



# FAX TRANSMISSION

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of the Secretary

DATE: 7/16  
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COMMENTS:



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Office of the Secretary

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**MEMORANDUM**

July 16, 1999

To: Josh Gottheimer

From: Jim Grossfeld  
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Re: U.S. Women's Soccer Team Event

Attached is a copy of Donna Shalala's July 7<sup>th</sup> speech to World Symposium on Women's Soccer. I've also attached some additional points we prepared for you regarding the Girl Power! Campaign and Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer Campaign. I hope they are of use.

You may have already seen the Norma Cantu item from the *Post*, but since you're including some Title IX material, I thought you might find this to be useful, too.

FOR RELEASE UPON DELIVERY  
WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 1999

*JOHN -  
PLEASE NOTE  
MATERIAL MARKED  
ON PAGES 4&5.*

\*REMARKS BY

DONNA E. SHALALA

U.S. SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

AT

THE SECOND ANNUAL WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON WOMEN'S  
SOCCER

CENTURY CITY, CALIFORNIA

\*THIS TEXT IS THE BASIS OF SECRETARY SHALALA'S ORAL REMARKS.  
IT SHOULD BE USED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT SOME  
MATERIAL MAY BE ADDED OR OMITTED DURING PRESENTATION.

Thank you Sepp Blatter for your gracious introduction.

I know I speak on behalf of both President Clinton and Vice President Gore when I tell you how proud I am to welcome you to the United States for the second annual World Symposium on Women's Soccer.

It doesn't seem all that long ago that people used to talk about how women's soccer had about as much chance catching on in this country as ice hockey does in Jamaica.

Well, I was thinking about that last week when I opened up the sports section of the Washington Post. Because there, on the front page, was a story saying the demand for Women's World Cup tickets was so intense that thousands -- not hundreds -- of new seats were going to have to be opened up at Jack Kent Cooke Stadium.

I thought about that, and it occurred to me that: I don't know how ice hockey's doing in Jamaica, but women's soccer is in the USA to stay!

This year's Women's World Cup is a milestone not just for women's soccer -- but for all of women's sports. For the first time in sports history a women's sporting event is being viewed as a major international event -- and that's changing the lives of little girls and women forever.

From the favelas of Brazil to the villages of Nigeria to the back streets of Boston -- the lives and hopes of young women everywhere are being expanded and transformed by new heroes -- heroes with names like Linda Medalen, Charmaine Hooper and Antonella Carta.

I know that after the U.S. win over Denmark at Giant's Stadium on the opening day of the World Cup -- young women from Brooklyn to Stockholm went to sleep with their soccer balls, humming: "Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better."

And it wasn't visions of sugarplums and ribbons they dreamed about. Their heads were filled with real life role models who are confident, strong and female. From Sao Paulo to Munich to Abuja to Washington D.C. -- soccer is giving young girls new confidence and skills that they might never have found.

This was a sport that was never even considered a women's sport until recently. And now, thanks to the extraordinary talent of players like Michelle Akers, Hege Riise and Sissi -- the world is catching on to the power of women's sports.

This is the first time ever that any women's sporting event has attracted more than 500,000 fans. And that's not even including the more than one billion who'll be watching on television.

But, as impressive as those numbers are, what makes this Women's World Cup so important isn't just the huge crowds it draws -- or even the incredible excitement it's generating. It's something more than that.

It's the hope it inspires and the dreams it nurtures. Because while today's newspapers may be full of stories about soccer stars named Hamm and Pettersen and Hong and Akhide there are literally millions of other players around the world whose names will probably never make it into the sports section, but who are proving themselves to be champions in their own right.

They're girls like Maria. Now, chances are no one here knows Maria. She's a 14 year-old girl whose family moved to South Central Los Angeles from Guatemala several years ago. At the time, Maria's parents hoped they were escaping a world of violence and poverty. But when they moved to the city they came face to face with a whole new set of dangers. The threat of drugs. The threat of gangs. The threat that their daughter would be drawn into a part of society where crime and violence are often glorified.

But thanks to girls' soccer, Maria found a way to meet these challenges...and she overcame them. While many girls seek artificial self-esteem in the world of gangs and drugs, Maria and her teammates found the real thing on the playing field. It's a place where she's learned about perseverance and hard work. Both Maria and her parents know that she's using those lessons not only when she steps into her cleats and heads to the soccer field, but when she grabs her books and heads to school. In fact, Maria's even joined the Navy's ROTC program at her high school.

Ask Maria and I think she'll tell you that it's great to win. But she and her teammates will also tell you it's less about competition than about fun, friendship, teamwork and having the chance to participate.

Teamwork. That's a vital lesson for everyone and it's the only way that our world will find peace and prosperity in the new millenium. Soccer is not the sport of kings and queens. It's the sport of young girls in Beijing in Brasilia and Oslo. It's a sport that transcends boundaries of country, race, language and income.

And, in some ways, that's the miracle of soccer.

Soccer means community. It means a common arena of good will and honor. Today we're celebrating a community of 16 nations -- the community of players, families, administrators, referees and many others. Together, we form a unique resource. It is a resource that's important to public health. And it is a resource that is vitally important to the emotional and physical health of girls.

Because, young women today are in a state of crisis. Here in the United States, for example, researchers are finding alarming rates of depression and eating disorders among young girls -- some as young as ten years old.

And, as they grow up, so does the risk that many of these young women will lose self-confidence and fall victim to substance abuse. If that wasn't enough -- like girls around the world -- they have also been shamelessly targeted by the tobacco industry to become its next generation of customers.

Let me just share a statistic with you: 200 to 300 million of the world's children - boys and girls -- are going to die as a result of tobacco use. The vast majority won't develop their tobacco habit when they're adults . . . they'll get hooked when they're in their teens.

Consider this: three-fourths of smokers in Latin America today started lighting up between the ages of 14 and 17 -- and multinational tobacco companies are targeting women and children in developing countries.

Now, is girls' soccer the entire solution? No. But it can be part of it.

Two Sunday's ago when Tisha Venturini of the U.S. Women's team scored a goal against North Korea she was so excited she began doing back-flips. Just like Tisha's tumbling, I believe sports can help turn these numbers on their head. I believe that young people are transformed and become strong on the inside as well as the outside when they play sports.

In the U.S., for example, we already know that teenage girls who participate in sports are much more likely to complete high school . . . to avoid an unwanted pregnancy . . . and to stay away from drugs. And, of course, they're less likely to smoke cigarettes.

Because sports can be such a powerful factor in the lives of young girls, I'm especially proud of the Girl Power! program my Department started in 1996. This innovative campaign is helping young girls say "no" to risky behaviors and helping them build the skills they need to overcome the challenges they'll face in all parts of their lives.

I'm also proud of the partnership my Department has forged with members of the U.S. Women's team through our "Smoke-Free Kids & Soccer" campaign. Launched in 1996, "Smoke-Free Kids" promotes soccer as a way to encourage physical activity, enhance self-esteem and discourage smoking among adolescent girls. It recognizes that participation in sports -- like avoiding cigarettes -- is something to be learned when young.

U.S. Women's Soccer team members regularly volunteer their time to talk with children, make public appearances and give media interviews on healthy, smoke-free lifestyles. And the entire U.S. team has pledged to be smoke-free -- maybe that's the reason they're doing so well. I think Julie Foudy, one of the team's co-captains put it best when she said, "Soccer players would rather smoke a defender than a cigarette."

Because, while women like Kristine Lilly, Joy Fawcett and Shannon MacMillan are making sports history – they also understand that good health is vital to their games – as well as to all parts of their lives.

Now, public service is nothing new to professional athletes. But the commitment of the U.S. Women's team to spreading the word about the dangers of tobacco has been extraordinary. And, I'm convinced that with a little leadership, we could transform their efforts into a commonplace occurrence in all professional sports.

I think of it as a new social contract between sports and society. A new recognition that says professional sports have a responsibility to not just the shareholders, but to its stakeholders: young people who look to athletes as more than role models – they see them as heroes.

That's part of why I was looking forward to being here today, because I'd like to invite all of you to join in this new social contract between sports and society. And, I think that begins by making soccer smoke-free.

Gro Brundtland, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, points out: "our main battlefield on children and tobacco is in that strange, exhilarating and often confusing landscape called adolescence. We must enter the discotheques, the schools and the sports arenas and win these spaces back."

We can start winning them back today. Just imagine. Wouldn't it be exciting if as a result of this symposium, each of your football federations would commit to work with FIFA to develop a smoke-free soccer program?

It wouldn't be hard. Through advertising and appearances at schools, players could highlight the importance of maintaining a smoke-free, healthy lifestyle to achieving success both on and off the playing field.

Wouldn't it be exciting if we could announce a FIFA health partnership at the start of the Women's Soccer competition in Sydney next year? Wouldn't it be exciting if our efforts were broadened to include the next Men's World Cup in 2002?

Wouldn't it be exciting that because of our commitment today, the tide of tobacco related disease was turned back thanks to the footwork of top players like Steffi Jones and Carla Overbeck? We can make all of this a reality. But how should we begin?

FIFA has already taken the lead by supporting our Girl Power and our Smoke-Free Kids Campaigns at this year's Women's World Cup – and I thank you for your efforts. Due to your leadership, we're reaching more young women than ever before to let them know that healthy lifestyles begin with physical fitness.

FIFA has also called upon each of the 16 teams, coaches and officials to stay smoke-free during matches. And, it recruited the help of the official mascot, "Nutmeg" to strengthen the smoke-free message near the Women's World Cup stadiums.

Now we need the support of each and every one of your national soccer federations. We stand ready to help. Come work with us, with FIFA, with the children of your countries. Together we can make soccer an example of what a smoke-free and healthy lifestyle is all about – a lifestyle based upon the very pillars of sports: team-work, honor, strength and physical fitness. Let us resolve today to make smoking history and to make soccer the unifying force of a truly international health movement.

As an adult, my sport is tennis. But for this week, I am joining the millions of fans in the United States and throughout the world who echo with pride the motto:

"This is my game ... watch me play."

Thank you.



## **Girl Power!**

- In 1996, the Department of Health and Human Services unveiled Girl Power! – a campaign designed to help young girls at the transitional age of 9-14 years when they are forming their values and attitudes and learning to navigate the challenges of adolescence. This has been a partnership with more than 300 organizations and over 60 national endorsers to promote opportunities for girls to build skills and self-esteem through sports, academics, the arts and other endeavors while disseminating accurate health information.
- Studies show that between the ages of 9 and 14 girls begin to lose self-confidence, become less physically active, neglect their interests and aspirations and allow their school performances to decline. This translates into vulnerability to negative outside influences and mixed messages about risky behaviors
- Girl Power! addresses these trends by combining strong “no use” messages about tobacco, alcohol and other illicit drugs with an emphasis on pursuing sports, academics, the arts, and other activities. Recently, Girl Power! and the Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer campaign teamed up with Women’s World Cup Soccer to help spread our message by distributing lanyards, water bottles, posters and informational material at selected Women’s World Cup games around the country.

## **Smoke Free Kids and Soccer Campaign**

- "Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer" is an innovative collaboration begun in 1996 between the Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Women's Soccer Team and US Soccer, the governing body of American soccer.
- The program models the "Smoke-Free" lifestyle of the U.S. Women’s Team members and encourages adolescent girls to participate in soccer to maintain physical fitness and resist pressures to smoke.
- Members of the U.S. Women’s Soccer Team have agreed to bring the "Smoke-Free Message" to millions of their young fans. They are committed to encouraging more girls to take up soccer and put down cigarettes.
- In explaining the importance of the "Smoke-Free" campaign, U.S. Co-Captain Julie Foudy challenged parents, teachers and coaches to join the "Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer" campaign and "to set an example for these kids and show them what a Smoke-Free life is all about."
- Foudy added, "it is a lifestyle to be learned when you are young and a lifestyle that will buy you years of healthy living." Foudy, 25, an internationally recognized midfielder, summed up the attitude of the fiercely competitive US players: "we'd much rather smoke a defender than a cigarette."

- Over the last three years, a 30-second television ad, a 60-second radio commercial, two motivational posters and a "fact sheet" on tobacco and soccer performance were developed by DHHS in partnership with the U.S. National Team and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Dissemination of the materials has taken place around the National Team's schedule of international matches within the U.S. in the last few years and prior to the World Cup. DHHS is now disseminating "Smoke-Free Kids and Soccer" posters and related materials to youth soccer associations, local PTAs, and state and local health departments.

6/27/99

THE WASHINGTON POST

## For the Record

*From testimony by Norma V. Cantu, assistant secretary for civil rights of the Department of Education, before a House Education and the Workforce subcommittee last week:*

The Office for Civil Rights is responsible for enforcing Title IX ... which prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs receiving federal financial assistance. ... A college or school may comply [with athletic rules] by applying any of the three approaches: (1) substantial proportionality between the enrollment and participation rates of the underrepresented sex; (2) a history and continuing practice of program expansion for the underrepresented sex; or (3) full and effective accommodation of the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex. ... OCR also [has] encouraged colleges to avoid the cutting of men's sports as a means for coming into compliance with the participation test. ...

During the 1996-97 academic year, more than 329,000 student-athletes (200,627 men and 128,209 women) participated in intercollegiate athletics at National Collegiate Athletic Association institutions, ... the highest number of total student-athletes ever.

More than 25 years after the passage of Title IX, women college athletes, as a whole, still receive fewer athletic opportunities and less support from their institutions than male athletes. Although men athletes represent about 60 percent of the student-athletes nationwide, they receive more than 76 percent of college sports' operating budgets [and] more than 82 percent of college recruiting money.

# EDITOR

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

August 7, 1996f

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE U.S. OLYMPIC TEAM

The South Lawn

10:28 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I want to welcome Dr. Walker here and Dick Schultz and Maynard Jackson and others who come from the Olympic Committee and from Atlanta. I want to say also a special word of thanks to the Vice President, who worked so hard on America's contribution to the Olympic Games, who can't be here today; and to my good friend Mack McLarty for all the work they did to help the Olympics succeed. (Applause.)

And I want to welcome the coaches and the family members who are here. But most of all, I want to welcome you here. I want you to know, you've caused us two problems -- one is, none of us got any sleep for the last two weeks, and I don't think we hurt the public interest -- (laughter) -- but we enjoyed watching you, sometimes until 1:00 o'clock in the morning. The second thing you have done is good in a way -- we've all intensified our training schedule around here -- (laughter) -- since we watched the Olympics. But I asked my staff if there were any special requests that I should make of you, and an enormous number of people asked if we could get the women's soccer team to teach us that belly slide. (Applause.)

As all of you know, this was a very great thing for the United States. When Hillary and I had a chance to come and meet with you at the beginning before the Olympics began, I said that we would cheer when you won and cry when you lost, but that your efforts and what you symbolized for America would be the most important thing. And I really very much believe that today.

This was a remarkable Olympic experience. And I think in many ways it was fitting that the Centennial Olympics were held in the United States because we do represent so many nations. When I leave you I'm going out to California. There were 197 teams in the Olympics. In one county in California, there are people from the same places as over 150 of those teams. That's what's special about our country. And you gave that to the world when we saw you, when we saw you compete, when we saw you win. And we're very grateful to you.

I'm also very grateful to the people in Atlanta who did a magnificent job in organizing the games and for the community spirit there after the bombing. I thought it was magnificent. (Applause.)

There may have been some discussion about this, but I believe that since more people saw these games than any games in history -- both in person and on television -- because they were so well organized, because there were so many countries represented, because you were so magnificent and because of the way people reacted to the tragedy, as far as I'm concerned, these Atlanta Games were the best. They were the greatest games in the history of the Olympics. (Applause.)

I also would like to say a special word of appreciation to all the athletes who competed and all those who won. But let me say, when I looked at our team, I couldn't help as the father of a daughter of whom I'm very proud, I couldn't help but note that over 20 years ago in a complete bipartisan commitment here in Washington the United States Congress passed something called Title IX which made it possible for a lot of the women athletes to be here today. (Applause.)

There were 77,000 spectators at the women's soccer finals. There were a lot of men basketball players watching the women's basketball finals thanking God they weren't on the court that day. (Laughter.) We should be on the forefront always of bringing more people into the world of sport, more people into competition, more people having a chance to live out their dreams whatever they are.

And yesterday, we saw off the torch for the Paralympics which will be starting in Atlanta soon. And I know everyone of you support that. One of our runners in the Paralympic actually is on an NCAA Division I track team at my alma mater Georgetown University. So, we ought to be for more and more and more people having the chance to participate.

And let me finally say that I had very high hopes for all of you and for our country. They were exceeded not only by the medals you won, but by the way you won them. And you gave something very special to the American people. I'm glad you can be here today. And we'd like to just have a chance to give a small portion back to you through your tour of your house that you gave to all of us for those wonderful 17 days.

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

END

10:34 A.M. EDT



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**Yahoo! News**

**Top Stories Headlines**

**Sunday July 11 1:45 AM ET**

## Clinton Hails U.S. Win As Women's Sports Watershed

**Full Coverage**  
Women's World Cup

By Randall Mikkelsen

PASADENA, California (Reuters) - President Clinton Saturday congratulated the victorious U.S. women's soccer team and said its World Cup triumph could be a turning point boosting the popularity of women's sports.

"I think this will mobilize," Clinton said upon boarding Air Force One in Los Angeles for his return to Washington after watching the game at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena.

"I think you'll have even more young girls playing soccer. I think you'll have even more young girls playing other sports. I think you'll have even more young girls finding self confidence and other ways to express themselves because of what these women have accomplished," Clinton told reporters.

Earlier in the locker room of U.S. team, Clinton saluted the players for winning their second World Cup by beating the Chinese women's team 5-4 in penalty kicks. The two teams battled to a scoreless tie in regulation and overtime, playing before 90,185 spectators, a record for women's soccer.

"I think everybody in the whole stadium was weeping. It was the most exciting sports event I believe I have ever seen," he said.

In 1991, the U.S. team won the inaugural World Cup in Beijing.

Clinton, surrounded and hugged by U.S. team members clad in yellow T-shirts proclaiming their new status as world champions, said he was impressed by the quality of play and was proud of both squads.

"I was so very proud of you," Clinton said. "We learned a lot today about soccer, women athletes, about courage and endurance and about Chinese sportsmanship."

Clinton first consoled the losing Chinese side in their locker room, telling the team they had played "a magnificent game."

"You will win many more games," he said.

While posing for a group photo with the disappointed Chinese players, Clinton told reporters: "We were very honored to have them in the United States."

To the happy American squad, Clinton said: "I cannot thank you enough for the gift you have given to the United States."

The United States is in the midst of an effort to soothe the feelings of officials in Beijing and people

across China for the bombing of China's embassy in Belgrade during the recent NATO air campaign against Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

Chinese officials have refused to accept U.S. apologies and explanations that the attack was an accident.

Asked whether his talk to the Chinese players could help improve relations, Clinton said on the plane, "I don't know about that. I was just very respectful. I was very impressed by these women. How could you not be? No one could have played harder than they did and yet they bore their last minute defeat with enormous dignity and grace and graciousness. They were amazing."

Clinton said he thought the impact of the game would be felt in other countries, but also hailed the game as victory for the so-called Title IX legislation requiring women's collegiate sports to be funded on par with men's.

"I'll say one more plug. It's a real victory for Title IX," he said.

Joining Clinton in the winners' locker room were Arsenio Hall, the former U.S. television talk show host who led a round of cheering with his trademark whirling raised fist, actor Edward James Olmos and political consultant James Carville.

Carville, Olmos and Christiaan Corry, the husband of U.S. star Mia Hamm, were among the group who watched the game with Clinton in a private box.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 9, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
TO THE NCAA MEN AND WOMEN BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

The East Room

6:10 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Please be seated. I want to welcome, in addition to the coaches and the university officials and the teams, Senator Ford from Kentucky, Senator Frist from Tennessee, Congressman Whitfield, Governor Patton, President Johnson, Coach Summit, the team captains -- Chamique Holdsclaw, and Kellie Jolly, Associate Athletic Director Larry Ivey, Coach Smith, your team captains, Allen Edwards, Camera Mills, and Jeff Sheppard.

Before I begin, I have to turn the microphone over to someone who couldn't be here today, but who never misses an opportunity to remind me at this occasion that there is a team from Tennessee here always. (Laughter and applause.) Laura just said, the Vice President is supposed to call in, but he's a little late. I like it. I'll get to talk some more. Not yet? Give me the high sign, Laura.

So we'll go on with the program. (Laughter.) I love November, not only because of Thanksgiving, but because we get to start the college basketball season. It's the time of year also lately where I welcome the Lady Vols and the Kentucky Wildcats here. (Laughter and applause.)

For Kentucky, it has been two out of the last three years. For the Vols, this reminds me -- when I was governor, there was this wonderful civics teacher in a little town in Arkansas. And every year, she was such a devoted teacher, she would always bring her class to the Governor's Office. And every year, Pat Summitt brings her class to the White House. (Laughter.) Just part of a civics lesson that is unmatched in NCAA Women's Basketball history. (Applause.) Thank you.

I want to congratulate Pat Summitt and Tubby Smith for knowing how to turn talent into victory. They are two different things as we all know.

Let me begin by saluting the Lady Vols basketball team. There are few things in sports more thrilling than the way they roared off the bench in the first half of the championship in Indianapolis, scoring 55 points, tying an NCAA record -- Tennessee's 61st NCAA win, the most by any school ever, at the end of a 39-0 season.

Not only that, they won each of these games by an average of 30 points. That's something that would not only make any coach jealous, it makes any politician drool. (Laughter.) The Lady Vols have been called flawless, mega talents, without peer, merciless. Some say they are the best team ever to step on the floor, anytime, anywhere.

It was, of course, a victory for the team. But I think we should note that Chamique Holdsclaw led the Vols in scoring, was the Final Four MVP, swept Player of the Year honors -- coincidentally, wearing Number



23. And like Michael Jordan, she dominated every game of the season, averaging over 23.5 points a game; in the final victory, an impressive 25 points and 10 rebounds. I say that because young people in this country, especially young girls who are learning about women's basketball, will hear a lot more about her.

And let me also salute Coach Pat Summitt-- Coach of the Year for the sixth time in 12 years; her third consecutive championship team. Only John Wooden has more collegiate basketball championships, and she's gaining on him every day. Thank you again for what you have done.

And now, is the Vice President on the phone?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Yes, I'm here, Mr. President. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: Okay, gloating time. (Laughter.)

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you for letting me join this event by way of the telephone, Mr. President, and Tipper and I are sorry that we can't be there in person to congratulate the Lady Vols and the Wildcats on their magnificent seasons.

We had to be in Tennessee today. I'm calling in to the White House from Carthage, Tennessee, and we are with you in spirit, both here at home and not very far from the Kentucky border.

This is really an exciting occasion. And of course, both of you were right in that same location in 1996, and I'm sure it won't be long before you're back again.

In fairness, let me do this in alphabetical order. You know how close I am to Pat Summitt, and the Lady Vols. But I want to start by congratulating Kentucky and saying, Coach, what a thrill it was to watch the Comeback Cats in the tournament -- three games in a row, three double-digit deficits, three gutsy wins. I'd like to commend every single one of the players for refusing to let this be a transition season, for refusing to give up, and for playing some great Tubby ball.

And, Coach Tubby Smith, I want to congratulate you on quite a remarkable first season, and for showing that you can teach some old Cats new tricks. You've already proven yourself a wonderful coach, a wonderful role model, a wonderful person, and a wonderful ambassador for Kentucky sports. The only question is, what are you going to do for an encore?

Now to the Lady Vols, of course, words can't express the pride that all Tennesseans feel in you and that all fans of excellence in sports feel for the Lady Vols. You didn't just win games, you dominated them, with an average margin of victory of over 30 points. And I thank you for sending a message to America that we play some pretty good basketball in Tennessee.

And even more importantly, your success has helped to popularize women's basketball, and you've given thousands of young women who want to play not just role models, but true heroines. And of course, Coach Pat Summitt is already a legend without peer. Six national championships in the last 12 years; a perfect 39 and zero record this past year, the best ever record by any NCAA basketball team, men or women. The first female coach to be on the cover of Sports Illustrated, possibly the best coach of all time -- woman or man -- in my opinion, and more Coach of the Year Awards than she has shelves to put them on.

So before I sign off, I just want to say one other thing. With the tradition of winning that both teams there at the White House today have, some people expected you to win. But that in no way belittles or

diminishes your accomplishments in any way, shape or form. It enhances them -- because high expectations bring high pressure. And like all true champions, you performed even better when the pressure was on.

So, Pat, good luck in your 25th season. And, Tubby, good luck in your next. To the returning players, good luck next time. And to the seniors, what a way to finish your careers. Thank you very much, and thank you for letting me join in the celebration. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I can't help noting that there's a little modest football game this weekend between Tennessee and Arkansas. (Laughter.) And both teams are undefeated, but Tennessee is much higher ranked. And both Vice President and Senator Frist refused to give me any points when we bet on this game. So I'm either going to have more barbecue than I can eat, or I'm going to have to take out a loan to finish Chelsea's college education after this. (Laughter.) But I'm looking forward to it.

I'd like to say a few words about the Kentucky Wildcats. First of all, I think all of us who watched the tournament this year thought it was one of the best tournaments that any of us could remember. And the fact that Kentucky did come back by 10 points at half-time in the last game to defeat Utah -- quite clearly a great, great team -- the fact that we had so much competition in the final teams that made it certainly to the Final Four, but even the last 16 -- it was an unbelievable tournament. And Kentucky became the first team ever to come back from such a large deficit in the final game of the tournament -- with heart, skill, and guts.

I want to congratulate the Final Four MVP, Jeff Sheppard, and all of his teammates. There were many solid scorers, no one who ran away. Kentucky had a team. They also did something that I think is very important for great teams. They got better and better and better as the season went on, winning their last 11 games by an average of 20 points.

Of course, Coach Tubby Smith faced the difficult task in his first year at Kentucky. People expected him to win all the time, and he had to start with that burden of expectation. I think the fact that he began his working life in tobacco fields with 16 brothers and sisters taught him something about teamwork. And he certainly brought what he knew about teamwork and family values and spirit to this work.

Jeff Sheppard said of Coach Smith that, "He does a really good job of teaching us the game of basketball, but an even better job of teaching us how to be men." I think that says more than anything I could possibly say about this remarkable man and his remarkable team.

Now I'd like to introduce Dr. Joe Johnson, the President of the University of Tennessee. (Applause.)

DR. JOHNSON: Mr. President, let me thank you for opening the White House to the 1998 National Basketball Champions. It is an honor to be here. We're neighbors, we just come up 75 with the Big Blue, and we joined together. And it's nice to have Kentuckians and Tennesseans in the White House being honored by you. And we appreciate that very much, and appreciate Vice President Gore being on the telephone.

My only obligation beyond to thank the President -- and that's an honor to do that -- is introduce Pat Summit. In light of what Vice President Gore and President Clinton have said about her, there's not much I can say, other than I want to make three comments about her. One, she is the best women's basketball coach, and in my view, the best basketball coach in America. Second, we've had her for a long time -- she started out driving a John Deere tractor -- on a farm, my the way, Tubby. And she's done all right. The other thing -- the last thing I