justice Department to receive these and other funds.

Tuesday's victory for veterans and taxpayers will prove to be hollow if, today, the House reverses itself. The tobacco companies and their powerful allies in Congress are working overtime to pass special protections to shield them from financial responsibility for the harm they've caused.

So, again, I ask Congress: Just let the American people have their day in court. The legal responsibility of the tobacco companies should be decided by judicial process, not by the political process. The health of our people is a precious resource.

Those of us in public life should be doing everything we can to work together, whether we're working to provide affordable prescription drug coverage, or to demand accountability for the health care costs of tobacco. In the days and months ahead, I will continue to work with members of both parties to achieve these goals. Thank you very much.

Q Sir, on gasoline prices, the Vice President was very direct and forthright yesterday, sir, in his accusations that there is collusion among the oil companies to inflate prices. Do you share those sentiments, and what are your thoughts on this becoming a preeminent issue in the presidential campaign?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, let's look at the problem here. This is a big problem, because there are a lot of Americans that have to drive to make a living. They have to drive distances just to make a living.

Then, you've got all these truckers out there that have to pay big fuel costs to make a living. And something that there hasn't been a lot of talk about, but if this thing can't be moderated, it's also going to have, I think, quite a burdensome impact on the airline companies, on the cost of air travel. So this is going to rifle throughout our economy.

I have said repeatedly, and I will say again: I think that it is in the best interest of the people of the United States, but also the oil-producing companies, to have oil prices somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20 to \$25 a barrel. That gives them the revenues they need, it keeps the incentives in our economy to continue to become more energy-efficient, and it doesn't bankrupt people that have to have fuel in substantial quantities. So this is a big problem.

Now, I have a lot of concerns about the speed with which this run-up occurred. I expected some upward pressure on prices because our economy is doing well and because the Asian economy is coming back, the European economy is coming back, so there would be a bigger global demand for oil and there would be some upward pressure.

But it doesn't explain, by a long stretch, the dramatic increase in prices. Neither does the requirement for special additives to reduce air pollution even come close to explaining the increase in the Chicago-Milwaukee area. We're talking about two or three cents a gallon for the environmental requirements, and that won't come close to explaining prices that are 50 cents a gallon higher than they are in other places.

So the proper thing to do, I think, is to have a vigorous inquiry by the Federal Trade Commission; they're going to do this. If you've noticed, there's some indication that the best evidence to support the statement the Vice President made is that two days after the call went out for the Federal Trade Commission to investigate this, there was a 16-cent-a-gallon drop in the price of the oil at the refinery level. Now, that hasn't manifested itself at the pump yet, because it takes time for this oil to be refined and to be distributed and to be sold as fuel. But I'm very concerned about it.

Let me say, I guess the follow-up question -- and I don't want to anticipate it, but you know, there are all these stories about, well, is this or is this not a political issue and who does it help or hurt, and I think the important thing is, this country should have a bipartisan or a nonpartisan interest in a long-term, stable energy policy. And there are several things the Congress can do right now to help that. And I would like to just go through them, because I mentioned several of them earlier this year.

But let me just mention -- first of all, you will remember I sent a proposal to Congress earlier this year to encourage more stripper well production in the United States. The Congress needs to pass that. We need to get some of these American wells back in operation. Now, the price will make it quite profitable, but we can do some things to jump-start that.

Secondly, the Congress still has not reauthorized the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which ties the President's hands; it undermines one of the options we have to maintain downward pressure on the oil prices, but also to deal with any emergencies that might crop up.

Thirdly, because of the failure to reauthorize the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, there is a cloud over the question of whether we can establish a regional home heating oil reserve for the mid-Atlantic and the Northeastern states that relies so heavily on home heating oil. And if these prices in fuel are any indication and the oil prices stay above \$30 a barrel, we're going to have serious problems in the Northeast this winter unless we have that reserve and we can move home heating oil in there in a hurry.

So let me just go through a couple of other things. Fourth, I have, for years now, asked the Congress to fund research and development into alternative energy, into the partnership for new generation vehicles. I have proposed for over two years a \$4-billion set of tax incentives for manufacturers and consumers to buy energy-efficient cars, homes and consumer products.

I've proposed a total spending of \$1.4 billion this year for the Department of Energy for renewable energy, for the development of natural gas, for distribution of power methodologies that will save consumers a lot of money. And on balance, Congress has approved about 12

percent of the funds I've asked to be spent for these things that will clearly lower energy bills and help the economy.

And the last thing I would say is, for two or three years, I've had the electricity restructuring bill up there that we estimate would save consumers in America \$20 billion a year in energy costs by the more efficient distribution and sales of electricity.

So there are things that the Congress can do that I would hope they would do on a bipartisan basis and do quickly that would help us to have a better long-term energy policy and would begin to show immediate benefits for a lot of people who could take advantage of these laws if we could just go ahead and pass them. So we need to do the stripper wells, we need to pass the tax incentives to buy more energy-efficient cars, homes and other products, and we need to stop spending about 12 percent a year of what we should be spending to develop alternative energy sources. And the electricity restructuring act needs to pass. So those are things we could do together in a bipartisan way to show movement.

Meanwhile, we need an aggressive inquiry by the FTC. There is no economic explanation I can think of for the run-up in the prices, particularly in the Middle West, and I want this thing to continue.

Q Mr. President, Bill Richardson was grilled pretty badly yesterday by the Republicans, and even Senator Byrd, and they didn't make the Secretary feel very good yesterday. What do you think of the hearing, the way it -- and do you still have full confidence in Mr. Richardson?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, I think the short answer to your question is, yes, I do. He came in there and faced a whole host of problems, and I think that in every case he's dealt with them in a forthright and aggressive manner. They're getting to the bottom of this last issue, I think pretty quickly with the help of good work by the FBI and others.

But it's a very serious matter, so the administration should expect to be asked hard questions about it, and we should figure out not only what happened in this case, but how to keep such things from happening in the future. You have to expect that you'll have tough congressional hearings when you have something really serious. And I don't have a problem with a tough hearing, but I do have confidence in him. He's worked hard on this trying to do the right thing.

Q Mr. President, what is your view of Senator Lott's handling of the China Trade Bill, and are you concerned that the delay is now endangering chances for final passage?

THE PRESIDENT: I was very concerned when I heard that the delay might run into September. Now, I believe we have agreement, as you've seen reported and as you have reported, to bring up the China bill shortly after the 4th of July recess. Obviously, I wish we could have voted on it before the 4th of July recess, but there are some issues there. There are some members in the Senate that want to offer amendments, just like the House, and some there's some work to be done.

I met with a group of senators yesterday, a bipartisan group who will continue to work it hard. But I think we're on schedule now for a timely vote, and I had a good visit with Senator Lott about it and I think we're on the same page, we're working together, and I look forward to successful conclusion of this in July.

Q In the upcoming midsession review, with the additional budget surplus you're anticipating, are you planning to propose a speed-up in the catastrophic coverage under your Medicare prescription drug plan?

THE PRESIDENT: I'll have some more to say about that next week when we've got the formal numbers. But let me say, as you have reported, there will be some upward revision in the projections, and that's good news.

I guess in this season, we ought to be crowing about it. But we've come a long way over the last eight years by being prudent. And one of the things that you can be sure I'll do is to reflect a recommendation that the Vice President made, that we wall off -- serve that portion of the surplus due to Medicare taxes like we've walled off that portion due to Social Security taxes so that we can pay down the debt more, and that would protect at least 20 percent of this projected surplus from either being spent or used on tax cuts.

But I think the most important thing you should remember is, we don't have any of that money yet; that's what we think will happen. These are the -- keep in mind, when I became President, they were forecasting a \$400-billion budget deficit for this year alone. And we worked very hard to turn that around. We should invest more, we should have a substantial tax cut for our people focused on the things that are most needed. But we shouldn't remember what got us to the dance here. What got us to the dance, what got us to this unbelievable point to have this discussion at all was discipline -- fiscal discipline, arithmetic, being careful, understanding that a projection is just that.

I think it would be a grave error to plan to spend every penny of this, particularly on tax cuts or other things that are so unavoidable because they may not get it back. Now, you can say "this is my plan for education," for example, and if the money doesn't come up then you don't have to spend it. But if you spend all this in tax cuts or some other mandated fashion on the front end and it doesn't materialize, then you'll be right back into deficits, right back into higher interest rates, and I think, frankly, just the whole legislative process, if that's the track we're on, would lead to an immediate increase in interest rates which would slow the economy down and keep those surpluses from materializing.

So my caution to everybody involved in this is prudence. We got here by being disciplined and prudent; don't get off of that, keep paying the debt down, and there will be more money than there would be if you tell everybody how you're going to spend it, and then it doesn't show up.

Q Won't there be greater room for debt reduction as well as greater tax relief and other changes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you can have both, but you can't -- but I think it's a mistake to plan to spend it all. Because what are you going to do if it doesn't materialize -- particularly if you plan to spend it all on the tax side, because if you do that and the money doesn't materialize, the tax cuts are still on the law.

You can say, "well, if it comes, I would like to spend it on certain things," and then if it doesn't show up, you don't spend it, because we do the spending every year. So I'll have more to say about it next week when we'll have more time to talk about it in detail.

Q Sir, on Colombia, after the Senate's endorsement last night of the appropriation, are you optimistic that you will get the funding for Operation Colombia before losing so much ground it will be impossible to make it back up?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, first, I'd like to compliment the Senate and the bipartisan vote. I'm grateful for it. As you know, there were some differences in the Senate bill and the House bill, first of all, a not insubstantial financial difference -- I think about \$300 million over two years -- and then some differences in how the money would be allocated. But I'm encouraged that we could maybe get the differences between the Senate proposal and the House proposal worked out.

The second part of your question is really a question that neither I nor anyone else is qualified to answer -- that is, it requires conjecture. I think as I've said all along, sooner is better than later. The quicker we can reach agreement and show that the United States is committed to democracy and to fighting the drug wars in Colombia and to strengthening the oldest democracy in Latin America, the better off we're going to be.

The quicker we do it, the quicker the Colombians will be able to get Europeans and others who are very sympathetic with them to come in and do their part; the more appealing it will be for the international financial institutions.

We haven't had a chance to talk about this much because there are so many other things going on. But those people, they're in the fight of their lives for their very way of life, with the combined pressure of a guerrilla war that's been going on for decades and the rise of the narco traffickers over the last two decades.

I don't think the average American can imagine what it would be like to live in a country where a third of the country, any given day, may be in the hands of someone that is an enemy, an adversary of the nation-state. I don't think we can even imagine what that would be like. Just, you know, driving through Washington, D.C. and you've got a one-in-three chance of being in a neighborhood that your government and the law of the land doesn't prevail in. This is a huge, huge issue. And again, I'm grateful to the Senate and I'm grateful it was done on such a bipartisan basis, and we just need to get it done as quickly as possible.

Now, on Monday or so I'll be back with something on the midsession review and we'll have a chance for more questions next week. Thank you.

END 10:18 A.M.EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 21, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT CEREMONY HONORING
ASIAN AMERICAN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

South Lawn Pavilion

4:45 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Chaplain Hicks; distinguished members of the Senate and the House who are here in large numbers; Secretary and Mrs. Cohen; Secretary and Mrs. West; Secretary Shalala; other members of the administration who are here, I thank all of you for being here on this profoundly important day.

In early 1945, a young Japanese American of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team lay dead on a hill in southern France -- the casualty of fierce fighting with the Germans. A chaplain went up to pray over him, to bless him, to bring him back down. As the Chaplain later said, "I found a letter in his pocket. The soldier had just learned that some vandals in California had burned down his father's home and barn in the name of patriotism. And yet, this young man had volunteered for every patrol he could go on."

In a few moments I will ask the military aides to read individual citations, detailing the extraordinary bravery of 22 Asian American soldiers -- some still with us, some to be represented by family members. We recognize them today with our nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor. They risked their lives, above and beyond the call of duty. And in so doing, they did more than defend America; in the face of painful prejudice, they helped to define America at its best.

We have many distinguished Americans here today -- members of the Senate and House, including at least one Medal of Honor winner, Senator Kerrey. We have former senators and House members here. But there is one person I would like to introduce and ask to stand because, in a profound and fundamental way, he stands on the shoulders of these whom we honor today, and all those who have worked for 50 years to set the record straight. Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to recognize the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, General Eric Shinseki. (Applause.)

Immediately following Pearl Harbor, Japanese Americans in the United States military were forced to surrender their weapons. National Guardsmen were dismissed; volunteers were rejected; draft-age youth were classified as -- quote -- "enemy aliens." Executive Order 9066 authorized military commanders to force more than 100,000 Japanese Americans from their homes and farms and businesses onto trains and buses and into camps, where they were placed behind barbed wire in tar-paper barracks, in places like Manzanar, Heart Mountain, Topaz. I am sad to say that one of the most compelling marks of my youth is that one of those was in my home state.

One resident of the camps remembers his 85-year-old grandmother standing in line for food, with her tin cup and plate. Another remembers only watch towers, guards, guilt and fear. Another has spent years telling her children, "No, Grandfather was not a spy."

The astonishing fact is that young men of Japanese descent, both in Hawaii and on the mainland, were still willing, even eager, to take up arms to defend America.

In 1942, a committee of the Army recommended against forming a combat unit of Japanese Americans, citing -- and I quote -- "the universal distrust in which they are held." Yet, Americans of Japanese ancestry, joined by others of good faith, pressed the issue, and a few months later President Roosevelt authorized a combat team of Japanese American volunteers.

In approving the unit FDR said, "Americanism is a matter of the mind and heart. American is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry." That statement from President Roosevelt, so different from the executive order of just a year before, showed a nation pulled between its highest ideals and its darkest fears. We were not only fighting for freedom and equality abroad, we were also in a struggle here at home over whether America would be defined narrowly, on the basis of race, or broadly, on the basis of shared values and ideals.

When young Japanese American men volunteered enthusiastically, some Americans were puzzled. But those who volunteered knew why. Their own country had dared to question their patriotism and they would not rest until they had proved their loyalty.

As sons set off to war, so many mothers and fathers told them, live if you can; die if you must; but fight always with honor, and never, ever bring shame on your family or your country.

Rarely has a nation been so well-served by a people it has so ill-treated. For their numbers and length of service, the Japanese Americans of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, including the 100th Infantry Battalion, became the most decorated unit in American military history. By the end of the war, America's military leaders in Europe all wanted these men under their command. Their motto was "Go for Broke." They risked it all to win it all.

They created a custom of reverse AWOL -- wounded soldiers left their hospital beds against doctor's order to return to battle. They were veterans of seven brutal campaigns. They fought in Italy to overwhelm entrenched German positions that blocked the path north. They fought in France and liberated towns that still remember them with memorials. They took

800 casualties in just five days of continuous combat in southern France, to rescue the lost battalion of Texas which had been surrounded by German troops.

As their heroic efforts forced back the Nazis in Europe, news of their patriotism began to beat back prejudice in America. But prejudice is a stubborn foe. Captain Daniel Inouye, back from the war, in full uniform, decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross, the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with Cluster, and 12 other medals and citations, tried to get a haircut and was told, "We don't cut Jap hair." As Captain Inouye said later, "I was tempted to break up the place," but he had already done all the fighting he needed to do.

People across the country had learned of his heroism and that of his colleagues, and loyal Americans were eager to teach others the difference between patriotism and prejudice. A group of Army veterans who knew firsthand the heroism of Japanese American soldiers, attacked prejudice in a letter to the Des Moines Register. It said, "When you have seen these boys blown to bits, going through shellfire that others refused to go through, that is the time to voice your opinion, not before."

In Los Angeles, a Japanese American soldier boarded a bus in full uniform, as a passenger hurled a racial slur. The driver heard the remark, stopped the bus, and said, "Lady, apologize to this American soldier or get off my bus." This defense of our ideals here at home was inspired by the courage of Japanese Americans in battle.

Senator Inouye, you wrote that your father told you as you left at age 18 to join the Army and fight a war that the Inouyes owe an unrepayable debt to America. If I may say so, sir, more than half a century later, America owes an unrepayable debt to you and your colleagues. (Applause.)

Fifty-four summers ago, just a few steps from this very spot, President Truman greeted the returning members of the 442nd and told them, "You fought not only the enemy, but you fought prejudice, and you have won." Let us not also forget that Americans of Japanese, Korean, Chinese and Filipino descent, along with Alaskan natives, all faced the same blind prejudice.

That is why we are proud to honor here today the service of 2nd Lieutenant Rudolph B. Davila, an American of Filipino and Spanish descent, who risked his life to help break through the German lines near Anzio; and Captain Francis Wai, an American of Chinese descent, who gave his life securing an important beachhead in the Philippine Islands. Americans of Asian descent did much more than prove they were Americans; they made our nation more American. They pushed us toward that more perfect union of our founder's dreams.

The report of the Presidential Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians, some 20 years ago now, called internment an injustice, based on "race prejudice, war hysteria and a failure of political leadership." It prescribed several steps for redress, including an apology from the Congress and the President.

Some years later, many leaders backed legislation sponsored by Senator Daniel Akaka, to review the combat records of Asian Americans in World War II to determine if any deserving service members had been passed over for the Medal of Honor. The review found, indeed, that some extraordinarily brave soldiers never did receive the honors they clearly had earned.

So today, America awards 22 of them the Medal of Honor. They risked their lives, on their own initiative, sometimes even against orders, to take out machine guns, give aid to wounded soldiers, draw fire, pinpoint the enemy, protect their own. People who can agree on nothing else fall silent before that kind of courage.

But it is long past time to break the silence about their courage, to put faces and names with the courage, and to honor it by name: Davila, Hajiro, Hayashi, Inouye, Kobashigawa, Okutsu, Sakato, Hasemoto, Hayashi, Kuroda, Moto, Muranaga, Nakae, Nakamine, Nakamura, Nishimoto, Ohata, Okubo, Ono, Otani, Tanouye, Wai. These American soldiers, with names we at long last recognize as American names, made an impact that soars beyond the force of any battle. They left a lasting imprint on the meaning of America. They didn't give up on our country, even when too many of their countrymen and women had given up on them. They deserve, at the least, the most we can give -- the Medal of Honor.

I would like now to ask the military aides to read the citations.

(The citations are read and the Medal of Honor is presented to the recipients.)

END 5:15 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 20, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON THE D.C. COLLEGE ACCESS ACT

The Roosevelt Room

2:23 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Well, this is a very happy day. Welcome. I'd like to thank Representatives Eleanor Holmes Norton, Tom Davis, and Jim Moran for their role in this day; and Secretary Riley; OMB Director Lew, especially for his role as the Chair of the Federal D.C. Interagency Task Force. And I'd like to thank Grant Stockdale who first proposed this idea several years ago.

I am sorry that Mayor Williams couldn't be with us today, but the city is very well-represented, and I want to welcome the university Presidents from George Mason, Trinity, Bowie State and Delaware State who are here today, as well as students they'll be welcoming because of the D.C. College Access Act. We also have some of the educators and parents who helped get these children to college, and the leaders of the D.C. College Access program who are raising private funds to help local students meet all the costs of a university education.

I want to talk in a moment about all that you have done together, but because this is my only opportunity to be with the press today, I want to say just a few words about another issue where your example of bipartisanship could stand us in good stead, and that is our stewardship of the Medicare program.

This week the House is preparing to vote on a proposal for a prescription drug benefit for older Americans and people with disabilities. Unfortunately, in my opinion at least, the private insurance drug plan does not achieve that objective, of giving affordable, dependable coverage to every senior who needs it. At the same time, we have to face the challenge of making sure we pay the Medicare providers enough so they can give our seniors the high-quality care they deserve.

Payments are too low in important areas, and Medicare patients are at risk. Some think we have to choose between the prescription drug benefit and adequate quality care. But because of our remarkable prosperity, I believe we can do both, especially given the present strength of the Medicare trust fund. And I think we should do it right.

Today I am proposing to dedicate \$40 billion over the next 10 years to ensure that our providers can continue to provide quality care. I think all of us recognize, and I do think this is a bipartisan recognition, that when we passed the Balanced Budget Act of '97, we did not provide adequate funding for the medical providers of the country, and this will help, by increasing Medicare payments to hospitals, teaching facilities, nursing homes, and the home health care programs, so that Medicare patients can get what they need.

My proposal also endorses Vice President Gore's initiatives to say for the very first time, the Medicare surplus will be off-budget, like the Social Security surplus, and therefore, can no longer be diverted for other purposes. Under the Vice President's plan, Medicare must be saved for paying down the debt in order to strengthen the life of the Medicare program.

Today, the House is voting on a proposal that embraces this concept, and takes an important step toward achieving the goal. And I'm very pleased. and again, I think it will have strong bipartisan support. I hope it will be strengthened in the Senate, so there will be absolutely no question that any loophole can allow the money to be spent in other ways.

Now, just as we bear a heavy responsibility to our seniors, we also have perhaps an even heavier one to our young people, to do all we can to prepare them for the future. More and more, that requires that we offer every student the chance to go to college. In the coming years, the number of new jobs requiring a bachelor's degree will actually grow twice as fast as the jobs that require only a high school diploma. Over the course of a career, someone with a college degree today will earn, on average, \$600,000 more than someone with a high school diploma.

I have often said that I was the first person to go to college in my family, and I couldn't have done it without not only help from my family, but without loans, scholarships and jobs. Those things enabled me to have opportunities my parents' generation did not have, and without them, clearly I wouldn't be standing here today making these remarks. So I think, like everyone in Congress who's been through the same experience, we want to make sure that the next generation have the same opportunity.

For years, too many of this city -- our capital city's young people have been left behind, not because they didn't have the ability, but because they didn't have the resources to go on to college. This fall, things will be different. Thanks to a remarkable coalition of business leaders, city and federal officials, Republicans and Democrats, working together, many of them here today, the children of Washington will have the chance to go to public colleges around the country at in-state rates, or get some help to go to a private school close to home.

The District of Columbia College Access Act makes the playing field a little more level for the children of Washington, D.C. More students and parents will know that if they study hard and believe in themselves, the doors of college and the opportunity college brings will be open to them. And more middle-income families will find that our great Nation's Capital is also a great place to live and raise their own children.

This fall, more than a thousand young people, many of whom might never have had the chance, will get the help to go to college. We're paying the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition, sometimes as high as \$10,000 a year. And we're providing \$2,500 for young people who have chosen to attend local private colleges.

Washington businesses are helping many of these children pay for the cost of college -- the other costs -- and they've helped increase funding for the University of the District of Columbia, as well. This is a great example of what we can do if we put aside our differences to work toward a common goal. It is one of the best investments we could ever make.

One of the things that I am proudest of in my service as President is that we've had the opportunity to have the biggest expansion in college aid since the G.I. Bill 50 years ago - - expanded Pell Grants, which many young Washingtonians use, education IRAs, the \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax credit, and the Lifetime Learning tax credit for the third and fourth years of college and graduate school and adult education. And now I've asked Congress to pass a college opportunity tax cut that would allow every family to deduct up to \$10,000 of college tuition from their income tax every year.

We have the resources now. The question is whether we have the vision and will to give all our children a shot at living their dreams. This bill indicates that we do. And again, I want to thank these representatives here who played a leading role, and all of you who helped to pass this bill.

I'd like to now ask Dr. Alan Merten, the President of George Mason University; Zack Gamble; Secretary Riley; and Representatives Norton, Davis, Moran; and Jack Lew to come forward. I want to tell you that Zack Gamble is a young man who did well in college and was acceptable -- accepted -- acceptable and accepted -- (laughter) -- into several colleges. The D.C. College Access Act is making it possible for him to go to George Mason this fall to study computer science. We're going to present his tuition check now. It is just the first of many.

Zack, congratulations. And to all the other young people here, congratulations to you. Good luck to you, God bless you. And now, in the immortal words of that great movie, we're going to show you the money. (Laughter.)

END 2:32 P.M. EDT

PRESIDENT CLINTON:
ANNOUNCING THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST SURVEY OF THE ENTIRE HUMAN GENOME

June 26, 2000

"Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. With this profound new knowledge, humankind is on the verge of gaining immense, new power to heal."

President Bill Clinton
June 26, 2000

Today, at the White House, President Clinton, along with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, announced that the international Human Genome Project and Celera Genomics Corporation have both completed an initial sequencing of the human genome – the genetic blueprint for human beings. The President congratulated the scientists working on this landmark achievement, which promises to bring new ways to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure disease. The President pledged to continue and accelerate the United States' participation in this historic effort, and underscored that genetic information must never be used to stigmatize or discriminate against any individual or group.

A REVOLUTION IN PREVENTING, DIAGNOSING, TREATING, AND CURING DISEASE. Genetics causes an estimated 5,000 hereditary diseases and influences the development of thousands of other diseases. Before the advent of the Human Genome Project – a joint effort of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Energy, and partners in the U.K., France, Germany, Japan, and China – connecting a gene with a disease was a slow, arduous, and often imprecise process. Today, largely because of the efforts of the Human Genome Project, genes are discovered and described within days. Scientists will be able to use the working draft of the human genome to:

- Alert patients that they are at risk for certain diseases;
- Reliably predict the course of disease;
- Precisely diagnose disease and ensure that the most effective treatment is used; and
- Develop new, more effective treatments at the molecular level.

USHERING IN A NEW ERA OF GENETIC MEDICINE. The sequence represents only the first step in the full decoding of the genome, because most of the individual genes and their specific functions must still be deciphered and understood. This research has begun, and already, tens of thousands of genes have been identified. The Human Genome Project, which completed its version of the working draft two years ahead of schedule and under budget, will continue its longstanding practice of making all of its sequencing data available to researchers worldwide at no cost. Celera Genomics, which makes its sequencing data available by subscription, has said that it will also make its version of the consensus human genome sequence available to non-subscribers upon publication.

PLEDGING STRONG SUPPORT FOR GENETIC RESEARCH. At today's announcement, President Clinton:

- Reiterated U.S. commitment to strong federal support for genetic research;
- Stated his support for a structure to consider the medical, ethical and legal issues created by this research;
- Recognized that research and development by biotechnology companies will be key to the translation of human genome sequence data into new health care products;
- Pledged to foster a business environment that will spur research and development in this vital sector; and
- Reaffirmed his support for patenting genetic discoveries that have substantial and credible uses.

BUILDING ON A STRONG COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING PRIVATE GENETIC INFORMATION. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked to ensure that scientific advances do not compromise patient privacy protections. President Clinton has:

- Signed an executive order that prohibits every civilian federal department and agency from using genetic information in any hiring or promotion action;
- Signed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, which prevents group health insurers from using genetic information to deny individuals health insurance benefits; and
- Endorsed the Genetic Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance & Employment Act of 1999, which ensures that genetic information will not be used to discriminate against Americans seeking employment, promotion, or health insurance.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 15, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE HISPANIC CONFERENCE

The East Room

2:48 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, and good afternoon. I have received a good report on what you have done so far, and I want to get right into our program, but I would like to make a few remarks first. I'd like to thank Governor Glendening and Senator Bingaman and Congressman Hinojosa and Guillermo Linares and Secretary Riley for joining us, along with our other panel members.

And I'd like to thank Congressman Joe Baca, Carlos Romero Barcello for being here. I think Congressman Reyes from Texas is on the way. And I want to welcome Mayor Beverly O'Neill from Long Beach, and especially Lt. Governor of California Cruz Bustamonte, who is here. And I'd like to thank Maria Echaveste and Mickey Ibarra from the White House for the work they have done on this, along with all the others who have worked so hard.

This is very important to me. One of the things that I have learned traveling America is just how diverse Hispanic America is, something that a lot of Americans don't really know yet. I think there is a common core of values around family and community and work and faith, but Hispanic America is growing more diverse every day with different challenges and, unfortunately, still different opportunities. There are still a lot of gaps that we all want to close. Most of them are narrowing, but we've still got a lot of work to do.

Last August, the First Lady hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Hispanic Children and Youth. And, today, we're following up on that conference by setting forth specific goals and an agenda for closing the student achievement gap over the next 10 years in ways that we can all be held accountable for.

The first step to closing that gap is to believe, as I do, that high expectations are for all students. I believe intelligence is equally distributed throughout the world, but opportunity is not. And the same is true within our own country.

For over seven years now, we've pushed hard for higher standards, for more choice, for greater accountability and for more support for children and teachers and parents, and schools need it. We have hired nearly 30,000 new, highly-trained teachers now, on the way to our goal of 100,000 more teachers to lower class sizes in the early grades. We've connected about three-quarters of our classrooms to the Internet -- that's up from 3 percent in 1994, when we started in Northern California, the Vice President and I did with our first NetDay.

We've made it possible for over 90 percent of our schools in very low income areas to have at least one Internet connection because of the e-rate program that the Vice President and I fought very hard for in the Telecommunications Act in 1996. And we have more than doubled college aid in the last seven years, the biggest expansion since the G.I. Bill 50 years ago. In all these areas, I actually believe we have more to do.

We also, as all of you know, put in place a Hispanic Education Action Plan that includes, this year, a \$436 million increase for programs to improve Latino student outcomes. And I want to double that investment. This strategy of investing more and demanding more is working. Test scores are up across the country; more students than ever are going to college. If we just keep it up, we'll really take this country and all its children where we want to go.

Unfortunately, that progress is threatened by the education bill that the House Committee yesterday -- or that the House passed yesterday. I think it demands too little accountability, and I know it puts in too few resources. It, in my judgment, under-invests in everything from after-school programs, which we have taken from \$1 million to over \$400 million in just three and a half years. And if that bill were to come to my desk, I would have to veto it. But I hope we can work with Congress on a bipartisan education bill. We've had some success in recent years, and I am confident we will this year.

I'd like to talk, just a moment, about what many of you already know, which is that Hispanic students are showing in this academic success, but still, too many are lagging behind in ways that I find deeply troubling. Today I'm releasing a study by my Council of Economic Advisors, which shows that the average educational level of native-born Hispanics has increased substantially over the last several decades, and the gap between Hispanics and whites has declined.

Compared to 1993, Hispanic students are scoring higher on math tests; greater percentages are completing high school, graduating from college and getting advanced degrees. However, there's some bad news in this report, because the need for education is growing even faster. For example, since 1993, the percentage of Hispanics with four or more years of college has increased, but only by about 2 percent. Over the next decade, the number of jobs requiring at least four years of college will more than double.

The study shows that Hispanics, who represent 11 percent of our work force, hold down just 4 percent of the jobs in information technology -- jobs that pay much more than average in the area where jobs are growing most rapidly. Every American should be concerned about that gap. When the fastest-growing demographic group in our country is under-represented in the fastest-growing employment sector, it means less opportunity, and a violation of the values that

we all share. It also means that, sooner or later, our economy will have a shortage of highly-skilled workers where we really need them.

One other finding in the report bears mentioning because it will inform the debate we're going to have today. The problem is not that Hispanics are not choosing careers in key industries like information technology. In fact, according to the report, Hispanics who graduate from college enter the information technology industry at about the same rate as non-Hispanics, and earn about as much. The problem, therefore, quite simply, is that not enough Hispanics are getting college degrees. That can be remedied only by raising the educational achievements of Hispanic students in schools, beginning in pre-school years, continuing into adulthood; and by making sure that no person is ever denied access to college because of cost.

We know that the achievement levels can be raised. The question is whether we have the will to do what we know works. If we're going to set high expectations of students, we must have high expectations of ourselves to do what it takes to make sure all of our students can make the grade.

We know that we can make college more accessible -- that's what the HOPE scholarships do; the Direct Student Loan Program; the Lifetime Learning tax credit. But I think we ought to do more. I have got a proposal before Congress to give up to \$10,000 of tuition tax deductible status every year, and to do it at a 28-percent income tax rate, even for people in the 15-percent income tax bracket, which is a very, very important proposal. And it could make it possible for even more of our young people to go to college, and for more of our families to afford it.

So, today, we know what we have to do and we know we can do it. And what I think is always helpful is to translate what we wish to do into specific goals. So I think we ought to adopt five specific goals to close the Hispanic student achievement gap over the next 10 years.

First, let's make sure that in 10 years, young Latino children are enrolled in quality early childhood programs at the same rate as other Americans. Second, let's make sure that in 10 years, every Hispanic student graduating from high school will have demonstrable proficiency in English. Third, let's make sure that in 10 years, there is no gap in test scores and other assessments between Hispanic students and their peers. Fourth, let's make sure in 10 years 90 percent of Latino students complete high school. And, fifth, let's make sure that over the next decade, the percentage of Hispanic students who earn college degrees will double what it is today.

Now, these goals are specific and ambitious, but clearly achievable. If we are serious, we have to do something about meeting them. This morning, the Secretary of Education released the first of what will be annual reports measuring progress in Hispanic student achievement. We also need an entity outside electoral politics to keep a national spotlight on these goals, because they should be the nation's goals, without regard to party.

Today, I'm happy to announce the creation of such an entity: the 2010 Alliance -- a partnership among a wide variety of Hispanic organizations, including La Raza and the National

Association for Bilingual Education; and corporate and non-profit groups, from the Ford, Irvine, Kellogg, and Hazen Foundations, to AT&T, GM, Univision and State Farm.

The alliance will be, as they say, in your face. (Laughter.) It is designed to remind the nation of these goals, and to spur commitments -- specific ones -- at every level of government in the private sector to help to meet them. I'm happy that a number of organizations have already committed to taking specific steps to help achieve the goals.

The Discovery Channel will publicize the goals in public service announcements to run on its Discovery and Espanol Network. The educational software firm, Lightspan, is teaming up with the Department of Housing and Urban Development, to provide special software and Internet access for computers in HUD neighborhood centers and Hispanic communities. Many other organizations, from the American Library Association, to the Hispanic Radio Network, also are contributing.

Closing this achievement gap is a challenge that may seem daunting now, but it will seem inevitable once we do it. And when we do it, if we work hard, stay together, and stay focused on the goal, America will be a better, stronger place in the 21st century. (Applause.)

Thank you very much. I'd like now to introduce Governor Parris Glendening of Maryland, who increased his state's investment in education by \$600 million, and doubled funds to build and modernize schools in his first term in office. In more ways than I can count right now, since he's been governor, Maryland has been on the forefront of change in our nation. And I wish every state would follow Maryland's lead.

Governor.

END

3:00 P.M. EDT

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Aachen, Germany)

For Immediate Release

June 2, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
UPON BEING PRESENTED THE
INTERNATIONAL CHARLEMAGNE PRIZE 2000

Katschhof Courtyard
Aachen Cathedral
Aachen, Germany

12:45 P.M. (L)

THE PRESIDENT: Ladies and gentlemen, Chancellor Schroeder, Lord Mayor Linden, President Rau, President Havel, His Majesty Juan Carlos, President Halonen, previous laureates, members of the Charlemagne Foundation, leaders of the clergy and cathedral, and members of the German and American governments. Let me begin by thanking the Lord Mayor for his welcome and his wise words, and my good friend, Chancellor Schroeder for his kind comments and his visionary statement.

The rare distinction you have bestowed upon me I am well aware is in large measure a tribute to the role the American people have played in promoting peace, freedom and security in Europe for the last 50 years. I feel the honor is greater still because of the remarkable contributions made by previous recipients of this prize toward our common dream of European union.

Of course, as has already been said, that dream has its roots here in Aachen, an ancient shrine that remains at the center of what it means to be European -- the seat of an empire, a place of healing waters, peace treaties, furious fighting. With its liberation at the end of World War II, Aachen became perhaps the first German city to join the postwar democratic order.

Today, as I have seen, Aachen is both a sanctuary for sacred relics, dating back to the dawn of Christianity, and a crucible of Europe's new information economy. Here, Charlemagne's name summons something glimpsed for the first time during his life -- a sense that the disparate people of this Earth's smallest continent could actually live together as participants in a single civilization.

In its quest for unity, even at the point of a sword, and in its devotion to the new idea that there was actually something called Europe, the Carolingian idea surpassed what had come before, and to an extent, it guides us still.

Twelve centuries ago, out of the long, dark night of endless tribal wars, there emerged a light that somehow has survived all the ravages of time, always burning brighter, always illuminating Europe's way to the future. Today, that shining light of European Union is a matter of the utmost importance, not just to Europeans, but to everyone on this planet.

For Europe has shown the world humanity at its best and at its worse. Europe's most violent history was caused by men claiming the mantle of Charlemagne, men who sought to impose European union for their own ends without the consent of the people. History teaches, therefore, that European union, not to mention transatlantic unity, must come from the considered judgment of free people and must be for worthy purposes that when threatened must be defended.

The creators of this prize and its first winners clearly understood that. We often say that theirs was the generation that rebuilt Europe after World War II. But actually, they did far more. They built the foundation of something entirely new -- a Europe united in common commitment to democracy, free markets and the rule of law. That achievement endured for half a century, but only for half a continent.

Then, 11 years ago, the Berlin Wall fell, the Iron Curtain parted, and at last the prospect of a Europe whole and free opened before you. All of us will remember 1989 for the Wall crumbling to the powerful strains of Schiller's "Ode to Joy." It was a moment of great liberation, like 1789 or 1848 -- a particular triumph for the German people, whose own unification defied great adversity and set the stage for the larger unification of Europe.

Too often we forget that 1989 was also a time of grave uncertainty about the future. There were doubts about NATO's future, reinforced later by its slowness to confront evil in Bosnia and Croatia. There were fears that the EU's efforts to come closer together would either fail or, succeeding, would fatally divide Europe and the United States. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe feared becoming a gray zone of poverty and insecurity. Many wondered if Russia was headed for a communist backlash or a nationalist coup.

In January of 1994, I came to Europe for the first time as President, both to celebrate Europe's new birth of freedom and to build upon it. Then, I spoke of a new conception of European security, based not on divided defense blocs, but instead on political, military and cultural integration. This new security idea required, as has already been said, the transatlantic alliance to do for Europe's East what we did for Europe's West after World War II.

Together, we set about doing that. We lowered trade barriers, supported young democracies, adapted NATO to new challenges and expanded our alliance across Europe's old divide. We made clear, and I repeat today, that NATO's door remains open to new members. The EU took in three new members that opened negotiations with a dozen others, created a single market with one currency.

We've stood by Russia, struggling to build their own democracy and opened the way to a partnership between Russia and NATO and between Ukraine and NATO. We defended the

values at the heart of our vision of an undivided Europe, acting to stop the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and forging what I believe will be an enduring peace there.

We acted in Kosovo in one of our alliance's finest moments. A year ago in Germany, we launched a Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe. We stand still with crusaders for tolerance and freedom from Croatia to Slovakia to Serbia, and we do encourage reconciliation between Turkey and Greece.

Over the last 11 years, of course, there have been some setbacks. But unquestionably, Europe today is more united, more democratic, more peaceful than ever, and both Europeans and Americans should be proud of that.

Think how much has changed. Borders built to stop tanks now manage invasions of tourists and trucks. Europe's fastest-growing economies are now on the other side of the old Iron Curtain. At NATO Headquarters the flags of 19 allies and 27 partners fly. In Central Europe and Eastern Europe, the realistic dream of membership in the EU and NATO has sparked the resolution of almost every old ethnic and border dispute. And, finally -- finally -- our friend, Vaclav Havel, has spent more years being President than he spent in prison. (Applause.)

In Southeastern Europe, the Bosnians are still fighting, but now at the ballot box. Croatia is a democracy. Soldiers from almost every European country, including bitter former adversaries, are keeping the peace together in Kosovo. Last year, as German troops marched through the Balkan countryside, they were hailed as liberators. What a way to end the 20th century. (Applause.)

In the meantime, Russia has stayed on the path of democracy, though its people have suffered bitter economic hardships, political and criminal violence, and the tragedy of the war in Chechnya, which yet may prove to be self-defeating because of the civilian casualties. Still, it has withdrawn its troops from the Baltic states, accepted the independence of its neighbors, and completed the first democratic transition in its thousand-year history.

European unity really is producing something new under the sun -- common institutions that are bigger than the nation-state, and at the same time, a devolution of democratic authority downward. Scotland and Wales have their own parliaments. This week, Northern Ireland, where my family has its roots, restored its new government. Europe is alive with the sound of ancient place names being spoken again -- Catalonia, Piedmont, Lombardy, Silesia, Transylvania, Uthenia -- not in the name of separatism, but in the spirit of healthy pride and heritage.

National sovereignty is being enriched by lively local voices making Europe safer for diversity, reaffirming our common humanity, reducing the chance that European disunity will embroil Europe and America in another large conflict.

One thing, thankfully, has not changed. Europe's security remains tied to America's security. When it is threatened, as it was in Bosnia and Kosovo, we, too, will respond. When it is being built, we, too, will always take part.

Europe's peace sets a powerful example to other parts of the world that remain divided along ethnic, religious and national lines. Even today Europe has internal disputes over fundamental questions of sovereignty, political power, and economic policy -- disputes no less consequential than those over which people still fight and die in other parts of the world. However, instead of fighting and dying over them now, Europeans argue about them in Brussels, in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

The whole world should take notice of this. If Western Europe could come together after the carnage of World War II, if Central Europe could do it following 50 years of communism, it can be done everywhere on this Earth. (Applause.)

Of course, for all of the positive developments and our good feelings today, the job of building a united Europe is certainly not finished, and it is important not to take all this self-congratulation too far. Instead, we should focus today on two big pieces of unfinished business and one enduring challenge. The first piece of unfinished business is to make Southeast Europe fully, finally and forever a part of the rest of Europe. That is the only way to make peace last in that bitterly divided region.

It cannot be done by forcing people to live together; there is no bringing back the old Yugoslavia. It cannot be done by giving every community its own country, army, and flag; shifting so many borders in the Balkans will only shake the peace further.

Our goal must be to de-Balkanize the Balkans. (Applause.) We must help them to create a magnet that will bring people together, a magnet more powerful than the polarizing pull of their old hatreds. That's what the Stability Pact that Germany helped to establish is designed to do, challenging the nations of Southeast Europe to reform their economies and strengthen their democracies, and pledging more than \$6 billion from the rest of us to support their efforts. Now we must turn quickly those pledges into positive changes in the lives of ordinary people, and steadily bring those nations into Western institutions.

We must also remain unrelenting in our support for a democratic transition in Serbia. For if there is to be a future for democracy and tolerance in this region, there must be no future for Mr. Milosevic and his policy of ethnic hatred and ethnic cleansing. (Applause.)

If Southeastern Europe is to be fully integrated into the continent, Turkey also must be included. I applaud the EU's decision to treat Turkey as a real candidate for membership. I hope both Turkey and the EU will take the next steps. It will be good for Turkey, good for Southeast Europe; good for more rapid reconciliation between Greece and Turkey and the resolution of Cyprus, and good for the entire world, which is still too divided over religious differences. (Applause.)

Our second piece of unfinished business concerns Russia. We must work to build a partnership with Russia that encourages stability, democracy and cooperative engagement with the West -- and full integration with global institutions.

Only time will tell what Russia's ultimate role in Europe will be. We do not yet know if Russia's hard-won democratic freedoms will endure. We don't know yet whether it will define its greatness in yesterday's terms, or tomorrow's. The Russian people will make those decisions.

Though Russia's transformation is incomplete, there clearly is reason for hope in Russia's remarkable journey over these last few years -- from dictatorship to democracy; from communism to the market; from empire to nation state; from adversary to partner in reducing the threat of mass destruction. Because the stakes are so high, we must do everything we can to encourage a Russia that is fully democratic and united in its diversity; a Russia that defines its greatness not by dominance of its neighbors, but by the dominant achievements of its people and its partnership; a Russia that should be, indeed, must be, fully part of Europe.

That means no doors can be sealed shut to Russia -- not NATO's, not the EU's. The alternative would be a future of harmful competition between Russia and the rest, and the end of our vision of an undivided continent.

As Winston Churchill said when he received the Charlemagne Prize in the far darker days of 1956, "in a true unity of Europe, Russia must have her part." Of course, Russia may very well decide it has no interest in formally joining European or transatlantic institutions. If that happens, we must make sure that, as the EU and NATO expand, their eastern borders become gateways to Russia, not barriers to trade, travel and security cooperation. We must build real institutional links with Russia, as NATO has begun to do. Of course, it won't be easy, and there is still mistrust to be overcome on both sides, but it is possible and absolutely necessary. (Applause.)

The steps necessary to bring Southeast Europe and Russia into the embrace of European unity illustrate the continued importance of the transatlantic alliance to both Europe and America. The enduring challenge we face, therefore, is to preserve and strengthen our alliance as Europe continues its coming together.

We have agreed on the principles; we have laid the foundations. But the future we're building will look very different from anything we have ever known. In a generation, I expect the EU will have as many as 30 members, from the Baltics to the Balkans to Turkey; a community of unprecedented cultural, political and economic diversity and vitality. It will be a bigger Europe than Charlemagne ever dared dream, a reflection of our recognition that ultimately, Europe is a unifying idea as much as a particular place. An expansive continent of different peoples who embrace a common destiny, play by the same rules, and affirm the same truths -- that ethnic and religious hatred are unacceptable; that human rights are inalienable and universal; that our differences are a source of strength, not weakness; that conflicts must be resolved by arguments, not by arms.

I believe America must continue to support Europe's most ambitious unification efforts. And I believe Europe should want to strengthen our alliance even as you grow stronger. The alliance has been the bedrock of our security for half a century. It can be the foundation on which our common future is built.

Oh, it's easy to point to our differences; many do. On my bad days, I do. But let's keep a healthy perspective. Consider these news headlines about U.S.-European dispute: "Allies Complain Of Washington's Heavy Hand," "France To NATO: Non, Merci," "U.S. Declares Economic Warfare On Allies," "Protestors Rally Against American Arms Plan." The first of those headlines is from the Suez crisis in 1956. The second is from 1966, when France left NATO's military command. The third is from 1981, the Siberian Pipeline crisis. The fourth, from 1986 during the debate about deploying intermediate nuclear missiles in Europe.

Yes, we've always had our differences and being human and imperfect, we always will. But the simple fact is, since Europe is an idea as much as a place, America also is a part of Europe, bound by ties of family, history and values. (Applause.)

More than ever, we are also actually connected. Underwater cables allow us to send staggering amounts of e-mail and e-commerce to each other instantaneously. One billion dollars in trade and investment goes back and forth every day, employing more than 14 million people on both sides of the Atlantic.

And there is the enduring connection -- the 104,000 Americans who lie in military cemeteries across Europe. Today's Europe would not be possible without them. And whatever work I have done to merit your prize was built on their sacrifice. (Applause.)

So, my friends, we must nourish the ties that bind us as we work to resolve honest disagreements, and to overcome potentially harmful misperceptions, on both sides of the Atlantic. Let me mention just two.

There is a perception right now in America that Europe doesn't always carry its fair share of our mutual responsibilities. Yet Europeans are providing more than 80 percent of both the troops keeping the peace in Kosovo and the funds for economic reconstruction there. And few Americans know that in our own backyard, Europeans paid for more than 60 percent of all aid to Central America when it was ravaged by Hurricane Mitch, and one-third of all support for peace in Guatemala.

At the same time, there is a perception in Europe that America's power -- military, economic, cultural -- is at times too overbearing. Perhaps our role in NATO's air campaign in Kosovo accentuated such fears. But in Kosovo, our power was exercised in alliance with Europe, in pursuit of our shared interest in European peace and stability, in defense of shared values central to the goal of European integration.

If, after Kosovo, European countries strengthen their own ability to act with greater authority and responsibility in times of crisis, while maintaining our transatlantic link, I think that is a very good thing. There is no contradiction between a strong Europe and a strong transatlantic partnership. (Applause.)

I would also like to mention that our partnership, as the Lord Mayor pointed out, and as Chancellor Schroeder said, remains profoundly important, not only to ourselves, but to the rest of the world as well. Together, we account for more than half the world's economy and 90 percent

of its humanitarian aid. If we're going to win the fight against terrorism, organized crime, the spread of weapons of mass destruction; if we want to promote ethnic, religious, and racial tolerance; if we want to combat global warming and environmental degradation, fight infectious disease, ease poverty, and close the digital divide -- clearly, we must do these things together.

Europe and America should draw strength from our transatlantic alliance. Europe should not be threatened by it, and America must not listen to those who say we should go it alone. America must remain Europe's good partner and good ally.

Lord Palmerston's rule that countries have no permanent alliances, only permanent interests, simply does not apply to our relationship. For America has a permanent interest in a permanent alliance with Europe. (Applause.) Our shared future is deeply rooted in our shared history. The American Revolution, after all, stemmed in part from the Seven Years War -- which in turn stemmed from a treaty signed here in Aachen in 1748.

Now, a few days ago, I stood at the mouth of the Tagus River in Lisbon. From that spot over five centuries ago, brave Europeans began to explore the far reaches of our planet. They traveled unimaginable distances and conquered indescribable adversity on their way to find Asia, Africa and the Americas. In their wake, the sons and daughters of this continent came across the Atlantic to populate places they called New Spain, New England, New France, New Netherlands, Nova Scotia, New Sweden -- in short, a new Europe. Without the longing for a new Europe, there never would have been an America in the first place.

Now, as the longing for a new Europe takes root on the soil of the old continent, we should never let a sense of history's inevitability cloud our wonder at how astonishingly Europeans changed the rest of the world through enterprise, imagination and their ability to grow -- qualities that always will define Europe's identity far more accurately than any mapmaker ever will.

In the years ahead, as pilgrims of peace come here to Aachen, I hope they will reflect on the similarity of the two monuments enshrined here. First, the magnificent cathedral holding Charlemagne's mortal remains -- begun in his lifetime, added to throughout the Middle Ages, repaired in the 20th century, when our failure to keep the peace required it. And second, the peace and unity that three generations have been building for five decades now in Europe -- a work far from complete, perhaps never to be completed, but completely worthy of our best labors and dreams.

Let us keep building this cathedral -- the cathedral of European unity -- on the foundation of our alliance for freedom. Because I have tried to lay a stone or two in my time, I am honored and humbled to accept this prize.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END 1:05 P.M. (L)

Talking Points: President Clinton's Budget Framework
Good News for Seniors, Families, Debt Reduction and America's Priorities
June 26, 2000

Today, the President is releasing an updated budget framework and offering a bold solution to move forward on bipartisan priorities this year. The Midsession Review projects a \$4.2 trillion surplus, including a \$1.5 trillion surplus outside of Social Security and Medicare. With this good economic news, the President proposes to:

1. Take Medicare Off-Budget and Extend its Solvency to at Least 2030

The President will follow Vice President Gore's recommendation to take Medicare Part A off budget and lock away the Medicare surplus for debt reduction. In addition, the President will use the benefits of this debt reduction to strengthen Medicare, keeping it solvent until at least 2030, ensuring a better future for America's seniors.

2. Move Ahead on Bipartisan Priorities This Year

The President will propose that if Congress takes action to lock in fiscal discipline by moving Medicare off-budget and protecting its surplus for debt reduction, then the Administration and Congress should work together on a bipartisan basis to (1) pass the President's affordable prescription drug benefit, including a catastrophic benefit and (2) address the marriage penalty by passing a proposal along the lines of the one reported out of the Senate Finance Committee or passed by the House of Representatives.

3. Announce the Largest Debt Reduction Ever

The Mid-Session Review will highlight the success of the Clinton-Gore Administration's policy of fiscal discipline. In 1992, America was running the largest budget deficit ever. Today, the Office of Management and Budget predicts that we will have the largest surplus ever. Under the President's plan, we will now be on target to pay off the entire national debt by 2012 – one year earlier than expected.

4. Set Aside Funds for Key Investments in America's Future

The President will propose setting aside a \$500 billion Reserve for America's Future. This reserve could be used for national priorities like retirement savings, targeted tax cuts, investments in education, research, health and the environment, or further debt reduction. At this late date in the fiscal year, with elections looming, it would be unrealistic and imprudent for those of us in Washington to decide what to do with this money. The priorities for this reserve should be debated in the coming months, and decided on by the American people this fall.

Talking Points: President Clinton's Budget Framework

Good News for Seniors, Families, Debt Reduction and America's Priorities
June 26, 2000

The Clinton-Gore strategy of fiscal discipline, opening foreign markets and making investments in the American people has created the conditions for the longest economic expansion in American history. Unemployment, inflation, poverty and crime are down while wages and homeownership are at record levels. Today, we have more good news that this strategy is working. New Mid-Session Review budget figures – and the President's budget framework with its commitment to increased fiscal discipline by taking Medicare off-budget – will put us on track to pay off the debt by 2012, one year earlier than previously projected.

This latest good news makes it possible to take the next step in our economic strategy – **implementing a new fiscally disciplined budget framework that strengthens and protects Medicare, continues to reduce the debt, invests in key priorities and allows a bipartisan agreement on a new Medicare prescription drug benefit and tax relief for America's families.**

Good News for Medicare: Under this fiscally disciplined budget framework, the President proposes to:

➤ **Protect Medicare by Take it Off-Budget**

As the Vice President has recommended, taking Medicare off-budget guarantees that Medicare surpluses can only be spent to pay down the debt in order to help strengthen the Medicare program, and cannot be diverted for other purposes. By locking away the Medicare surplus we can ensure that Medicare will be there for future generations. Together with the President's commitment to using Social Security surpluses for debt reduction, this will lock in a total of \$2.9 trillion for debt reduction over the next decade.

➤ **Extend the solvency of Medicare and Social Security**

By using the off-budget Medicare surpluses to pay down the debt, dedicating the total interest savings to extending solvency and enacting the Administration's reforms to increase competition and reduce fraud, Medicare would remain solvent until at least 2030. And under the President's plan, Social Security would remain solvent until at least 2057.

Good News for Debt Reduction: In 1993, President Clinton and Vice President Gore implemented an economic strategy of fiscal discipline, greater investment and expanded trade, resulting in the longest economic expansion in history. Each year, economic growth has surpassed expectations, and this year is no exception:

➤ **Largest Budget Surplus Ever**

In 1992, the nation had a \$290 billion deficit, projected to rise to \$455 billion this year. Today's announcement, reporting a projected \$211 billion surplus for 2000, shows just how far we have come under the Administration's budget strategy. And, the nation's surplus over the next 10 years is projected to be \$1 trillion larger than was forecast just four months ago.

➤ **America Debt Free by 2012**

As a result of today's good news, and the Clinton-Gore Administration's commitment to protect Medicare surpluses for debt reduction, America will be debt free by 2012, a year earlier than we

projected just four months ago. This means lower interest rates, more private sector investment, more jobs and more economic growth for years to come.

Good News for Moving Forward on Bipartisan Priorities This Year: Members of both parties expressed support for taking Medicare off-budget after Vice President Gore proposed the idea earlier this month. If Congress acts this year to lock in this step for fiscal discipline, then President Clinton is willing to strike a bargain that addresses two pressing priorities for American families:

➤ **Affordable prescription drug coverage with catastrophic protection.**

This voluntary and affordable benefit would, when fully phased in, provide coverage for 50 percent of prescription drug costs up to \$5,000 when fully phased in. The President's proposal also includes a specific catastrophic policy to limit out-of-pocket spending at \$4,000 for beneficiaries.

➤ **Tax Relief for America's Families**

There is bipartisan agreement that America's families need relief from the marriage penalty. The President's budget contained a targeted \$43 billion relief from the marriage penalty. If a broader marriage penalty bill, along the lines reported out by the Senate Finance Committee or passed by the House of Representatives, is passed as part of a framework that locks in additional debt reduction by taking Medicare off-budget and provides the President's proposal for a Medicare prescription drug benefit, then the President would be willing to sign it.

Good News for America's Future: To guarantee that American families will continue to benefit from the strong economy in the years to come, President Clinton and Vice President Gore propose:

➤ **A new \$500 billion Reserve for America's Future**

We can protect Medicare, pay down the debt, enact a new prescription drug benefit, provide America's families with tax relief, and have substantial funds available to fund future priorities. Rather than have politicians in Washington commit new funding at this late date, President Clinton proposes to set aside a \$500 billion Reserve for America's Future. Decisions over the reserve fund would be debated and decided by the American people this fall.

➤ **Making key investments in health care, education, the environment and law enforcement**

The President's FY2001 budget provides targeted tax cuts while making key investment in expanding health care coverage, placing qualified teachers in every classroom, enforcing environmental laws and prosecuting gun criminals. Unfortunately, Congress has cut these priorities deeply or ignored them altogether. The President will encourage Congress to reconsider these ill-advised cuts and pass a budget that reflects America's values and priorities.

**PRESIDENT CLINTON:
ANNOUNCING THE COMPLETION OF THE FIRST SURVEY OF THE ENTIRE HUMAN
GENOME**

June 26, 2000

"Today, we are learning the language in which God created life. With this profound new knowledge, humankind is on the verge of gaining immense, new power to heal."

President Bill Clinton
June 26, 2000

Today, at the White House, President Clinton, along with British Prime Minister Tony Blair, announced that the international Human Genome Project and Celera Genomics Corporation have both completed an initial sequencing of the human genome – the genetic blueprint for human beings. The President congratulated the scientists working on this landmark achievement, which promises to bring new ways to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure disease. The President pledged to continue and accelerate the United States' participation in this historic effort, and underscored that genetic information must never be used to stigmatize or discriminate against any individual or group.

A REVOLUTION IN PREVENTING, DIAGNOSING, TREATING, AND CURING DISEASE. Genetics causes an estimated 5,000 hereditary diseases and influences the development of thousands of other diseases. Before the advent of the Human Genome Project – a joint effort of the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Energy, and partners in the U.K., France, Germany, Japan, and China – connecting a gene with a disease was a slow, arduous, and often imprecise process. Today, largely because of the efforts of the Human Genome Project, genes are discovered and described within days. Scientists will be able to use the working draft of the human genome to:

- Alert patients that they are at risk for certain diseases;
- Reliably predict the course of disease;
- Precisely diagnose disease and ensure that the most effective treatment is used; and
- Develop new, more effective treatments at the molecular level.

USHERING IN A NEW ERA OF GENETIC MEDICINE. The sequence represents only the first step in the full decoding of the genome, because most of the individual genes and their specific functions must still be deciphered and understood. This research has begun, and already, tens of thousands of genes have been identified. The Human Genome Project, which completed its version of the working draft two years ahead of schedule and under budget, will continue its longstanding practice of making all of its sequencing data available to researchers worldwide at no cost. Celera Genomics, which makes its sequencing data available by subscription, has said that it will also make its version of the consensus human genome sequence available to non-subscribers upon publication.

PLEDGING STRONG SUPPORT FOR GENETIC RESEARCH. At today's announcement, President Clinton:

- Reiterated U.S. commitment to strong federal support for genetic research;
- Stated his support for a structure to consider the medical, ethical and legal issues created by this research;
- Recognized that research and development by biotechnology companies will be key to the translation of human genome sequence data into new health care products;
- Pledged to foster a business environment that will spur research and development in this vital sector; and
- Reaffirmed his support for patenting genetic discoveries that have substantial and credible uses.

BUILDING ON A STRONG COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING PRIVATE GENETIC INFORMATION. President Clinton and Vice President Gore have worked to ensure that scientific advances do not compromise patient privacy protections. President Clinton has:

- Signed an executive order that prohibits every civilian federal department and agency from using genetic information in any hiring or promotion action;
- Signed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, which prevents group health insurers from using genetic information to deny individuals health insurance benefits; and
- Endorsed the Genetic Nondiscrimination in Health Insurance & Employment Act of 1999, which ensures that genetic information will not be used to discriminate against Americans seeking employment, promotion, or health insurance.

PRESIDENT UNVEILS IMPROVED MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT
Urges Congress to Modernize and Strengthen Medicare This Year
June 24, 2000

In his weekly radio address, the President will announce that next week he will send the Congress a proposal to strengthen his Medicare prescription drug benefit by: specifying his catastrophic protection benefit; maintaining the beneficiary premium at the same level even with the enhanced benefit; starting the program one year earlier; and providing immediate payments to managed care plans to provide a prescription drug benefit. He will propose to add \$58 billion over 10 years to finance these changes. Finally, the President will reiterate his commitment to add \$40 billion over 10 years to: increase Medicare health care provider payments; support the Vice President's proposal to take Medicare off budget and use the resulting savings from debt reduction to help extend the life of Medicare to at least 2030; and maintain critical structural reforms that will be needed as the baby boom generation retires.

PRESIDENT UNVEILS ENHANCED PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT. The President will announce that he is improving his Medicare prescription drug benefit by:

- Specifying that no beneficiary would pay more than \$4,000 in out-of-pocket drug costs. The President's plan would limit beneficiary spending on prescription drugs to \$4,000 per year in 2002, indexed to drug inflation in subsequent years. This reaffirms the President's commitment to providing true insurance, enabling beneficiaries to afford needed drugs when they have high expenses.
- Limiting premiums to \$25 per month even with the benefit improvement. The President's proposal will dedicate a portion of this new investment to maintain the monthly premium at the levels that were in his February proposal, even with the newly specified catastrophic benefit. Thus, premiums for this coverage would start at \$25 per month in the first year and would increase as the benefit is phased in.
- Starting the benefit in 2002, not 2003. The President's plan accelerates the implementation of the drug benefit to January 1, 2002. Seniors and people with disabilities need prescription drug coverage as soon as possible and the new resources available will allow for an earlier start-up.
- Paying managed care plans to provide prescription drugs in 2001. To help managed care plans continue to offer prescription drug coverage next year and stabilize the managed care market, the President proposes to increase payments to the Medicare+Choice plans in 2001 to explicitly pay for prescription drug coverage. Plans that provide at least 50 percent coinsurance to \$2,000 would be eligible for these subsidies. Under the President's plan, managed care plans would receive direct subsidies for the provision of a prescription drug benefit for the first time in program history. This will increase payments by over \$25 billion over 5 years and over \$75 billion over 10 years, including \$2 billion in 2001.

By adding \$58 billion over 10 years (\$39 billion over 5 years), the new total cost of the Medicare prescription drug benefit would be about \$253 billion over 10 years (\$79 billion over 5 years).

PRESIDENT'S PLAN - NOT REPUBLICAN PLAN - PROVIDES AN AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, MEANINGFUL PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT.

President's plan is a Medicare benefit - House Republican private plan is not. Under the President's plan, all beneficiaries - including those in areas that are rural or otherwise underserved - would be guaranteed a defined, accessible, stable benefit for the same premium. Medicare would subsidize beneficiaries directly and pay for prescription drug costs like any other Medicare benefit. Plans would not come in and out of different market areas every year, and premiums would not vary from plan to plan and place to place.

In contrast, the House Republican proposal relies on private insurers who themselves say they will not participate in this flawed plan. Medicare would not provide a single dollar of direct premium assistance for middle-class Medicare beneficiaries (any senior with income above \$12,600). Instead, Republicans rely on a flawed "trickle-down theory" that would end up subsidizing insurers, not seniors. A rural senior would be at particular risk of facing excessive premiums since insurers would likely face little competition and less incentive to offer affordable coverage.

President's plan has a meaningful benefit - House Republican private plan does not. Under the President's plan, Medicare would guarantee that all participating beneficiaries would pay no deductible, pay 50 percent coinsurance up to a limit, and have their out-of-pocket spending limited to \$4,000 annually. In addition, all medically necessary drugs and access to local pharmacies would be ensured - so that seniors would have a choice of pharmacies and needed prescription drugs.

Under the House Republican plan, Medicare beneficiaries would be put at risk. Private insurers would define deductibles, copays and benefit limits, promoting competition on confusion rather than price and quality. Because insurers charge one premium for all enrollees - no matter how sick - they could discourage enrollment by the oldest seniors and most disabled beneficiaries by offering no deductible and low copays, but also a low benefit cap that leaves a large gap in coverage before the stop-loss kicks in. Moreover, private plans could limit access to pharmacists and needed medications. The so-called "choice" under the Republican plan is a false one - there is no assurance that beneficiaries could easily access medically necessary prescriptions and no certainty that they would be able to use their community pharmacist.

President's plan ensures better benefits for lower premiums. Under the President's plan, beneficiaries would pay a lower, stable premium for a better benefit. The premiums would be \$25 per month in 2002, \$26 per month in 2003 and would have a zero deductible benefit with a \$4000 catastrophic stop loss protection benefit.

The House Republican plan would not even provide a benefit in 2002. In 2003, although premiums and benefits would vary from plan to plan, Republicans claim that the premium would average \$37 per month - over 40 percent higher than the President's plan premium of \$26 per month. This is a difference of over \$130 per year. It would be an even higher premium in different parts of the country and it might be for a benefit that has a \$250 deductible with a \$6,000 catastrophic benefit.

PART OF THE PRESIDENT'S OVERALL MEDICARE PLAN. This improved prescription drug benefit is part of the President's overall plan to strengthen and modernize Medicare. This plan includes:

- Taking the Medicare Trust Fund off-budget. Following the lead of Vice President Gore, the President recently proposed to take the Medicare Hospital Insurance (HI) Trust Fund off-budget -- just like the Social Security Trust Fund. Currently, the surplus in the Medicare Trust Fund is counted towards the on-budget surplus and thus is available to pay for non-Medicare spending. Taking Medicare off-budget ensures that its surplus will be protected for paying down the debt to help strengthen the life of the Medicare program. It also ends the practice of cutting Medicare to meet budget targets or to pay for other spending increases or tax cuts.
- Using the benefit of debt reduction to extend Medicare solvency. The President proposes to dedicate a portion of the on-budget surplus, reflecting interest savings, to help extend the solvency of Medicare to at least 2030.
- Improving health care provider payments. The President has proposed to dedicate \$21 billion over 5 years (\$40 billion over 10 years) to a provider payment restoration initiative designed to ensure adequate reimbursement to hospitals, rural providers, teaching facilities, nursing homes, home health care agencies, managed care plans, and other providers. The proposal, designed to continue access to high-quality care, clearly illustrates that adequate financing for provider payments need not conflict with necessary funding for a long-overdue, voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit. It includes \$9 billion (\$19 billion over 10 years) in specific policies that are primarily designed for immediate payment increases that would start to benefit providers in fiscal year 2001 and delay further Balanced Budget Act (BBA) payment reductions, many of which are scheduled to occur on October 1. It also includes \$11 billion (\$21 billion over 10 years) in unspecified funding for use in developing additional policies that target and/or permanently correct flawed BBA policies.
- Modifying reform policies. Finally, the savings proposals in the President's reform plan will be adjusted to reflect recent, lower-than-expected Medicare spending. The need for out-year spending constraints appears lower, so all traditional provider payment reductions for '03-08 have been dropped. In addition, the plan no longer includes the repeal of the Balanced Budget Refinement Act managed care risk adjustment policy, the bad debt policy, and the preferred provider organization proposal. These changes reduce net savings by \$30 billion over 10 years. The President's plan continues to include policies to produce long-term efficiencies (e.g., the competitive defined benefits proposal), reduce fraud and abuse, and invest in priorities such as eliminating preventive services cost sharing.

PRAISES SENATE ON PROGRESS TOWARDS BIPARTISAN CONSENSUS. The President will highlight the encouraging bipartisan vote this week in the Senate in favor of Senator Robb's amendment to provide a true Medicare prescription drug benefit. He will indicate his hope that the Congress can work together on a bipartisan basis to pass a prescription drug benefit that provides real coverage, not political cover.

Embargoed for release until 10:06 AM EDT, Saturday, June 24, 2000

PRESIDENT CLINTON CHALLENGES THE CONGRESS TO ACT NOW ON THE NATION'S HEALTH CARE PRIORITIES

June 22, 2000

Today, the President will challenge the Congress to place the nation's health care interests ahead of special interests by providing an affordable Medicare prescription drug benefit and holding tobacco companies accountable for the cost of smoking related illnesses. The President will express his disappointment with the House Ways and Means Committee straight party line vote for a prescription drug benefit that would be neither affordable nor meaningful for the nation's seniors and people with disabilities served by Medicare. He will urge the full House to reject this partisan committee vote and work towards a bipartisan agreement on a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is affordable, available, and optional for all Medicare beneficiaries. The President will also commend the House of Representatives for its bipartisan decision on Tuesday to adopt the Waxman amendment, allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs to help finance the Department of Justice (DOJ) tobacco litigation. He will urge the House to take the next step and adopt an amendment permitting DOJ to accept this funding so they can proceed with the litigation, which could provide billions of dollars to improve the medical care of not only veterans, but all Americans.

HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS REPUBLICANS PASS SEVERELY FLAWED

PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT. Last night, the House Ways and Means Committee, on a straight party-line vote, passed out a private insurance drug benefit that the insurance industry itself has consistently stated won't work. They voted against every Democratic amendment designed to strengthen the benefit and ensure that all Medicare beneficiaries would have access to an affordable prescription drug benefit. When the Republicans had the opportunity to support a true Medicare benefit that would be available to all beneficiaries, each and every one of them voted against it. Clearly, the legislation supported by Committee Republicans serves the pharmaceutical industry's interests much more than those of the senior citizens and people with disabilities it purports to help. This is why virtually every organization representing older Americans and people with disabilities have strongly rejected the House Republican policy.

REPUBLICAN POLICY DOES NOT MEET THE RHETORIC OF ITS PROPONENTS.

Although the House Republican leadership has finally recognized the need for an affordable, optional prescription drug benefit available to all Medicare beneficiaries, the President will note that their policy does not achieve their stated goals. The Republican policy:

- **Fails to assure the availability or stability of drug coverage options.** The Republican plan builds on the already-flawed private Medigap insurance market rather than adding a prescription drug benefit to Medicare. The insurance industry itself claims that an insurance model will not work for prescription drug coverage – and that insurers will not voluntarily participate. Even if some insurers do offer coverage, they would likely come in and out of the market, move to profitable market areas, and significantly modify their benefit design from year

to year based on prior year's experience. This would result in the same pull-outs and uncertainty that we see in managed care today.

- **Provides a private insurance – not a Medicare – benefit.** Outpatient prescription drugs would not be part of the Medicare benefits package like doctor or hospital care. Beneficiaries would pay expensive premiums to private Medigap plans rather than to Medicare for an affordable option.
- **Fails to ensure the affordability of coverage options.** Under the Republican plan, it appears that Medicare would not provide a single dollar of direct premium assistance for middle-class Medicare beneficiaries (any senior with income above \$12,600). Instead, it relies on a flawed “trickle-down theory” that would end up subsidizing insurers, not seniors. The Republican proposal appears to subsidize insurers for part of the cost for the most expensive enrollees, hoping that this will result in lower premiums for all enrollees. There are no assurances that seniors will see lower premiums as a result. Even if an insurer passed through every dollar of its subsidy, premiums would still be too expensive for many seniors.
- **Does not guarantee a meaningful benefit.** The Republican plan appears to specify only the stop-loss amount. Private insurers could define deductibles, copayments and benefit limits, promoting competition on confusion rather than price and quality. In addition, relying on an insurance model where insurers get paid one premium for all enrollees – no matter how sick – and can define the drug benefit puts sicker seniors and people with disabilities at risk of adverse selection. An insurer could discourage seniors with high drug costs from enrolling by offering no deductible, low copayments and a low benefit cap that leaves a large gap before the stop-loss kicks in.
- **Limits choice of drugs and pharmacies.** The so-called “choice” model offered by the Republicans appears to break up the pooled purchasing power of seniors, forcing insurers to reduce prices through restrictive formularies and limited choice of pharmacies. While there may be a limited appeals process available to them, beneficiaries are not guaranteed access to off-formulary drugs that their doctor certifies are medically necessary.

REPUBLICANS REJECT NEEDED HEALTH CARE PROVIDER RESTORATIONS.

Last night, the Republicans unilaterally rejected the President's proposed investment of \$21 billion over five years (\$40 billion over 10 years) for a Medicare and Medicaid health care provider payment restoration initiative designed to ensure adequate reimbursement to hospitals, rural providers, teaching facilities, nursing homes, home health care agencies, managed care plans, and other providers. It provides \$9 billion over 5 years (\$19 billion over 10 years) for specific policies that mainly stop payment reductions scheduled to take place on October 1, 2000 and provides \$11 billion over 5 years (\$21 billion over 10) in unspecified funding to be used in developing additional targeted and / or permanent policy modifications for provider reimbursement. The proposal is designed to continue access to high-quality care, and clearly illustrates that adequate financing for provider payments need not conflict with necessary funding for a long-overdue and voluntary Medicare prescription drug benefit.

PRESIDENT URGES THE CONGRESS TO WORK ON A BIPARTISAN BASIS. The President will urge the House leadership to change their proposal to ensure that it is: voluntary; accessible to all beneficiaries; designed to provide meaningful protection and bargaining power for seniors; affordable for all beneficiaries and for the program; and administered using competitive purchasing techniques. In so doing, he will underscore that there is still time left to do both a voluntary prescription drug benefit and provider payment restoration in the context of broader reforms that extend the life of the Medicare trust fund beyond 2030.

PRESIDENT URGES CONGRESS TO LOOK OUT FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST, NOT THE SPECIAL INTEREST OF BIG TOBACCO . This week, the House of Representatives took an important step toward protecting the health of all Americans by putting the people's interests before special interests and passing an amendment on the VA/HUD Appropriations bill allowing the Department of Veterans Affairs to devote a small portion of its funding to help finance the Justice Department litigation against tobacco companies. This litigation would recover billions of dollars in tobacco-related health care costs and finally make the tobacco industry answer to the taxpayers in court for their actions. However, this bipartisan victory was only the first step. The 2001 Commerce State Justice Appropriations bill, as reported by committee, would prohibit the Justice Department from accepting any transferred funds except in cases of defensive litigation. Today, the President will urge Congress to continue the task they have begun by adopting an amendment, expected to be offered by Representative Waxman and others, permitting the Justice Department to accept transferred funds (including those from the DVA) for tobacco litigation and other narrowly defined purposes. The President will reiterate his call on Congress to make the health of our children a priority and to reject the interests of big tobacco so that justice can run its course – the legal responsibility of the tobacco companies should be decided by the judicial process, not the political process.

THE DEADLY INFLUENCE OF TOBACCO. Both the President and Vice President have worked hard since taking office to protect our nation's children from the dangers of tobacco. Each year, more than 400,000 Americans are killed by tobacco-related diseases. The cost to the federal government is staggeringly large, and includes more than \$20 billion in federal payments under Medicare and other programs. Each year, the Department of Veterans Affairs spends more than \$1 billion alone on smoking related illnesses. Children have been particularly targeted by tobacco media campaigns. Nearly 4 million children under the age of 18 smoke cigarettes – every day more than 6,000 try their first cigarette, 3,000 become regular smokers, and 1,000 will have their lives cut short as a result. We can and must work across party lines to preserve the health of our nation and the lives of our children. The President will assert that failure to pass the Waxman amendment on the CJS Appropriations bill would be wholly inconsistent with Tuesday's bipartisan vote and represent the worst example of catering to special interests.

PRESIDENT CLINTON HIGHLIGHTS FIRST COMPREHENSIVE GUN TRAFFICKING REPORT AND EFFORTS TO CRACK DOWN ON GUN TRAFFICKERS

June 21, 2000

Today, President Clinton will highlight the release of the nation's first-ever comprehensive gun trafficking report, "Following the Gun: Enforcing Federal Laws Against Firearms Traffickers". This Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (ATF) report documents that of 1,500 ATF trafficking investigations, more than 84,000 guns were diverted to the illegal market and were often later used by criminals to commit violent crimes. In addition, the report shows that investigations involving gun shows and corrupt gun dealers involved the highest numbers of trafficked guns – providing further evidence of the need to strengthen our gun laws. In response to these findings, the President will renew his call on Congress to pass stalled common sense gun safety legislation that would require background checks at gun shows and to provide law enforcement with more tools to crack down on gun trafficking, corrupt gun dealers and other armed criminals by funding his \$280 million National Gun Enforcement Initiative.

RELEASING FIRST-EVER GUN TRAFFICKING REPORT. Today's report documents 1,530 ATF firearms trafficking investigations conducted from July 1996 to December 1998. While the report shows a strong record of enforcement against traffickers, it also shows the need to strengthen our gun laws to reduce access to illegal guns in the first place. Key findings include:

- **ATF trafficking investigations led to the prosecutions of more than 1,700 defendants.** Of the cases fully adjudicated by the report's release, 812 defendants were sentenced in federal court to a total of 7,420 years in prison, with an average sentence of nine years.

- **Many trafficking investigations involved armed violent criminals.** Nearly 45 percent of the investigations involved convicted felons in various roles, and a quarter of the traffickers themselves were convicted felons.

- **Gun shows and corrupt gun dealers were primary channels for illegal guns.** While illegal guns often pass through multiple trafficking channels, the report confirms that corrupt gun dealers and gun shows present challenges to enforcement. Although gun dealers were involved in less than 10 percent of the investigations, they were associated with the largest total number of diverted firearms (over 40,000 guns) and the highest average number of guns per investigation (350). Gun shows had the second highest number of trafficked guns per investigation (more than 130) and were associated with over 26,000 diverted guns.

- **Over half of the trafficking investigations involved guns later used in crimes.** Today's report provides further evidence of the deadly link between criminal gun trafficking and violent crime. Of the investigations where diverted firearms were later used in crimes, over 25 percent involved assaults, 17 percent involved homicides, and more than 16 percent involved robberies. In addition, over 40 percent of the cases involved convicted felons and over 14 percent involved juveniles.

FIGHTING TO CLOSE DEADLY LOOPHOLES WITH STRONGER GUN LAWS. In response to the findings of the report, the President will renew his call on Congress to reduce access to illegal guns by enacting the common sense gun safety legislation that passed the Senate last year. This legislation would curtail access to illegal guns and help prevent gun violence by: closing the gun show loophole; mandating child safety locks with every handgun sold; banning the importation of high capacity ammunition clips; and barring the most violent juvenile offenders from ever possessing firearms as adults. Despite numerous gun-related tragedies across America – at the National Zoo, in schools, places of worship, day care centers and nursing homes – the Congress has buckled to the gun lobby and stalled passage of these measures for more than one year. The President will call upon the Congress to put the public safety interests of American families ahead of those of the gun lobby and pass these lifesaving measures without delay.

PUSHING TO ENACT THE LARGEST NATIONAL GUN ENFORCEMENT

INITIATIVE IN HISTORY. In order to help law enforcement build on their successful efforts to crack down on gun traffickers and other gun criminals, the President has urged Congress to fully fund his unprecedented \$280 million Gun Enforcement Initiative to: 1) hire 500 new ATF firearms agents and inspectors to target violent gun criminals, gun traffickers and corrupt gun dealers; 2) fund over 1,000 new federal, state and local gun prosecutors to take dangerous gun criminals off of the streets; 3) create the first national ballistics testing network and expand crime gun tracing to help identify more gun criminals; 4) fund local media campaigns to discourage gun violence and send a tough message on penalties for breaking gun laws; and 5) expand the development and expansion of “smart gun” technology. Unfortunately last week, the House Appropriations Committee approved a Justice Department spending bill that guts key components of the President’s initiative, by failing to include \$150 million for state and local gun prosecutors, and funding for local anti-gun violence media campaigns and smart gun research.

June 2000

Presidential Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 July S M T W T F S 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				1 U.S. Embassy Community Event Departure Ceremony/Depart en route Berlin, Germany Mtg w/ German President Rau Mtg w/ German Chancellor Schroder Mtg w/ PM Barak Brief Mtg w/ New CDU Leader Angela Merkel RON Berlin, Germany	2 Depart en route Aachen, Germany Prayer Service/Tour Cathedral Charlemagne Prize Presentation Tour Treasury Remarks to Sponsors of Charlemagne Prize Return to Berlin, Germany Tape Radio Address/Leaders Photo Remarks to Progressive Govt Conf Dinner RON Berlin, Germany Employment #'s	3 Progressive Govt Conf Opening Session Closing Statements Progressive Govt Conf Lunch Depart en route Moscow, Russia Arrival Photo w/ Russian President Putin Dinner w/ Russian President Putin RON Moscow, Russia
Projected House & Senate Recess						
4 Mtg w/ Russian President Putin Bilat w/ Russian President Putin Mtg w/ Russian President Putin Joint Press Conference w/ Putin Radio Interview w/ Ekho Moskvy RON Moscow, Russia Projected House & Senate Recess	5 Remarks to Duma Courtesy Call w/ Russian President Putin Courtesy Call w/ Former Russ. Pres. Yeltsin RON TBD Remarks to U.S. Embassy Community Depart en route Kiev, Ukraine Bilats w/ Ukrainian President Kuchma Signing Ceremony Remarks to People of Ukraine Depart en route Washington, DC	6 Mtg w/ King Abdullah of Jordan Statement on Agenda RON DC	7 Departure Statement Day & Evening Off Depart for Tokyo, Japan RON AFI	8 Attend Memorial Service for PM Obuchi, Tokyo, Japan Return to DC RON DC	9 Official Working Visit of President Zedillo of Mexico Tape Radio Address Travel to Minneapolis, MN RON Minneapolis, MN	10 Carleton College Commencement, Northfield, MN \$ Lunch, Minneapolis, MN \$ Reception, Minneapolis, MN Return to DC RON DC or NY
11 Day & Evening Off RON DC	12 Dr. Tubb Promotion Ceremony Economic Mtg (JP/GS) Millennium Event Senator Dodd 25th Anniv. Gala, DC RON DC	13 Rural Rx Drug Event Official Working Visit of President de la Rúa of Argentina President's Service Awards Photo-Op (T) \$ Reception, DC \$ Reception, DC RON DC	14 Rx Drug Event Ambassador Credentials (11) (T) RON DC	15 Mtg w/ Arafat National Hispanic Education Mtg U.S. Dream Academy Visit Mayor Williams Tribute Dinner, DC RON NY	16 Live TODAY Show Interview, NY VHI Save the Music Event, NY Tape Radio Address School Construction Event, Brooklyn, NY \$ Reception, NY RON DC	17 Day & Evening Off
18 Day & Evening Off	19 Travel to TX \$ Lunch, Houston, TX \$ Reception, Houston, TX \$ Dinner/Reception, Austin, TX Return to DC RON DC	20 State Visit of King Mohammed of Morocco Drop-by DC College Access Act Event Congressional Mtg (China) Crop Insurance Bill Photo-op RON DC	21 Travel to AR Asian American Medals of Honor Event \$ Reception, DC \$ Dinner, DC RON DC	22 Departure Statement TBD Photo-op w/ PAESMT Recipients Travel to AZ \$ Lunch, Phoenix, AZ \$ Reception, San Diego, CA \$ Dinner, San Diego, CA RON San Diego, CA	23 Olympics Event, Chula Vista, CA \$ Reception, Los Angeles, CA \$ Reception, Los Angeles, CA \$ Dinner, Los Angeles, CA RON Los Angeles, CA	24 Breakfast, CA \$ Lunch, Los Angeles, CA Return to DC RON DC
25 Korean War Memorial 50th Anniv Celebration, DC RON DC	26 Human Genome Event Statement Press Picnic RON DC	27 Robert Rubin's Portrait Dedication Mtg w/ Armenian President Kocharian Drop-by Reception with Rep Hinojosa \$ Reception, DC RON DC	28 Briefing & Press Conference Presidential Scholars Ceremony Puerto Rican Status Mtg \$ Dinner, DC \$ Reception, DC RON DC	29 WWII Memorial Reception Statement TBD Lunch, DC Cabinet Mtg & Photo \$ Reception, DC RON DC	30 AFSCME Speech, Philadelphia, PA Digital Signatures Bill Signing Event, Philadelphia, PA Tape Radio Address \$ Lunch/ Reception, NJ Official Meeting, Philadelphia, PA AFSCME Speech, Philadelphia, PA RON DC	

July 2000

Presidential Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																			
						1 RON Camp David Projected House & Senate Recess																																																																																			
2 RON Camp David	3 RON NY (T)	4 International Naval Review, NYC Fireworks Celebration, DC RON DC Independence Day	5 Down until 10AM Message Event (T) Meeting w/ WH Fellows (T) Videos Intrepid Gala, NY RON NY	6 Hold for Travel	7 Lincoln's Retreat-Soldiers' Home Event	8 Live Radio Address Afternoon & Evening off RON TBD																																																																																			
Projected House & Senate Recess																																																																																									
9 Day & Evening off RON TBD Projected House & Senate Recess	10 Remarks to NGA Summer Meeting, PA \$ Dinner, Philadelphia, PA	11 Down until 11AM Departure Statement (T) Remarks to NAACP Convention \$ Dinner, DC	12 Welfare to Work NCAA Basketball Championship Event Drop-by American Australian Dinner, DC	13 State Visit of President Ben Ali of Tunisia Hesburgh Congressional Gold Medal Presentation	14 DLC National Conversation and On-Line Chat w/ Blair, Baltimore, MD Travel to CA \$ Reception/Dinner, San Francisco, CA RON San Francisco, CA	15 \$ Reception, Calabasas, CA \$ Dinner, Orange County, CA RON TBD																																																																																			
16 \$ Lunch, Aspen, CO \$ Picnic, Aspen, CO \$ Dinner, Aspen, CO RON DC	17 Day & Evening off Anniv: TWA Flight 800 Crash	18 Summer Intern Photo (T) Message Event (T) NFL Super Bowl Championship Event \$ Dinner, DC \$ Dinner, DC (T)	19 Departure Statement (T) Depart for Tokyo, Japan	20	21 Tape Radio Address G-8 Summit, Okinawa, Japan	22																																																																																			
23 Return to DC RON DC G-8 Summit, Okinawa, Japan	24	25 Hold for Travel	26 Message Event (T) Press Picnic \$ Reception, DC 10th Anniv: ADA	27 Official Working Visit of President Estrada of the Philippines \$ Dinner, DC Congressional Picnic	28 Tape Radio Address Travel to RI \$ Lunch, Rhode Island Message Event, Rhode Island (T) Travel to MA \$ Dinner, Boston, MA RON NY	29 \$ Lunch, NY Return to DC WH Staff Picnic RON DC Projected House & Senate Recess																																																																																			
30 Day & Evening off 35th Anniv of Medicare Projected House & Senate Recess	31 Message Event, Tampa, FL \$ Lunch, Tampa, FL (T) \$ Dinner, West Palm Beach or Boca Raton, FL (T) RON DC	June <table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td></tr></table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		August <table><tr><td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td></tr><tr><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td></tr><tr><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td></tr><tr><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td></tr></table>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
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June 2000

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4 DOWN DAY. Carthage TN (RON)	5 Fly to North Carolina from TN. Tarboro H.S. Commencement, North Carolina. Drive to Greenville Fly to NYC DCCC 70th Bday for Rangel RON, NYC N.Carolina / NYC (RON)	6 GMA Town Hall Meeting Rosie Reschedule Day Parents Magazine Fly to DC, RON Fly to DC -ALMT/NJ/NM/SD Primary -NYC/DC (RON)	7 Fly to Palm Springs DNC Lunch, Palm Springs Fly to LA DNC Reception, Los Angeles DNC Dinner, Los Angeles Los Angeles RON	8 Message Event DNC Reception, LA DNC Dinner, LA Los Angeles RON	9 Fly to Pasco Message Event Fly to Seattle DNC Lunch Seattle US Conference of Mayors Fly to Spokane Spokane State Party Dinner Fly to DC, REDEYE Seattle, WA	10 ARRIVE DC																																																																																											
11	12 Fly to Long Island DNC Lunch, Long Island Travel to Trenton Message Event ~ Oxygen.com Travel to NYC RON NYC	13 NY Times Ed Board -NYC Message Event 2:30-6:30 Press Time Fly to Scranton Airport Arrival RON Scranton	14 TBD Event and Press Fly to NYC 2 DNC Dinners, NYC RON NYC	15 Fly to Cincinnati Message Event NOTE: Satellite into WH Conference on Hispanic Education Fly to DC RON NAVOBS	16 RON NAVOBS	17 RON NAVOBS																																																																																											
18 RON NAVOBS Father's Day	19 -NJDC Reception, Drop By DNC Dinner, DC RON NAVOBS	20 Note: Morocco State Visit -Travel to Lexington KY -Message Event -Travel to DC RON NAVOBS	21 Travel to Iowa Iowa Message Event Fly to MN RON Minneapolis	22 -MN School Day Fly to Denver, CO Drop By NALEO DNC Reception DNC Dinner, Denver CO RON Denver	23 Fly to Palo Alto DNC Lunch, Palo Alto Message Event Travel to San Fran DNC Gala San Francisco RON San Francisco Note: 28th Anniversary Title IX RON San Francisco	24 Fly from SF to Miami Miami JJ Dinner DNC Reception Fly to DC RON NAVOBS Florida / RON NAVOBS																																																																																											
25 50th Anniversary Korean War Event Arlington Cemetery	26 Meeting and Dinner President Kocharyan of Armenia DC RON NAVOBS	27 Travel to Pittsburgh Message Event Fly to Philly 1:30 AFSCME Event Fly to DC DNC Dinners- DC RON NAVOBS RON NAVOBS	28 Fly to Columbus, OH EZ Conference & Mayor's Meeting Columbus Fly to NYC DNC Dinners, NYC DNC Rec RON w/ MEG NYC Columbus / NYC RON	29 Travel TBD Message Event	30																																																																																												

July 2000

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2 Note: EEOC Anniversary	3 NCLP San Diego	4 Travel TBD	5 Travel to Philly. AFT Philadelphia CONFIRMED Travel to Chicago RON Chicago	6 NEA Address, Chicago CONFIRMED Travel to DC RON NAVOBS	7 DNC Dinner W PA RON NAVOBS	8
9 ME Dem Party Augusta	10 Fly to NYC 2 DNC Dinners RON NAVOBS	11 Travel TBD Planned Parenthood Conf DC (thru 13th) Return to DC RON NAVOBS	12 NAACP Baltimore NJ DNC Dinner RON New Jersey	13 Note: Tunisia State Visit	14	15
16	17 -DNC Dinner Memphis RON NAVOBS	18	19 DNC Dinner CT	20 -DNC Dinner/Reception (2) DC (T)	21 -Note: G-8 Mtgs. in Oknawa, Japan	22 DNC NJ Event -Note: G-8 Mtgs. in Oknawa, Japan RON NJ
23 DNC Brunch Jersey Shore DNC Dinner Long Island -Note: G-8 Mtgs. in Oknawa, Japan	24 Travel to Cleveland DNC Dinner	25 -ADA Event Navobs	26 WH Cong Picnic -Disabilities Event on South Lawn -Note: 10th Anniversary ADA	27	28	29 Note: Republican National Convention
30 Note: Republican National Convention	31 Note: Republican National Convention					