

PRESIDENT CLINTON -- PUBLIC RECORD ON DRUGS

MAY 13, 1993

WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING - ADDRESS TO SMALL BUSINESS LEADERS

The third thing we're trying to do, as Dr. Brown will tell you, is we want to change the emphasis of the federal government's drug control efforts. With regard to enforcement, we want to concentrate more on kingpins, really big dealers, to try to break the financial back of a lot of these networks -- not just on how many arrests we can make of people in the middle, but really go after big people and money networks. Then, with people who are actual users and who may commit crimes in the course of that, we're trying to have much more comprehensive alcohol and drug abuse treatment. One of the really important things about our health care plan that I would think you would support is that it includes substance abuse treatment for people who now don't have any insurance. So that will stop a lot of these long, long delays for adequate treatment. Drug treatment works in an extraordinary percentage of the cases -- not in all the cases, but in a lot of the cases if it is there. So those are the things that we're working on. But the other thing we want to do is to listen to people like you who've actually done things that work. We have not only Lee Brown, but Janet Reno, the attorney general, was a prosecutor in Miami, one of the toughest towns in America for drugs problems, and Louis Freeh, the director of the FBI, was a U.S. attorney, a federal judge, and an FBI agent working principally in drug cases. He broke big, international drug cases as well as dealing with drugs on the street. So we've got these three crime fighters who basically came up from the grass roots. And it's the first time we ever had a team of grass roots crime fighters dealing with the drug issue. They want to hear from you and people like you all over the country about what would work for you.

OCTOBER 26, 1993

REMARKS IN REINVENTING GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

According to the NPR report, if Congress does its part in passing legislation and we do our part in making it work, we could save more than \$5 billion in the first year of this reform alone. We ought to take some of that money that your government has been wasting all these years and use it to uphold government's first responsibility, which is to keep our citizens safe here at home. With that money, we can make our crime bill even stronger....We can have more drug courts, like the one the Attorney General started in Florida and the one our administration is helping to launch here in D.C., so we can stop sending tens of thousands of criminal addicts back onto the street every year where they'll commit more crimes if they don't get treatment first.

NOVEMBER 2, 1993

INTERVIEW BY ROLLING STONE MAGAZINE

Q ... I just have a couple of questions, the question of drug policy. And Lee Brown, by the way, who I know -- I think he's a terrific guy and it was a great choice -- you issued a national drug strategy last week that emphasized health issues as the main focus. But, yet, the budget that comes with it is the same as the Bush budget, which was about \$13 billion that was distributed 65 percent, 35 percent to law enforcement. How do you reconcile those two?

THE PRESIDENT: Because most of the -- first of all, we do need to make some changes --

Q So that's an interim budget?

THE PRESIDENT: We're going to try to make some changes in it. But, secondly, the big -- let me back up a second -- the main change we want to make that you'll see coming through the crime bill -- and we don't know yet how much money we're going to get in this, because we start negotiations again tonight on that -- is for more drug treatment for people convicted of crimes. Because I think that's a big issue.

For people who are outside, that is, who are not in the criminal justice system, our biggest change of priority would be manifest if the health care bill passes next year. Because in the health care bill, we cover drug treatment, both preventive and treatment services related to drugs. Now, if that fails, then I'll have to revisit my whole idea about what to do with the budget. But the reason we didn't try to make radical changes in the budget this year is, I believe, both substantively and as a matter of political reality, we have to have a certain level of support for enforcement and interdiction.

And Lee Brown had -- one of the things he didn't get credit for and I think he should have is that he wants to change the focus of interdiction --

Q To?

THE PRESIDENT: -- to really working on the roots of the exports of the United States and not just sort of middlemen that run your numbers up. But we have to spend some money on that, and so since I didn't just want to drastically move around what is a relatively small amount of money, we decided to go ahead and put the drug treatment piece into the health care bill and make that a part of comprehensive health benefits.

Q Is there any indication that interdiction as a strategy works?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Well, not in the way we do it, exactly. It works,

but it doesn't. I mean, it works --

Q I mean, there's drugs everywhere.

THE PRESIDENT: It works, but they still get in and run the price up.

Q They're available.

THE PRESIDENT: So you'd have to be much more draconian. Anyway, the place that I feel badly about in this whole drug thing, keep in mind we always knew when the crime bill came up at the end of the year we'd come back with more drug treatment for people in the penitentiary -- drug treatment generally will be covered in the health care bill. So if I fail with this somehow, then I'll have to come back with a different strategy.

The third thing that we can be -- I don't know -- we can certainly be criticized for, is that in this budget, when we got through all the cutting and everything, the drug prevention programs funded by the federal government had been cut. So we don't have as much money as we had previously had to give the school districts, for example.

Now, there's a lot of controversy about that. The Congress had to meet, the Appropriations Committee had to meet these very tough budget caps, and they thought those were the monies that could most easily be taken up at the local level to support the DARE program or whatever.

But I have to tell you, based on my personal experience as a governor, I think those prevention programs do work. I realize that you can argue that they don't, but I think they do. And I think it's really worth doing. Because prevention, over time, it's exactly the flip side of what you said about the television and what we said about the television. There is a cumulative impact on the culture that is absolutely impossible to quantify. But I'm convinced it's positive, and so if I have fallen short this year, it's in that little piece of the -- in the prevention programs.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1993
NBC "MEET THE PRESS" INTERVIEW

MR. BROKAW: So much of this is driven by drugs. Your administration has kind of taken drugs off the radar screen. Do you think you're going to have a take a harder line on drugs?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, first of all, I don't think that's a fair characterization. The administration has had to subject the drug budget to the same ruthless discipline that nearly every other budget has been subjected to so

that while we have increased some drug funding, like in the block grant program, some of the rest of it has not been increased.

What I have tried to do is to get people to see the drug problem first of all in terms of stopping the major sources and then here at home focusing on drug -- in terms of treatment and education and integrating it with our overall strategy on law enforcement and violence. I think this country needs a community strategy which deals with the crisis of drugs, violence, crime, the family and work. And we need to go not only nationally but at the grassroots level, and we need to understand that there's some basic things we have to do. If you want families to stay together, you've got to make it possible for people to be successful workers and successful parents.

NOVEMBER 13, 1993

**REMARKS TO THE 86TH ANNUAL HOLY CONVOCATION OF THE
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST (MEMPHIS, TN)**

But (Martin Luther King) would say, I did not live and die to see the American family destroyed. I did not live and die to see 13-year-old boys get automatic weapons and gun down 9-year-olds just for the kick of it. I did not live and die to see young people destroy their own lives with drugs and then build fortunes destroying the lives of others. That is not what I came here to do.

We want to pass a health care bill that will make drug treatment available for everyone. And we also have to do it -- we have to have drug treatment and education available to everyone, and especially those who are in prison who are coming out. We have a Drug Czar now in Lee Brown, who was the Police Chief of Atlanta, of Houston, of New York, who understands these things. And when the Congress comes back next year we will be moving forward on that.

DECEMBER 8, 1993

REMARKS TO PRESS POOL

Q Dr. Elders, obviously, has said a lot of things that have created a controversy; but unless I'm mistaken, this is the first time I can remember her making a comment that was a fundamental disagreement with you and that a member of your administration talked about reining her in -- that she needs to only speak for the administration.

THE PRESIDENT: I just don't agree with that position. When you have someone as outspoken and energetic as she is, there's going to be times when she'll be outspoken and energetic in a way that I don't necessarily agree with.

Q Is she allowed to disagree with you?

THE PRESIDENT: But I certainly stand behind her foursquare as Surgeon General. I think she's done a good job and she's beginning to really focus the country on a lot of these public health problems. So, I just -- she needs to make it very clear that -- and I think she did, to be fair -- that I just disagree with that. I have thought about it a lot, and I think the cost of legalizing drugs would far outweigh the benefits. But I think the fact that everybody in America feels overwhelmed and determined to do something about crime and violence and drugs and gangs is a very positive thing. So we'll just go from here.

DECEMBER 9, 1993

REMARKS IN MEETING WITH MAYORS AND CHIEFS OF POLICE

I also think we ought to recognize that we don't have all the money in world, and we don't want to spend a lot of money on things that will be of marginal significance. I was glad to see you advocating this paper. I've just been skimming it over -- that we ought to give attention to drug treatment as well as drug enforcement, that we needed to deal with supply and demand in an evenhanded way. We need some more investment to do that.

JANUARY 25, 1994

STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

... We must remember that drugs are a factor in an enormous percentage of crimes. Recent studies indicate, sadly, that drug use is on the rise again among our young people. The crime bill contains -- all the crime bills contain -- more money for drug treatment for criminal addicts, and boot camps for youthful offenders that include incentives to get off drugs and to stay off drugs.

Our administration's budget with all its cuts can paint a large increase in funding for drug treatment and drug education. You must pass them both. We need them desperately.

FEBRUARY 3, 1994

REMARKS TO STUDENTS AT KRAMER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

The first thing I want to ask of you is not to give up. Don't give up on yourselves and don't give up on your country. I very much want you to go to school in safety, where you learn things and can look forward to a brighter and richer future. I want you to feel that you should that you must stay off drugs and graduate from high school and go beyond....

One of those goals says by the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment, conducive to learning. No one should have to go to school afraid, and no school should operate in a way that makes learning impossible. But the truth is that while we have some legislation up there to make our schools safer, you have a lot to do with what goes on in this school and whether the environment is good for learning.

Q Good morning. I would like to know, how can we keep the drugs off the street?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think there are two or three things we have to focus on. How can we keep the drugs off the street? Your ideas are maybe better than mine. Maybe you ought to tell me how you think we can keep the drugs off the street. I've got two or three ideas I want to mention, though. One is, most cities do not have enough police officers to give the neighborhoods the kind of coverage they need. Thirty years ago, there were three police officers in this country for every violent crime reported. Today, there are three crimes, violent crimes, for every police officer. So most cities simply don't have the people they need to work in the neighborhoods, stay there and help keep the places safe and drug-free -- first thing.

Second thing is that schools should become drug-free areas. You ought to be able to get the drugs out of the schools, and then kids should be taught from a very early age about the hazards of drugs -- that they can kill you, they can take your life away.

The third thing is, we've got to bring another economy to the areas where people are doing drugs, because it's a business. People have to have other ways of making a living. We have to create an alternative future.

So I think there's law enforcement, I think there's drug education and treatment, which I know works, because I've had -- my own brother has had a drug problem, and I know that works. But I think you also have to create another future. We have to tell people -- keep in mind, the drugs got real bad in the places where the family and the community and the jobs were all disappearing. So I think we have to again create an alternative reality.

One of the things we're trying to do in our administration is to create some conditions in which people will go in and invest money and hire people in these areas where people have been making money off drugs instead of off honest jobs. But you all might have better ideas than that. If you've got any ideas for me about what to do about drugs, stand up and give me one of your ideas. I'd like to have -- go ahead.

FEBRUARY 9, 1994

REMARKS IN TELECONFERENCE CALL WITH MAYORS

Earlier today, Lee Brown and I announced our new drug control strategy, which expands drug treatment programs as well as provides more police officers on the street. These two items in our budget got bigger increases than almost anything else. Community policing went up \$1.7 billion. The drug budget went up \$1 billion, even though we were cutting half the government departments and 60 percent of the line items in the budget.

FEBRUARY 28, 1994

REMARKS TO STUDENTS OF HILLCREST HIGH SCHOOL

I can't help saying one thing about drugs that I think is important, and that is that we see some evidence now that drug use, after going down among young people for several years, may now be on the rise again. And I just have to tell you that one of the things that I learn every day as President is to be a little humble about what I can do. That is, I get up every day and I try to do what I can to make the future better for you. My job really is about guaranteeing the future for America, preparing America for the 21st century, trying to keep the American Dream alive for you. I've lived most of my life, and I hope more than I can say that none of you have lived most of your lives. I hope the vast majority of your life is still out there ahead of you. But I know that there is a limit to what even the President can do.

The President can't keep anybody off drugs. The President can't keep anybody from getting in trouble with the law. The President can't keep anybody from resorting to violence. These are decisions you have to make.

MARCH 19, 1994

REMARKS IN ABC SPECIAL "ANSWERING CHILDREN'S QUESTIONS"

Q Well, Mr. President Clinton, I know you get a lot of questions, but this is just a little thing about you. I think you're such a decent and honest person and I really believe in you in trying to make everybody happy. And I think we kids have to take the responsibility, because we should know who's bringing in the drugs, the guns. And if we just report it in, that would really make a difference. And also that would make a really big difference is that most of the criminals and people who sell drugs, they don't feel loved. And so I think, from the moment your born, you have to feel loved. You should tell your child that you love them very much.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me just say two things. First of all, remember what I said, no matter what I do, the President has to have partners all over America.

Everybody's got a role to play. Everybody is important.

In most schools where there are drugs and guns, some other kids who don't do drugs and don't have guns know about it. They could report it; they could help to get it done; they could organize themselves into groups in each school and say, we don't want drugs in our schools, we don't want guns, we don't want knives, we don't want violence in our schools. That could make a bigger difference in that school than anything the President could do.

On the other question, I think you're right. One of the things that we have to do is to find young people who are likely to get in trouble and try to reach them before they get to the point where they are hurting other people, because a lot of young people never felt like they were loved. That's obvious to me, I see it all the time.

APRIL 13, 1994

REMARKS TO THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF NEWSPAPER EDITORS

... We cannot live the lives of children for them. So every one of us -- every parent, every teacher, every person has to somehow find a way to reach these kids before it's too late. Somehow the young people who make it know that they're important; they understand that their lives matter; they understand that there can be a future; they think about the future in terms of what happens five or 10 years or 20 years from now instead of what happens five or 10 minutes from now. They understand that they have to fight to find ways other than violence to solve their problems or deal with their frustrations. They have to come to understand that children having children is just wrong, and can't lead to anything good for them; that drugs will ruin their lives. We've got a lot of kids now who are beginning to creep back into drug use just because they think it's hopeless out there. We have to change that, and we have to help them change that. And a government program, alone, cannot do it. We have to do it with the kinds of things you do with these special reportings in your newspaper, and galvanizing and organizing people all over this country, community by community.

APRIL 14, 1994

REMARKS IN EVENT WITH MAYORS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS

It's funny, you know, you hear sometimes the debates in the Congress and people who want to be tough on crime say, well, this prevention stuff, it's a little squishy and maybe we shouldn't spend the money on it. But if you talk to any veteran police officer, they tell you, spend the money on prevention; give me the tools to do alcohol and drug abuse education; give me the tools to give these kids something to do before school and after school and at night; give me the tools to give these

young people something to say yes to, instead of just having us tell them to say no to something wrong. That's what the law enforcement community tells us.

APRIL 19, 1994

REMARKS IN MTV'S "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH" FORUM ON CRIME

Q Hi, Mr. President. My name is Connor Kennedy and I'm a 19-year old from New York City. My question is, given the massive overcrowding in prisons in this country today, how well do you think mandatory sentences for drug offenders works?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the mandatory sentencing program has -- of course, keep in mind, that's basically a federal program, although New York also has a mandatory sentencing program. Some states have it and some states don't. By and large, there have been a lot of problems with mandatory sentencing programs related to drugs because they tend to treat cases that are different the same.

The second thing I have to say is that there isn't enough drug treatment on demand. We know that appropriate drug treatment, if you also accompany it with something that a young person can do, works in more than half the cases. So I think what we need to do is to focus on having an appropriate level of punishment, but also an appropriate alternative so people can move out of the life they're living. That's what I think.

So the mandatory sentencing program, there have been problems with all of them, largely because they treat -- they tend to treat cases that really are different fundamentally the same.

Now, on the other hand, if you listen to anybody talk, they'll also tell you a lot of people get parole without doing an appropriate amount of time. So the system is not as rational as it ought to be. And I do think there's some problems with the sentencing. I'd like to see some changes.

MS. SOREN: We do have a question on prevention over here for President Clinton.

Q Hello, Mr. President. My name is Berniece Thornton and I'm a 19-year-old D.C. resident. I know a lot of drug addicts that have been locked up for abusing drugs. And personally, I just don't think that's right. I think there should be more drug prevention or more drug rehabilitation programs out here to help them. And putting them in jail is not the answer, I don't think. What do you think about that?

THE PRESIDENT: I agree with half of what you said. I think there should be more drug prevention programs, and I think they'd work, the drug education

programs. I think there should be more drug treatment programs. But some of you, perhaps all of you know that my brother is a recovering drug addict who actually went to prison for 14 months. It is my opinion that if he hadn't been caught up in the criminal justice system, he probably would have died because his problem was so gross and so bad. And I think he would tell you the same thing if he were standing here with me.

So I don't think it's inappropriate for people to do some time for violating serious crimes when they have a drug problem, and it may actually jerk them out of the life they're in and help to save their life. But I would say two things: Number one, you don't want to overdo the length of time they have to serve if, fundamentally, they're not drug pushers, they're really drug users and abusers and addicts -- you can overdo the length of time. And, number two, you've got to have adequate drug treatment, as well as preparation for living a different life if you want a different kind of behavior coming of the prison than you got going in. That, it seems to me, is the biggest problem.

So a little time won't hurt people who are in the process of killing themselves anyway, if you make the most of them. But if you just send them to prison for a too-long sentence and you never do drug treatment and they get nothing when they come out, then you're right, it's self-defeating.

To: All DPC
STAFF

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 6, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT DLC GALA

Sheraton Ballroom
Washington, D.C.

8:26 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Congressman McCurdy. (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you. (Applause.) Thank you, Congressman McCurdy. Hillary and I are delighted to be here. I was so glad when Michael Steinhardt and Al From and Will Marshall came up on the stage. I thought we were occupying the right wing all by ourselves here tonight. (Laughter.) I want to -- it'll get funnier as you think about it. (Laughter.)

I want to thank everybody on this stage -- my wonderful and longtime friend, Lindy Boggs, who had me in her home in the presidential campaign and who has been such great inspiration to us. And I thank Senator Lieberman and Senator Breaux for whatever they said they were doing, their Kosher-Cajun partnership. (Laughter.) They have been wonderful.

I thank Dave McCurdy for the courageous battle that he waged in Oklahoma against some forces that I want to talk about more in a moment, and for going to New Hampshire for me, and for being the embodiment of what the DLC is all about. He is very young. I have lost two elections. I will make a prediction about which I know quite a bit -- he will be back. (Applause.)

I want to thank my friend of many years, Senator Chuck Robb, for waging what may have been the most courageous campaign in America. (Applause.) Twenty-million dollars and all they could throw at him, he's still standing -- and well and proud, and we're proud of him. (Applause.)

I want to thank Al From and Will Marshall and Michael Steinhardt for believing in the DLC and the PPI, for believing in the power of ideas in public life.

You know, I was trying to think of what I ought to say here tonight. I've gotten all these good and bad in in-the-middle reports about all these deliberations here. They gave me some remarks at the office; I didn't like them, so I wrote some down so no one is to blame for what I say but me. But the problem is I'm hurdling into middle age, and I can no longer read my own writing from this distance. (Laughter.) But I'm going to do the best I can.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: -- glasses.

THE PRESIDENT: I've heard all these -- no, I brought my glasses, but I'm too vain to wear them while I talk. (Laughter.)

I got to thinking about, you know, how I could describe this election, and was it one of these situations where, well, they just didn't know what we've done; they didn't recognize what we'd done -- the Democrats. There's some of that.

It reminded me of the story of the fellow that ran a cleaners in New York City for 40 years. And his wife passed away and

MORE

his children were all grown and educated, so he just cashed in. He had a million dollars. He went out and had a hair transplant, joined a spa, and lost 30 pounds, married a lady 40 years younger than he was and went to Florida on his honeymoon where a storm came up when he was walking on the beach -- lightning struck him dead, and he was taken to heaven immediately. And he looked in the face of God, and he said, I don't want to be blasphemous, but how could you do this to me? (Laughter.) I mean, for 40 years I was faithful to my family; I educated all my children; I worked six days a week; I payed every nickel I ever owed in taxes. Finally, I have a chance to have a little fun. How could you do this to me? And God said, Oh, Jake, I'm sorry, I didn't recognize you. (Laughter.)

Maybe, you know, there was a little of bit of that in this election. Then I thought, well, maybe what we did was good, but they just didn't appreciate it. And I thought about the story of the elderly couple rocking on the porch. And they were way up in their 70s and they'd been married over 50 years. The husband was a man of few words, and he looked at his wife and he said, Sarah, you know, before we run out of time, there are some things I have never said to you in our married life together, and I'd feel remiss if I didn't. We got married and I didn't have a nickel to my name. And we worked hard. But the Great Depression came along, and as soon as I built my business, it broke me and I was absolutely devastated. But you never flinched and you never left me. You were so wonderful. And she said, yeah, that's right.

He said, then I had to go to World War II and I got that terrible wound. It took me a year to recuperate, but you were there by my said every step of the way. And she said, yeah. He said, then, finally in 1952 we finally saved up enough money to move in our own home. We weren't there six weeks before a tornado came and blew it down. We didn't have any insurance or anything. It took us another 10 years to get a house, but you stayed with me all the way through. She said, yeah, I sure did. He said, well, before it's too late, I want to say one thing to you -- Sarah, you're bad luck. (Laughter.)

Well, there was some -- also some real things. I want to talk about them. But since one of their leaders was quoting Roosevelt the other day, I ought to say, I think we're a lot more like Lincoln than they are like Roosevelt. (Applause.) And it reminded me of when Lincoln sustained a defeat, he said that it hurt too much to laugh and he was too old to cry, but it was a slip and not a fall.

And what I want to talk to you tonight about is what's really going on in this country, not about the Democrats and Republicans and who loses and who wins, out who loses and who wins out in America.

In 1992, late '91 really, I got into the race for president basically because I was convinced deep, down inside that there was something amiss in this country, that we were in danger of losing the American Dream; that more people were working harder for less; that people who were poor but wanted to work themselves into the middle class weren't able to do so; that we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together; and that the political system had reached the point where it was almost incapable of dealing with fundamental problems.

I ran out of a conviction that as a citizen I ought to try to do something about it. I ran because my experience as a governor made me believe that you really could roll up your sleeves and reach across party lines and other lines and solve real problems that real people have. I ran because the DLC made me believe that ideas could matter in national politics just like they do in other forms of public endeavor.

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I ran out of a conviction that as a citizen I ought to try to do something about it. I ran because my experience as a governor made me believe that you really could roll up your sleeves and reach across party lines and other lines and solve real problems that real people have. I ran because the DLC made me believe that ideas could matter in national politics just like they do in other forms of public endeavor.

And when I started this campaign, nobody but my mother gave me much chance to win. But, you know, what I was afraid of was that I would win and people wouldn't understand how hard it would be to really change -- not only to change things on their merits, but to deal with the culture of Washington and to communicate through the fog and the blizzard to folks out in the country; and also to have communication be two-way, never to lose touch with people, never to sever that mystic chord that has to exist between a president and a government and the people.

I knew that there were many dangers. One is just taking on tough issues, is taking on tough issues. If they were easy issues, somebody else would have done them because a poll would say it was popular to do. The second is if you try to do a lot of things in a short time, you're going to make some mistakes. And I've made my fair share, and I accept that. The third is that it is easy to be misunderstood in a difficult time when you're a long way from where people live. Ask Mr. McCurdy and Senator Robb -- it's easy to be demonized when you're a long way from where people live so that the very people you try hardest to help are those who turn away.

That's the thing I regret about this election more than anything else. All the people who are working harder for lower wages and less security than they were 10 years ago, they're the people I ran to help. All the people who are trying to follow the rules, and are sick and tired of people benefitting who don't, who take advantage of the system whether they're rich or poor or somewhere in between, those are the folks that the Democratic Party ought to be championing and the ones who ultimately will benefit if we stay on the right course.

Well, we did a lot of things that they didn't like very much, especially after it got explained to them, as we say at home. I think I was right when I opposed discrimination and intolerance, but a lot of folks thought I was just more concerned about minorities than the problems for the majority.

I believe we were right when we stood up to the NRA and said, we ought to take these military assault weapons off the street. (Applause.) But a long way from the battlegrounds of the inner cities, a lot of folks out in the country said, my Lord, I'm paying too much in taxes, I can't hold my job, and now they're coming after my gun. Why won't they just let me alone?

I believe we were right when we fought to bring this terrible deficit down. Let me tell you something, folks. The budget would be in balance this year, were it not for interest payments on the debt accumulated when they had control and they ran this country into the ditch. (Applause.)

And before you listen to the siren's songs that will be offered in the next year, you just remember this: Next time you make out your federal income tax check, 28 percent of it's going to pay interest on the debt accumulated in the last 12 years before we took over. So I think we were right to do that.

And, yes, I think we were right to try to find a way to stop health care costs from going up three times the rate of inflation; to stop people from losing their health care or having it explode if they have a kid sick or if they try to change jobs; to try to find an affordable way for small businesspeople and self-employed people to buy private health insurance. But by the time it got to the American people, in both cases, it was characterized as the Democrats are the party of government and taxes. And they don't have a lot of trust or faith in government because they're working harder for less, less money.

Males in this country without a college degree are making 12 percent less than they were making 10 years ago working a longer work week. We are the only country in the world with an advanced economy where the percentage of people with health insurance under 65 is lower today than it was 10 years ago. That's why these numbers don't mean a lot.

That's why the story I told about John and Martha don't mean a lot. That may be a good story. Sometimes you're not happy, even if somebody does something good, if you don't like the result, there are still people out there just killing themselves, thinking I'm doing everything I can -- I'm working a longer work week; I can't afford a vacation anymore; I'm paying more for health care; I may lose my job tomorrow; my kid could get shot on the way to school; and all my money is going to people who misbehave. Now, that's what a lot of people think.

And they're the very people I've been up here killing myself for two years trying to help and the people they've been trying to help. Can we get them back? You bet we can. But they have to know we heard the lesson in the election. They have to know we got the message. But we cannot tell them we will always agree. We cannot tell them we will always agree. And we cannot tell them, even if the cost is very great. Sometimes people make decisions when they are very, very angry. And sometimes those decisions are good. Sometimes they're not so good.

One of the first lessons I was ever given at my mama's knee was, count to 10, Bill, before you say something. I still don't do it all the time, and every time I don't, I'm sorry. (Laughter.) Every time I don't, I'm sorry.

There is no prescription for a perfect world in a difficult time of change where every election works out and everybody is happy. But we've got to let these folks know that we heard them, because they're the very people that I ran for president to help. Now, all my life, ever since I was a little boy, I have seen people like that mistreated, disadvantaged, and then I have seen them inflamed with anger and enraged and taken advantage of. So, I'm telling you, forget about us. We owe it to them to let them know we heard and we're fighting for them and we're going to deliver. (Applause.)

You know, I've got three things I want to say -- I think -- we've got reaffirm our convictions with clarity. We've got to say what we did and be proud of it. And we've got to engage the Republicans in a spirit of genuine partnership and say, you have some new ideas; we do, too; let's have a contest of ideas. But stop all this demonization and get on with the business of helping America to build this country. (Applause.)

Sometime in the next two or three days, if you want to know how to state our principles with clarity, go back and read the New Orleans Declaration, five years ago. It's just as good as it gets. We believe the promise of America is equal opportunity, not equal outcome. The Democratic Party's fundamental mission is to expand opportunity, not government. America must remain energetically engaged in the world, not retreat from it. The United States must maintain a strong and capable defense. The right way to rebuild America's economic security is to invest in our people and to expand trade, not to restrict it.

We believe in preventing crime and punishing criminals, not explaining away their behavior. The purpose of social welfare is to bring the poor into the economic mainstream, not to maintain them in dependence. Government should respect individual liberty and stay out of our private lives and personal decisions. We believe in the

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moral and cultural values most Americans share -- individual responsibility, tolerance, work, faith and family.

We believe American citizenship entails responsibilities as well as rights. And we mean to ask our citizens to give something back to their communities and their country. I believe that, and if you do, we've got a great future. (Applause.)

Now, this is what I want to say to you: You have to decide what your mission is in this new world, because the truth is, we are already making a difference in the new Democratic Party. In the last two years, despite the atmosphere of contentiousness and all the difficulty, more of the DLC agenda was enacted into law and will make a difference in the lives of the American people than almost any political movement in any similar time period in the history of the United States. And you ought to be proud of that.

You should not ask for a medal, and we shouldn't ask for a medal because wages are still stagnant and the future is still too uncertain for too many millions of Americans, because the country is still coming apart at the seams in many places because of family breakdown and crime, and because government is still too much of a burden on a lot of people.

But you sure ought to be proud of the start that has been made. And if you don't tell it, nobody else will. So stand up and say, here is what we have done. We're going to build on it. We're going to go forward. We heard the message in the election, but let's don't tear down what has been done that's good for the people who control the future of this country. (Applause.)

You go back and read. Go back and read what the DLC specifically advocated. Principles are fine, but sooner or later, you've got to do something, too. It really does matter, you know. One of the great political thinkers who is here in this audience tonight, whom I will not embarrass, said to me, you know, one of the problems, Mr. President, is you've been trying to do something. And he told me, he mentioned another political leader, and he said, you know, his popularity is very great in this country because he has talked a lot, but he hasn't tried to do anything, so he hasn't upset anybody very much.

We have tried to do things. You should be proud of that. It was not easy to bring the deficit down three years in a row for the first time since Truman. The DLC said we ought to do it, and we did it. It was not easy. (Applause.)

It was not easy to figure out how to do that and provide tax reduction -- the first step in the middle-class tax relief -- to 15 million working families with 40 million Americans in it, people who work hard, have children at the house, are on modest wages -- we don't want them to go into welfare, we want them to be out. We don't want to tax anyone into poverty. That's what the earned income tax credit was. That was a DLC idea. We did it. It provided more tax fairness than any time in 20 years. We should be proud of it. (Applause.) It changed people's lives. (Applause.)

They talked about less government. There are 70,000 fewer people working for the federal government today than there were on the day I was inaugurated. We are reducing the size of the federal government by more than a quarter of a million. (Applause.) If not one other thing is done because of what the members of Congress here present have already voted for, we will have the smallest federal government since John Kennedy was president at the end of this budget cycle.

That is what we have already done. The Republicans want to do more; come on, let's do it. Let's have a partnership. Let's

have a contest. Let's have at it. We're not through reducing government, but don't deny the fact that we have started it, we led the way. They didn't begin it. We did. Ask them to join us. Let's go forward. (Applause.)

And a dramatic thing happened that Mr. McCurdy mentioned a minute ago. The Democratic Party moved away markedly from protectionism -- into GATT, into NAFTA, into reaching out to the Asian countries, into this Summit of the Americas with all the countries in our region that our democracies. We did that. It was a fundamental break with the past, and it is opening up new vistas of opportunity.

And we did it for one, simple reason. All the pressures we have to keep wages and down and to displace low-wage workers from trade are there no matter what we do. But because we demanded access to markets and a fairer deal for American workers and for American companies, we're going to create new high-wage jobs for America. That was the DLC position. We have done it -- more trade advancement than at any time in a generation. You ought to be proud of it, and you ought to stand up there and defend it and talk about it. (Applause.)

And what are the results? Over 5 million new jobs -- more construction jobs this year than in the last nine years combined, 11 months of manufacturing job growth rate for the first time in a decade. Those are the results.

And finally, we're beginning to see some high-wage job growth, more high-wage jobs this year than the previous five years combined. What is the challenge? How to get incomes up and how to help people when they change jobs not be riven with insecurity. That is the challenge.

So, how are we going to do that? The first thing we've got to do is to provide a system of lifetime education and training. You want to reverse income inequality in this country? There is an education premium, and we had better give it to every American who's willing to take it. That is the only way to do it. (Applause.)

Look at the education agenda -- the best year for education in 30 years -- expanded Head Start; national standards with grass roots reforms, like charter schools and character education programs advocated by the DLC; apprenticeship programs for young people who don't go to college. I had 13 CEOs of the biggest companies in this country today into the White House to talk to me about how we could get all the companies in the country to participate in our School to Work program; how we can get 2 million more young people getting out of high school, not going on to college getting decent jobs.

And the middle-class college loan program that we had to face down enormous vested interests to pass, making millions of young people eligible for lower-interest college loans and able to pay it back as a percentage of their income so that nobody need walk away from college. That was all DLC advocacy. We did it. The American people should know it, and you should be proud of it. (Applause.)

The Family Leave Law, immunizing all the kids in this country under two, tougher child support enforcement. The welfare reform bill has been in the Congress since last March. These things are good for America. This administration has also tried to give power back to the states -- something the DLC has always been for. Twenty states, 20, have already received permission to cut through federal rules and regulations to have their own welfare reform proposal; nine states, health care reform proposal. These are things that you have advocated that we've already done.

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The Republicans say they want to give more power back to the states, more power back to the cities. Tell them to come on. Let's contest their ideas. Let's do it. Let's do it together. But don't you walk away from the fact that we started it, and we intend to finish it, and we want them to go with us. (Applause.)

And we still have to implement that Crime Bill, folks. A hundred thousand police means that cities will get an average in small towns and rural areas of 20 percent more police. We know if they're deployed properly that it will lower the crime rate. Community policing -- a DLC idea -- we've been advocating it for years. And we believe in the prevention programs. Read our record. They don't. We're right. The police are on our side. Let's fight to save those prevention programs. Let's get those police in place. Let's have the tougher punishment. If they have more ideas on crime, let's have at it. But let's not stop implementing the Crime Bill until we lower the crime rate and make streets safe for American families and their children again. (Applause.) And don't forget that we passed it.

You know, finally, let me say that I want to you to see national service as the embodiment of what we want to do. It has been attacked by some who are coming into this new Congress. It is not a government program. It's a corporation with Republicans and Democrats on the board. It is not a bureaucracy. It's totally grass-roots oriented. It is designed to promote the concept of service in America and to reward it with educational credits. There are already more people in national service solving the problems of Americas at the grass-roots level than there were in the Peace Corps in its largest year. There are 20,000 this year. Year after next, if by cutting and investing we can get the money, we will have 100,000. So let us say, that's where we are. That's where the new Democratic party is. That's where the DLC is. Let's ask the Republicans to support national service, not to tear it up; to go forward to build this country and make it what it ought to be. (Applause.)

The best thing you can do is what you have done -- put out ten new ideas as a counterpoint to the Republican contract. That is the best thing you can do. Let's stand on that. Let's fight for those ideas.

Next week and the week after, I'll be announcing some more of my new ideas. Let's do this with vision. Let's do it with conviction. Let's make the effort it takes. Let's put country over party and challenge the Republicans to do the same. Let's say we do not want to roll back the gains that the DLC fought so hard for. They're not liberal or conservative. They brought our party together. They'll bring our country together. And the more the American people know about it, the better they will like it. The answer is not to reverse what we have done, but to build on it. The answer is to reach out to the middle class and say, we know why you're angry, we know why you're frustrated, we got the message in the election; we're not going back on our principles, but we're coming right at you because we were hired to help you build a better future for ourselves. That is our only purpose.

If we do these things, their prediction of our demise will be entirely premature. (Applause.) But I ask you now, once again, to think about what your responsibility is. We always talk about what other people's responsibilities are. What's your responsibility? It's to join me in the arena -- not in the peanut gallery -- in the arena; and fight, and roll up your sleeves, and be willing to make a mistake now and then, and be willing to put your shoulder to the wheel. Be willing to engage. Be willing to struggle. Be willing to debate. And enjoy this.

The American people are going through a great period of change. But let me tell you something, folks, this is a very great country. We can stand this conflict. This can be good for us. It can be good for our party, but, more importantly, it can be good for the American people. Never forget that it is not accident that it was the United States that was asked to be involved in putting an end to all this conflict that's gone on in Northern Ireland; the United States that was asked to stand up to aggression in the Gulf; or work on peace in the Middle East; or restore democracy to Haiti.

We are committed to the rest of the world, but we should see ourselves sometimes a little more the way they see us. This is a very great country. The responsibility we have is not to win elections, it is to fight for the people about whom elections are fought. (Applause.) If we fight for them and their children, then the elections will take care of themselves. And if they don't, we'll still be doing what's right. That's my commitment, and it ought to be yours.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

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9:14 P.M. EST

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END

9:14 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 24, 1995

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

U.S. Capitol

9:14 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, members of the 104th Congress, my fellow Americans: Again we are here in the sanctuary of democracy, and once again, our democracy has spoken. So let me begin by congratulating all of you here in the 104th Congress, and congratulating you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause.)

If we agree on nothing else tonight, we must agree that the American people certainly voted for change in 1992 and in 1994. (Applause.) And as I look out at you, I know how some of you must have felt in 1992. (Laughter and applause.)

I must say that in both years we didn't hear America singing, we heard America shouting. And now all of us, Republicans and Democrats alike, must say: We hear you. We will work together to earn the jobs you have given us. (Applause.) For we are the keepers of the sacred trust, and we must be faithful to it in this new and very demanding era.

Over 200 years ago, our founders changed the entire course of human history by joining together to create a new country based on a single powerful idea: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

It has fallen to every generation since then to preserve that idea -- the American idea -- and to deepen and expand its meaning to new and different times: To Lincoln and his Congress, to preserve the Union and to end slavery. To Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, to restrain the abuses and excesses of the Industrial Revolution, and to assert our leadership in the world. To Franklin Roosevelt, to fight the failure and pain of the Great Depression, and to win our country's great struggle against fascism. And to all our presidents since, to fight the Cold War.

Especially, I recall two who struggled to fight that Cold War in partnership with congresses where the majority was of a different party. To Harry Truman, who summoned us to unparalleled prosperity at home, and who built the architecture of the Cold War. And to Ronald Reagan, whom we wish well tonight, and who exhorted us to carry on until the twilight struggle against communism was won. (Applause.)

In another time of change and challenge, I had the honor to be the first president to be elected in the post-Cold War era, an era marked by the global economy, the information revolution, unparalleled change and opportunity and insecurity for the American people.

I came to this hallowed chamber two years ago on a mission -- to restore the American Dream for all our people and to

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make sure that we move into the 21st century still the strongest force for freedom and democracy in the entire world. I was determined then to tackle the tough problems too long ignored. In this effort I am frank to say that I have made my mistakes, and I have learned again the importance of humility in all human endeavor. But I am also proud to say tonight that our country is stronger than it was two years ago. (Applause.)

Record numbers -- record numbers of Americans are succeeding in the new global economy. We are at peace and we are a force for peace and freedom throughout the world. We have almost six million new jobs since I became president, and we have the lowest combined rate of unemployment and inflation in 25 years. (Applause.) Our businesses are more productive and here we have worked to bring the deficit down, to expand trade, to put more police on our streets, to give our citizens more of the tools they need to get an education and to rebuild their own communities.

But the rising tide is not lifting all boats. While our nation is enjoying peace and prosperity, too many of our people are still working harder and harder, for less and less. While our businesses are restructuring and growing more productive and competitive, too many of our people still can't be sure of having a job next year or even next month. And far more than our material riches are threatened; things far more precious too us -- our children, our families, our values.

Our civil life is suffering in America today. Citizens are working together less and shouting at each other more. The common bonds of community which have been the great strength of our country from its very beginning are badly frayed. What are we to do about it?

More than 60 years ago, at the dawn of another new era, President Roosevelt told our nation, "New conditions impose new requirements on government and those who conduct government." And from that simple proposition, he shaped the New Deal, which helped to restore our nation to prosperity and define the relationship between our people and their government for half a century.

That approach worked in its time. But we today, we face a very different time and very different conditions. We are moving from an Industrial Age built on gears and sweat to an Information Age demanding skills and learning and flexibility. Our government, once a champion of national purpose, is now seen by many as simply a captive of narrow interests, putting more burdens on our citizens rather than equipping them to get ahead. The values that used to hold us all together seem to be coming apart.

So tonight, we must forge a new social compact to meet the challenges of this time. As we enter a new era, we need a new set of understandings, not just with government, but even more important, with one another as Americans.

That's what I want to talk with you about tonight. I call it the New Covenant. But it's grounded in a very, very old idea -- that all Americans have not just a right, but a solid responsibility to rise as far as their God-given talents and determination can take them; and to give something back to their communities and their country in return. Opportunity and responsibility: They go hand in hand. We can't have one without the other. And our national community can't hold together without both. (Applause.)

Our New Covenant is a new set of understandings for how we can equip our people to meet the challenges of a new economy, how we can change the way our government works to fit a different time, and, above all, how we can repair the damaged bonds in our society

and come together behind our common purpose. We must have dramatic change in our economy, our government and ourselves.

My fellow Americans, without regard to party, let us rise to the occasion. Let us put aside partisanship and pettiness and pride. As we embark on this new course, let us put our country first, remembering that regardless of party label, we are all Americans. And let the final test of everything we do be a simple one: Is it good for the American people? (Applause.)

Let me begin by saying that we cannot ask Americans to be better citizens if we are not better servants. You made a good start by passing that law which applies to Congress all the laws you put on the private sector, and I was proud to sign it yesterday. (Applause.)

But we have a lot more to do before people really trust the way things work around here. Three times as many lobbyists are in the streets and corridors of Washington as were here 20 years ago. The American people look at their capital and they see a city where the well-connected and the well-protected can work the system, but the interests of ordinary citizens are often left out.

As the new Congress opened its doors, lobbyists were still doing business as usual -- the gifts, the trips, all the things that people are concerned about haven't stopped. Twice this month you missed opportunities to stop these practices. I know there were other considerations in those votes, but I want to use something that I've heard my Republican friends say from time to time -- there doesn't have to be a law for everything. So tonight, I ask you to just stop taking the lobbyists' perks. Just stop. (Applause.)

We don't have to wait for legislation to pass to send a strong signal to the American people that things are really changing. But I also hope you will send me the strongest possible lobby reform bill, and I'll sign that, too. (Applause.)

We should require lobbyists to tell the people for whom they work what they're spending, what they want. We should also curb the role of big money in elections by capping the cost of campaigns and limiting the influence of PACs. (Applause.)

And as I have said for three years, we should work to open the airwaves so that they can be an instrument of democracy, not a weapon of destruction by giving free TV time to candidates for public office. (Applause.)

When the last Congress killed political reform last year, it was reported in the press that the lobbyists actually stood in the halls of this sacred building and cheered. This year, let's give the folks at home something to cheer about. (Applause.)

More important, I think we all agree that we have to change the way the government works. Let's make it smaller, less costly and smaller -- leaner, not meaner. (Applause.)

I just told the Speaker the equal time doctrine is alive and well. (Laughter.)

The New Covenant approach to governing is as different from the old bureaucratic way as the computer is from the manual typewriter. The old way of governing around here protected organized interests. We should look out for the interests of ordinary people. The old way divided us by interest, constituency or class. The New Covenant way should unite us behind a common vision of what's best for our country. The old way dispensed services through large, top-down, inflexible bureaucracies. The New Covenant way should shift these resources and decision-making from bureaucrats to citizens,

injecting choice and competition and individual responsibility into national policy. (Applause.)

The old way of governing around here actually seemed to reward failure. The New Covenant way should have built-in incentives to reward success. The old way was centralized here in Washington. The New Covenant way must take hold in the communities all across America. And we should help them to do that. (Applause.)

Our job here is to expand opportunity, not bureaucracy; to empower people to make the most of their own lives; and to enhance our security here at home and abroad. We must not ask government to do what we should do for ourselves. We should rely on government as a partner to help us to do more for ourselves and for each other. (Applause.)

I hope very much that as we debate these specific and exciting matters, we can go beyond the sterile discussion between the illusion that there is somehow a program for every problem on the one hand, and the other illusion that the government is a source of every problem we have. Our job is to get rid of yesterday's government so that our own people can meet today's and tomorrow's needs. And we ought to do it together. (Applause.)

You know, for years before I became president, I heard others say they would cut government and how bad it was. But not much happened. We actually did it. We cut over a quarter of a trillion dollars in spending, more than 300 domestic programs, more than 100,000 positions from the federal bureaucracy in the last two years alone. Based on decisions already made, we will have cut a total of more than a quarter of a million positions from the federal government, making it the smallest it has been since John Kennedy was president, by the time I come here again next year. (Applause.)

Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, our initiatives have already saved taxpayers \$63 billion. The age of the \$500 hammer and the ashtray you can break on David Letterman is gone. Deadwood programs, like mohair subsidies, are gone. We've streamlined the Agriculture Department by reducing it by more than 1,200 offices. We've slashed the small business loan form from an inch thick to a single page. We've thrown away the government's 10,000-page personnel manual. And the government is working better in important ways: FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, has gone from being a disaster to helping people in disasters. (Applause.)

You can ask the farmers in the Middle West who fought the flood there or the people in California who have dealt with floods and earthquakes and fires, and they'll tell you that. Government workers, working hand in hand with private business, rebuilt Southern California's fractured freeways in record time and under budget. And because the federal government moved fast, all but one of the 5,600 schools damaged in the earthquake are back in business.

Now, there are a lot of other things that I could talk about. I want to just mention one because it will be discussed here in the next few weeks. University administrators all over the country have told me that they are saving weeks and weeks of bureaucratic time now because of our direct college loan program, which makes college loans cheaper and more affordable, with better repayment terms for students, costs the government less, and cuts out paperwork and bureaucracy for the government and for the universities. We shouldn't cap that program. We should give every college in America the opportunity to be a part of it. (Applause.)

Previous government programs gather dust. The reinventing government report is getting results. And we're not

through. There's going to be a second round of reinventing government. We propose to cut \$130 billion in spending by shrinking departments, extending our freeze on domestic spending, cutting 60 public housing programs down to three, getting rid of over 100 programs we do not need, like the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Helium Reserve Program. (Applause.) And we're working on getting rid of unnecessary regulations and making them more sensible. The programs and regulations that have outlived their usefulness should go. We have to cut yesterday's government to help solve tomorrow's problems. (Applause.)

And we need to get government closer to the people its meant to serve. We need to help move programs down to the point where states and communities and private citizens in the private sector can do a better job. If they can do it, we ought to let them do it. We should get out of the way and let them do what they can do better. (Applause.)

Taking power away from federal bureaucracies and giving it back to communities and individuals is something everyone should be able to be for. It's time for Congress to stop passing on to the state the cost of decisions we make here in Washington. (Applause.)

I know there are still serious differences over the details of the unfunded mandates legislation, but I want to work with you to make sure we pass a reasonable bill which will protect the national interests and give justified relief where we need to give it. (Applause.)

For years, Congress concealed in the budget scores of pet spending projects. Last year was no different. There was a \$1 million to study stress in plants, and \$12 million for a tick removal program that didn't work. It's hard to remove ticks; those of us who have had them know. (Laughter.) But, I'll tell you something; if you'll give me the line-item veto, I'll remove some of that unnecessary spending. (Applause.)

But I think we should all remember, and almost all of us would agree, that government still has important responsibilities. Our young people -- we should think of this when we cut -- our young people hold our future in their hands. We still owe a debt to our veterans. (Applause.) And our senior citizens have made us what we are.

Now, my budget cuts a lot. But it protects education, veterans, Social Security and Medicare -- (applause) -- and I hope you will do the same thing. (Applause.) You should, and I hope you will. (Applause.)

And when we give more flexibility to the states, let us remember that there are certain fundamental national needs that should be addressed in every state, north and south, east and west -- immunization against childhood disease -- (applause) -- school lunches in all our schools -- (applause) -- Head Start, medical care and nutrition for pregnant women and infants -- (applause) -- medical care and nutrition for pregnant women and infants. (Applause.) All these things -- (applause) -- all these things are in the national interest.

I applaud your desire to get rid of costly and unnecessary regulations. But when we deregulate, let's remember what national action in the national interest has given us: safer foods for our families, safer toys for our children, safer nursing homes for our parents, safer cars and highways, and safer workplaces, clean air and cleaner water. Do we need common sense and fairness in our regulations? You bet we do. But we can have common sense and still provide for safe drinking water. We can have fairness and still clean up toxic dumps, and we ought to do it. (Applause.)

Should we cut the deficit more? Well, of course, we should. Of course, we should. (Applause.) But we can bring it down in a way that still protects our economic recovery and does not unduly punish people who should not be punished, but instead should be helped.

I know many of you in this chamber support the balanced budget amendment. (Applause.) I certainly want to balance the budget. Our administration has done more to bring the budget down and to save money than any in a very, very long time. (Applause.) If you believe passing this amendment is the right thing to do, then you have to be straight with the American people. They have a right to know what you're going to cut -- (applause) -- and how it's going to affect them. (Applause.)

We should be doing things in the open around here. For example, everybody ought to know if this proposal is going to endanger Social Security. (Applause.) I would oppose that, and I think most Americans would.

Nothing is done more to undermine our sense of common responsibility than our failed welfare system. This is one of the problems we have to face here in Washington in our New Covenant. It rewards welfare over work. It undermines family values. It lets millions of parents get away without paying their child support. It keeps a minority, but a significant minority of the people on welfare trapped on it for a very long time.

I worked on this problem for a long time, nearly 15 years now. As a governor I had the honor of working with the Reagan administration to write the last welfare reform bill back in 1988. In the last two years we made a good start in continuing the work of welfare reform. Our administration gave two dozen states the right to slash through federal rules and regulations to reform their own welfare systems, and to try to promote work and responsibility over welfare and dependency.

Last year I introduced the most sweeping welfare reform plan ever presented by an administration. We have to make welfare what it was meant to be -- a second chance, not a way of life. We have to help those on welfare move to work as quickly as possible, to provide child care and teach them skills if that's what they need for up to two years. And after that, there ought to be a simple hard rule: anyone who can work must go to work. (Applause.) If a parent isn't paying child support, they should be forced to pay. (Applause.) We should suspend drivers' licenses, track the across state lines, make them work off what they owe. That is what we should do. Governments do not raise children, people do. And the parents must take responsibility for the children they bring into this world. (Applause.)

I want to work with you, with all of you, to pass welfare reform. But our goal must be to liberate people and lift them up, from dependence to independence, from welfare to work, from mere childbearing to responsible parenting. Our goal should not be to punish them because they happen to be poor. (Applause.)

We should -- we should require work and mutual responsibility. But we shouldn't cut people off just because they're poor, they're young, or even because they're unmarried. We should promote responsibility by requiring young mothers to live at home with their parents or in other supervised settings, by requiring them to finish school. But we shouldn't put them and their children out on the street. (Applause.)

And I know all the arguments, pro and con, and I have read and thought about this for a long time. I still don't think we

can in good conscious punish poor children for the mistakes of their parents. (Applause.) My fellow Americans, every single survey shows that all the American people care about this without regard to party or race or region. So let this be the year we end welfare as we know it. But also let this be the year that we are all able to stop using this issue to divide America.

No one is more eager to end welfare -- (applause.) I may be the only president who has actually had the opportunity to sit in a welfare office, who's actually spent hours and hours talking to people on welfare. And I am telling you, people who are trapped on it know it doesn't work. They also want to get off. So we can promote together education and work and good parenting. I have no problem with punishing bad behavior or the refusal to be a worker or a student, or a responsible parent. I just don't want to punish poverty and past mistakes. All of us have made our mistakes, and none of us can change our yesterdays. But every one of us can change our tomorrows. (Applause.)

And America's best example of that may be Lynn Woolsey, who worked her way off welfare to become a congresswoman from the state of California. (Applause.)

I know the members of this Congress are concerned about crime, as are all the citizens of our country. And I remind you that last year, we passed a very tough crime bill -- longer sentences, three strikes and you're out, almost 60 new capital punishment offenses, more prisons, more prevention, 100,000 more police. And we paid for it all by reducing the size of the federal bureaucracy and giving the money back to local communities to lower the crime rate.

There may be other things we can do to be tougher on crime, to be smarter with crime, to help to lower that rate first. Well, if there are, let's talk about them and let's do them. But let's not go back on the things that we did last year that we know work; that we know work because the local law enforcement officers tell us that we did the right things, because local community leaders who have worked for years and years to lower the crime rate tell us that they work.

Let's look at the experience of our cities and our rural areas where the crime rate has gone down and ask the people who did it how they did it. And if what we did last year supports the decline in the crime rate -- and I am convinced that it does -- let us not go back on it. Let's stick with it, implement it. We've got four more hard years of work to do to do that. (Applause.)

I don't want to destroy the good atmosphere in the room or in the country tonight, but I have to mention one issue that divided this body greatly last year. The last Congress also passed the Brady Bill and, in the crime bill, the ban on 19 assault weapons. I don't think it's a secret to anybody in this room that several members of the last Congress who voted for that aren't here tonight because they voted for it. (Applause.) And I know, therefore, that some of you who are here because they voted for it are under enormous pressure to repeal it. I just have to tell you how I feel about it.

The members of Congress who voted for that bill and I would never do anything to infringe on the right to keep and bear arms to hunt and to engage in other appropriate sporting activities. I've done it since I was a boy, and I'm going to keep right on doing it until I can't do it anymore. But a lot of people laid down their seats in Congress so that police officers and kids wouldn't have to lay down their lives under a hail of assault weapon attack -- and I will not let that be repealed. (Applause.) I will not let it be repealed. (Applause.)

I'd like to talk about a couple of other issues we have to deal with. I want us to cut more spending, but I hope we won't cut government programs that help to prepare us for the new economy, promote responsibility and are organized from the grass roots up, not by federal bureaucracy. The very best example of this is the National Service Corps -- AmeriCorps. (Applause.)

It passed with strong bipartisan support. And now there are 20,000 Americans, more than every served in one year in the Peace Corps, working all over this country, helping people person to person in local, grass-roots volunteer groups, solving problems and, in the process, earning some money for their education. This is citizenship at its best. It's good for the AmeriCorps members, but it's good for the rest of us, too. It's the essence of the New Covenant, and we shouldn't stop it. (Applause.)

All Americans, not only in the states most heavily affected, but in every place in this country, are rightly disturbed by the large numbers of illegal aliens entering our country. The jobs they hold might otherwise be held by citizens or legal immigrants. The public service they use impose burdens on our taxpayers. That's why our administration has moved aggressively to secure our borders more by hiring a record number of new border guards, by deporting twice as many criminal aliens as ever before, by cracking down on illegal hiring, by barring welfare benefits to illegal aliens.

In the budget I will present to you we will try to do more to speed the deportation of illegal aliens who are arrested for crimes, to better identify illegal aliens in the workplace as recommended by the commission headed by former Congresswoman Barbara Jordan.

We are a nation of immigrants. But we are also a nation of laws. It is wrong and ultimately self-defeating for a nation of immigrants to permit the kind of abuse of our immigration laws we have seen in recent years, and we must do more to stop it. (Applause.)

The most important job of our government in this new era is to empower the American people to succeed in the global economy. America has always been a land of opportunity, a land where, if you work hard, you can get ahead. We've become a great middle class country. Middle class values sustain us. We must expand that middle class, and shrink the underclass, even as we do everything we can to support the millions of Americans who are already successful in the new economy.

America is once again the world's strongest economic power, almost six million new jobs in the last two years, exports booming, inflation down, high-wage jobs are coming back. A record number of American entrepreneurs are living the American Dream. If we want it to stay that way, those who work and lift our nation must have more of its benefits.

Today, too many of those people are being left out. They're working harder for less. They have less security, less income, less certainty that they can even afford a vacation, much less college for their kids or retirement for themselves. We cannot let this continue.

If we don't act, our economy will probably keep doing what it's been doing since about 1978, when the income growth began to go to those at the very top of our economic scale and the people in the vast middle got very little growth, and people who worked like crazy but were on the bottom then fell even further and further behind in the years afterward -- no matter how hard they worked.

We've got to have a government that can be a real partner in making this new economy work for all of our people; a government that helps each and every one of us to get an education, and to have the opportunity to renew our skills. That's why we worked so hard to increase educational opportunities in the last two years -- from Head Start to public schools, to apprenticeships for young people who don't go to college, to making college loans more available and more affordable. That's the first thing we have to do. We've got to do something to empower people to improve their skills.

The second thing we ought to do is to help people raise their incomes immediately by lowering their taxes. (Applause.) We took the first step in 1993 with a working family tax cut for 15 million families with incomes under \$27,000; a tax cut that this year will average about \$1,000 a family. And we also gave tax reductions to most small and new businesses.

Before we could do more than that, we first had to bring down the deficit we inherited, and we had to get economic growth up. Now we've done both. And now we can cut taxes in a more comprehensive way. But tax cuts should reinforce and promote our first obligation -- to empower our citizens through education and training to make the most of their own lives.

The spotlight should shine on those who make the right choices for themselves, their families and their communities. I have proposed the Middle Class Bill of Rights, which should properly be called the Bill of Rights and Responsibilities because its provisions only benefit those who are working to educate and raise their children and to educate themselves. It will, therefore, give needed tax relief and raise incomes in both the short run and the long run in a way that benefits all of us.

There are four provisions. First, a tax deduction for all education and training after high school. (Applause.) If you think about it, we permit businesses to deduct their investment, we permit individuals to deduct interest on their home mortgages, but today an education is even more important to the economic well-being of our whole country than even those things are. We should do everything we can to encourage it. And I hope you will support it.

Second, we ought to cut taxes, \$500 for families with children under 13. (Applause.)

Third, we ought to foster more savings and personal responsibility by permitting people to establish an Individual Retirement Account and withdraw from it tax free for the cost of education, health care, first-time home-buying or the care of a parent. (Applause.)

And fourth, we should pass a G.I. Bill for America's workers. We propose to collapse nearly 70 federal programs and not give the money to the states, but give the money directly to the American people; offer vouchers to them so that they, if they're laid off or if they're working for a very low wage, can get a voucher worth \$2,600 a year for up to two years to go to their local community colleges or wherever else they want to get the skills they need to improve their lives. Let's empower people in this way. Move it from the government directly to the workers of America. (Applause.)

Now, any one of us can call for a tax cut, but I won't accept one that explodes the deficit or puts our recovery at risk. We ought to pay for our tax cuts fully and honestly. (Applause.)

Just two years ago, it was an open question whether we would find the strength to cut the deficit. Thanks to the courage of the people who were here then, many of whom didn't return, we did cut

the deficit. We began to do what others said would not be done. We cut the deficit by over \$600 billion, about \$10,000 for every family in this country. It's coming down three years in a row for the first time since Mr. Truman was president, and I don't think anybody in America wants us to let it explode again. (Applause.)

In the budget I will send you, the Middle Class Bill of Rights is fully paid for by budget cuts in bureaucracy, cuts in programs, cuts in special interest subsidies. And the spending cuts will more than double the tax cuts. My budget pays for the Middle Class Bill of Rights without any cuts in Medicare. And I will oppose any attempts to pay for tax cuts with Medicare cuts. That's not the right thing to do. (Applause.)

I know that a lot of you have your own ideas about tax relief, and some of them I find quite interesting. I really want to work with all of you. My test for our proposals will be: Will it create jobs and raise incomes? Will it strengthen our families and support our children? Is it paid for? Will it build the middle class and shrink the underclass? If it does, I'll support it. But if it doesn't, I won't.

The goal of building the middle class and shrinking the underclass is also why I believe that you should raise the minimum wage. (Applause.) It rewards work. Two and a half million Americans -- 2.5 million Americans, often women with children, are working out there today for \$4.25 an hour. In terms of real buying power, by next year that minimum wage will be at a 40-year low. That's not my idea of how the new economy ought to work.

Now, I've studied the arguments and the evidence for and against a minimum wage increase. I believe the weight of the evidence is that a modest increase does not cost jobs, and may even lure people back into the job market. But the most important thing is, you can't make a living on \$4.25 an hour. (Applause.) Especially if you have children, even with the working families tax cut we passed last year. In the past, the minimum wage has been a bipartisan issue, and I think it should be again. So I want to challenge you to have honest hearings on this; to get together; to find a way to make the minimum wage a living wage.

Members of Congress have been here less than a month, but by the end of the week, 28 days into the new year, every member of Congress will have earned as much in congressional salary as a minimum wage worker makes all year long. (Applause.)

Everybody else here, including the President, has something else that too many Americans do without, and that's health care. Now, last year, we almost came to blows over health care. But we didn't do anything. And the cold, hard fact is that, since last year, since I was here, another 1.1 million Americans in working families have lost their health care. And the cold, hard fact is that many millions more, most of them farmers and small businesspeople and self-employed people, have seen their premiums skyrocket, their co-pays and deductibles go up. There's a whole bunch of people in this country that, in the statistics have health insurance, but really what they've got is a piece of paper that says they won't lose their home if they get sick.

Now, I still believe our country has got to move toward providing health security for every American family. (Applause.) But I know that last year, as the evidence indicates, we bit off more than we could chew. So I'm asking you that we work together. Let's do it step by step. Let's do whatever we have to do to get something done. Let's at least pass meaningful insurance reform so that no American risks losing coverage for facing skyrocketing prices. (Applause.) That nobody loses their coverage because they face high

prices or unavailable insurance, when they change jobs and lose a job, or a family member gets sick.

I want to work together with all of you who have an interest in this -- with the Democrats who worked on it last time, with the Republican leaders like Senator Dole who has a longtime commitment to health care reform and made some constructive proposals in this area last year. We ought to make sure that self-employed people in small businesses can buy insurance at more affordable rates through voluntary purchasing pools. We ought to help families provide long-term care for a sick parent or a disabled child. We can work to help workers who lose their jobs at least keep their health insurance coverage for a year while they look for work. And we can find a way -- it may take some time, but we can find a way -- to make sure that our children have health care. (Applause.)

You know, I think everybody in this room, without regard to party, can be proud of the fact that our country was rated as having the world's most productive economy for the first time in nearly a decade. But we can't be proud of the fact that we're the only wealthy country in the world that has a smaller percentage of the work force and their children with health insurance today than we did 10 years ago, the last time we were the most productive economy in the world. So let's work together on this. It is too important for politics as usual. (Applause.)

Much of what the American people are thinking about tonight is what we've already talked about. A lot of people think that the security concerns of America today are entirely internal to our borders. They relate to the security of our jobs and our homes, and our incomes and our children, our streets, our health and protecting those borders. Now that the Cold War has passed, it's tempting to believe that all the security issues, with the possible exception of trade, reside here at home. But it's not so. Our security still depends upon our continued world leadership for peace and freedom and democracy. We still can't be strong at home unless we're strong abroad.

The financial crisis in Mexico is a case in point. I know it's not popular to say it tonight, but we have to act. Not for the Mexican people, but for the sake of the millions of Americans whose livelihoods are tied to Mexico's well-being. If we want to secure American jobs, preserve American exports, safeguard America's borders, then we must pass the stabilization program and help to put Mexico back on track.

Now let me repeat: it's not a loan, it's not foreign aid, it's not a bail out. We will be given a guarantee like co-signing a note with good collateral that will cover our risks. This legislation is the right thing for America. That's why the bipartisan leadership has supported it. And I hope you in Congress will pass it quickly. It is in our interest, and we can explain it to the American people, because we're going to do it in the right way. (Applause.)

You know, tonight, this is the first State of the Union address ever delivered since the beginning of the Cold War when not a single Russian missile is pointed at the children of America. (Applause.) And along with the Russians, we're on the way to destroying the missiles and the bombers that carry 9,000 nuclear warheads. We've come so far so fast in this post-Cold War world that it's easy to take the decline of the nuclear threat for granted. But it's still there, and we aren't finished yet.

This year I'll ask the Senate to approve START II, to eliminate weapons that carry 5,000 more warheads. The United States will lead the charge to extend indefinitely the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty -- (applause); to enact a comprehensive

nuclear test ban -- (applause); and to eliminate chemical weapons. (applause.) To stop and roll back North Korea's potentially deadly nuclear program, we'll continue to implement the agree we have reached with that nation. It's smart; it's tough; it's a deal based on continuing inspection with safeguards for our allies and ourselves. (Applause.)

This year I'll submit to Congress comprehensive legislation to strengthen our hand in combatting terrorists -- whether they strike at home or abroad. As the coward's who bombed the World Trade Center found out, this country will hunt down terrorists and bring them to justice. (Applause.)

Just this week, another horrendous terrorist act in Israel killed 19 and injured scores more. On behalf of the American people and all of you, I send our deepest sympathy to the families of the victims. I know that in the face of such evil, it is hard for the people in the Middle East to go forward. But the terrorists represent the past, not the future. We must and we will pursue a comprehensive peace between Israel and all her neighbors in the Middle East. (Applause.)

Accordingly, last night I signed an executive order that will block the assets in the United States of terrorist organizations that threaten to disrupt the peace process. It prohibits financial transactions with these groups. And tonight I call on our allies and peace-loving nations throughout the world to join us with renewed fervor in a global effort to combat terrorism. We cannot permit the future to be marred by terror and fear and paralysis. (Applause.)

From the day I took the oath of office, I pledged that our nation would maintain the best-equipped, best-trained and best-prepared military on Earth. We have, and they are. They have managed the dramatic downsizing of our forces after the Cold War with remarkable skill and spirit. But to make sure our military is ready for action, and to provide the pay and the quality of life the military and their families deserve, I'm asking the Congress to add \$25 billion in defense spending over the next six years. (Applause.)

I have visited many bases at home and around the world, since I became president. Tonight, I repeat that request with renewed conviction. We ask a very great deal of our Armed Forces. Now that they are smaller in number, we ask more of them. They go out more often to more different places and stay longer. They are called to service in many, many ways. And we must give them and their families what the times demand and what they have earned. (Applause.)

Just think about what our troops have done in the last year, showing America at its best -- helping to save hundreds of thousands of people in Rwanda, moving with lightning speech to head off another threat to Kuwait, giving freedom and democracy back to the people of Haiti. (Applause.)

We have proudly supported peace and prosperity and freedom from South Africa to Northern Ireland, from Central and Eastern Europe to Asia, from Latin America to the Middle East. All these endeavors are good in those places, but they make our future more confident and more secure.

Well, my fellow Americans, that's my agenda for America's future: Expanding opportunity, not bureaucracy; enhancing security at home and abroad; empowering our people to make the most of their own lives. It's ambitious and achievable, but it's not enough. We even need more than new ideas for changing the world or equipping Americans to compete in the new economy; more than a government that's smaller, smarter and wiser; more than all the

changes we can make in government and in the private sector from the outside in.

Our fortunes and our posterity also depend upon our ability to answer some questions from within -- from the values and voices that speak to our hearts as well as our heads; voices that tell us we have to do more to accept responsibility for ourselves and our families, for our communities, and, yes, for our fellow citizens. We see our families and our communities all over this country coming apart. And we feel the common ground shifting from under us. The PTA, the town hall meeting, the ball park -- it's hard for a lot of overworked parents to find the time and space for those things that strengthen the bonds of trust and cooperation. Too many of our children don't even have parents and grandparents who can give them those experiences that they need to build their own character and their sense of identity.

We all know what while we here in this chamber can make a difference on those things, that the real differences will be made by our fellow citizens -- where they work and where they live. And it will be made almost without regard to party. When I used to go to the softball park in Little Rock to watch my daughter's league, and people would come up to me, fathers and mothers, and talk to me, I can honestly say I had no idea whether 90 percent of them were Republicans or Democrats. When I visited the relief centers after the floods in California -- Northern California -- last week, a woman came up to me and did something that very few of you would do -- she hugged me and said, "Mr. President, I'm a Republican, but I'm glad you're here." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, why? We can't wait for disasters to act the way we used to act every day. Because as we move into this next century, everybody matters; we don't have a person to waste. And a lot of people are losing a lot of chances to do better. That means that we need a New Covenant for everybody.

For our corporate and business leaders, we're going to work here to keep bringing the deficit down, to expand markets, to support their success in every possible way. But they have an obligation when they're doing well to keep jobs in our communities and give their workers a fair share of the prosperity they generate. (Applause.)

For people in the entertainment industry in this country, we applaud your creativity and your world-wide success, and we support your freedom of expression. But you do have a responsibility to assess the impact of your work and to understand the damage that comes from the incessant, repetitive, mindless violence and irresponsible conduct that permeates our media all the time. (Applause.)

We've got to ask our community leaders and all kinds of organizations to help us stop our most serious social problem: the epidemic of teen pregnancies and births where there is no marriage. I have sent to Congress a plan to target schools all over this country with anti-pregnancy programs that work. But government can only do so much. Tonight, I call on parents and leaders all across this country to join together in a national campaign against teen pregnancy to make a difference. We can do this, and we must. (Applause.)

And I would like to say a special word to our religious leaders. You know, I'm proud of the fact the United States has more houses of worship per capita than any country in the world. These people who lead our houses of worship can ignite their congregations to carry their faith into action; can reach out to all of our children, to all of the people in distress, to those who have been savaged by the breakdown of all we hold dear. Because so much of

what we've done must come from the inside out, and our religious leaders and their congregations can make all the difference. They have a role in the New Covenant as well.

There must be more responsibility for all of our citizens. You know, it takes a lot of people to help all the kids in trouble stay off the streets and in school. It takes a lot of people to build the Habitat for Humanity houses that the Speaker celebrates on his lapel pin. It takes a lot of people to provide the people power for all of the civic organizations in this country that made our communities mean so much to most of us when we were kids. It takes every parent to teach the children the difference between right and wrong and to encourage them to learn and grow; and to say no to the wrong things, but also to believe that they can be whatever they want to be.

I know it's hard when you're working harder for less, when you're under great stress to do these things. A lot of our people don't have the time or the emotional stress they think to do the work of citizenship.

Most of us in politics haven't helped very much. For years, we've mostly treated citizens like they were consumers or spectators, sort of political couch potatoes who were supposed to watch the TV ads, either promise them something for nothing or play on their fears and frustrations. And more and more of our citizens now get most of their information in very negative and aggressive ways that are hardly conducive to honest and open conversations. But the truth is, we have got to stop seeing each other as enemies, just because we have different views.

If you go back to the beginning of this country, the great strength of America, as de Tocqueville pointed out when he came here a long time ago, has always been our ability to associate with people who were different from ourselves and to work together to find common ground. And in this day, everybody has a responsibility to do more of that. We simply cannot wait for a tornado, a fire, or a flood to behave like Americans ought to behave in dealing with one another. (Applause.)

I want to finish up here by pointing out some folks that are up with the First Lady that represent what I'm trying to talk about -- citizens. I have no idea what their party affiliation is or who they voted for in the last election. But they represent what we ought to be doing.

Cindy Perry teaches second graders to read in AmeriCorps in rural Kentucky. She gains when she gives. She's a mother of four. She says that her service inspired her to get her high school equivalency last year. (Applause.) She was married when she was a teenager. Stand up, Cindy. (Applause.) She was married when she was a teenager. She had four children, but she had time to serve other people, to get her high school equivalency. And she's going to use her AmeriCorps money to go back to college. (Applause.)

Stephen Bishop is the police chief of Kansas City. (Applause.) He's been a national leader. (Applause.) Stand up -- (applause). He's been a national leader in using more police in community policing, and he's worked with AmeriCorps to do it. And the crime rate in Kansas City has gone down as a result of what he did.

Corporal Gregory Depestre went to Haiti as part of his adopted country's force to help secure democracy in his native land. (Applause.) And I might add, we must be the only country in the world that could have gone to Haiti and taken Haitian-Americans there who could speak the language and talk to the people. And he was one of them, and we're proud of him. (Applause.)

The next two folks I've had the honor of meeting and getting to know a little bit, the Reverend John and the Reverend Diana Cherry of the AME Zion Church in Temple Hills, Maryland. I'd like to ask them to stand. (Applause.) I want to tell you about them. In the early '80s, they left government service and formed a church in a small living room in a small house, in the early '80s. Today that church has 17,000 members. It is one of the three or four biggest churches in the entire United States. It grows by 200 a month. They do it together. And the special focus of their ministry is keeping families together. (Applause.)

Two things they did make a big impression on me. I visited their church once, and I learned they were building a new sanctuary closer to the Washington, D.C., line in a higher crime, higher drug rate area because they thought it was part of their ministry to change the lives of the people who needed them. (Applause.)

The second thing I want to say is, that once Reverend Cherry was at a meeting at the White House with some other religious leaders, and he left early to go back to his church to minister to 150 couples that he had brought back to his church from all over America to convince them to come back together, to save their marriages, and to raise their kids. This is the kind of work that citizens are doing in America. We need more of it, and it ought to be lifted up and supported. (Applause.)

The last person I want to introduce is Jack Lucas from Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Jack, would you stand up? (Applause.) Fifty years ago, in the sands of Iwo Jima, Jack Lucas taught and learned the lessons of citizenship. On February the 20th, 1945, he and three of his buddies encountered the enemy and two grenades at their feet. Jack Lucas threw himself on both of them. In that moment, he saved the lives of his companions, and miraculously in the next instant, a medic saved his life. He gained a foothold for freedom, and at the age of 17, just a year older than his grandson, who is up there with him today, and his son, who is a West Point graduate and a veteran, at 17, Jack Lucas became the youngest Marine in history and the youngest soldier in this century to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. (Applause.)

All these years later, yesterday, here's what he said about that day: "It didn't matter where you were from or who you were, you relied on one another. You did it for your country."

We all gain when we give, and we reap what we sow. That's at the heart of this New Covenant -- responsibility, opportunity and citizenship. More than stale chapters in some remote civics book; they're still the virtue by which we can fulfill ourselves and reach our God-given potential and be like them; and also to fulfill the eternal promise of this country -- the enduring dream from that first and most sacred covenant.

I believe every person in this country still believes that we are created equal, and given by our Creator, the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. This is a very, very great country. And our best days are still to come.

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

END

10:35 P.M. EST

Five years, 10 years, 20 years from now, do you realize that 90 percent of what we are so obsessed with in the moment, no one will ever be able to remember? What this is about is getting people together and getting things done. And this is a city that understands that. That's the kind of mayor you have. That's what this community college is all about, getting things done. And if you want me to get things done, you have to say to the Members of Congress, "act." The one person you don't have to say it to is Dan Rostenkowski. It's in his bones, and he will do it, too. Thank you.

Let me just say one thing in closing. Sometimes I think Chicago works better than some other cities because you are instinctively, I think, maybe better organized. You understand community roots and deep ties and binds. I look around here and I see these health care professionals, I see these fine police officers in their uniforms. You know, there are a lot of things we have to face in this country that the President and the Congress can't fix alone. Teachers still teach kids in classrooms a long way from Washington. Police officers walk beats on streets a long way from Washington. There is nothing I can do except to try to help you have the opportunity, those of you who are students here, to have a better education and the opportunity to have the jobs if you get the education. You still have to seize it.

So the last thing I wish to say to you is, if we are going to meet our obligations to the future, every one of us has got to ask ourselves, what do we have to do as citizens to keep these kids alive, to give them a better future, to make sure that the education is there, to invest in the areas that we have run off and left, to build a better future? We have serious obligations. We are coming to the end of a century; we are coming to the end of a millennium; we are going into a whole new era in world history. And we, we have to meet our obligations if we're going to keep the American dream alive in that era. I'm going to do my best, and I hope you will too.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:16 a.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Chicago Mayor Richard Daley and Raymond Le Feavour, president, Wilbur Wright College.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at Hillcrest High School in Country Club Hills, Illinois

February 28, 1994

The President. Thank you very much. It's wonderful to be here. I thank you for your warm reception, and I do mean warm reception. I'm sorry it's so warm, but they had to put the lights up so that the cameras will put you all on the news tonight. So see, it's not so bad now, is it, what do you think about that? [Laughter]

I want to thank my good friend Congressman Mel Reynolds for arranging for me to come here and to be with you today and for the leadership that he is already displaying in his career in Congress. He is a great credit to all of you here, and I think you would be very proud of the work that he does in Washington. I want to thank your principal, Gwendolyn Lee, for inviting me here and for the comments she made. She told me that her mother made dinner for Martin Luther King, when she was 11 years old. And she said her mother sent me a plate that he had dinner off of, so she sent me into a little room out here to have a snack off the same plate. So you see, even when you grow up you've got to try to do what your mama wants. [Laughter] I've spent most of my life doing that myself. I want to thank Starr Nelson for being here with us. I thought she was very well spoken. We knew exactly what she had to say, and she was brief. That makes you very popular if you're a speaker. [Laughter]

Also I want to say I've heard good things about your music program here, so I hope before I leave I get to hear the band play. You guys have got to play a little for me. I also want to thank anybody in this whole student body who was responsible for putting together that statement up there, that letter for me. If every one of you believes that and lives by it, then I don't need to be here, I need to be somewhere else today. It's a very impressive statement and a real credit to your school.

I came here today, as I think all of you know, to talk about the problem of crime and violence in our land and especially as it affects our young people. As the Congress comes back to work this week, it will be con-

sidering some very important education bills and some very important crime legislation. We know as a practical matter that we can never really be what we ought to be as a people until we are not only free of the scourge of violent crime but free of the fear of it. For the very fear of crime keeps 160,000 young people just like you home from school every day. Every day that's how many people we estimate don't go to school because they're afraid that if they do go, either at school or going to school or coming from school, they'll be shot or knifed or beat up or hurt in some way.

I know that you understand that because last November two teens were shot and wounded within a week right outside your school. This kind of thing is happening all across the country, and we have got to do what we can to stop it—you and I together.

The number of teens murdered by guns has doubled just since 1985. You think of that. We've been a country for over 200 years, and the number of our teenagers murdered by guns has doubled in less than 10 years. One in 20 high school students carries a gun to school each day somewhere in America. I hope not here. But it happens. Some do it for protection. Some do it for the wrong reasons.

More and more of our young people find themselves caught up in a cycle of violence. I just left the Wright Community College here in Chicago where I met a woman whose 22-year-old son was murdered by his best friend in just a fight over nothing; over nothing they were fighting. And she said when the young man was arraigned in court he said he missed his friend every day. I had another medical professional tell me that she looked into the face of a woman who had just lost her husband because his younger brother went in another room and got a gun and shot him down because they were fighting over which channel they were going to watch on television. And the guy had two little children—people dying over nothing.

I was in California a few months ago, and I did a town meeting—I'm going to that in a minute here, get rid of this microphone and just let you ask me questions—and I was in Sacramento, California, but we were hooked into three or four other towns and

people all over the State could ask me questions. And this young man stood up and told a story of how he and his brother didn't want to be in a gang, didn't want to have any guns, didn't want to cause any trouble. And their school was unsafe, so they went to another school they thought was safer. And while they were standing in line to register at this safer school, some half-crazy person came into school and shot his brother standing right there in front of him in the line.

These things are happening all over the country. Today, the Brady bill becomes law. It's a bill that will save some lives. It's a bill that will require that no place in America can anybody buy a gun until they've been checked for criminal background or mental health history. And we know that it will keep thousands and thousands of people from getting guns who would otherwise get them, commit crimes, and maybe even kill with them.

We have done our best to deal with the problems, the special problems of assault weapons. We have a lot of evidence now that more and more people are hurt more grievously by guns when semiautomatics or assault weapons are involved because they're likely to have more bullets in their body. Today we banned an assault weapon called the "street sweeper" that was developed for crowd control in South Africa. To enforce apartheid in South Africa, to repress blacks in South Africa, that's what this gun was developed for—now not used anywhere, but manufactured in America so that people can get it and repress each other with it—no sporting purpose, no hunting purpose in this country.

But we have more to do. Congress is also considering, as I said, the crime bill. Let me tell you a little bit about what it does, and then I'll open the floor and you can tell me what else you think we can do. The crime bill now before Congress would permit us to train and hire, working with cities, another 100,000 police officers to work not just to catch criminals but to walk the streets, to know the neighborhoods, to go into the schools, to meet and become friends and neighbors with the young people in the schools. Last month, as Mayor Welch reminded me, Country Club Hills received a

grant for three new police officers from our Justice Department to do this kind of thing. We have seen evidence all across America, even in tough neighborhoods and big cities, that if there are enough police that are really walking the streets, knowing the families, knowing the young people, working with them, that a crime rate can go down by just creating an environment in which people don't commit crimes and feel that there is somebody secure and supportive there.

So that's the first thing that this bill does. The second thing the bill does is to ban about 28 kinds of assault weapons. The third thing it does is to have a safe-schools provision which provides money to help provide security measures in schools but also to try to help young people resolve their differences in different ways. We forget—at least I say, “we,” not you but me, those of us who are older, who grew up in a different time, and who stayed busy all day doing other things—we forget that there are a lot of people who see people resolve their differences hours and hours and hours a day on television programs where the differences are always resolved with a fight or a shooting, and where there may not be someone else saying there's another way to do this. And so we're doing our best through this crime bill to give the schools and the communities of our country the means to bring good gifted people in to work with young people about how to resolve their differences, how to deal with anger, how to deal with frustration.

Let me tell you something: We all feel anger. We all feel frustration. We all feel like we're being thwarted. There are always things that happen to all of us that we wish wouldn't happen and where we want to double up our fist or pick up a stick or something. But we learn not to do that. You have to learn not to do that in a society where you're really going to be civilized and recognize one another's rights. That's what we're struggling for in Bosnia today. That's what we hope for the people of all those countries in Africa which are embroiled in civil wars. And that's what we have to hope for our own people, that we can decide that we can do that. And in the end, that's what the people of the troubled Middle East are going to have

to decide: if they can resolve their differences without killing each other.

So this is a big deal. And this is what is in the crime bill. The crime bill has tougher punishment. It recognizes that most of the really serious crimes are committed by a small number of people, so if you commit three serious violent crimes that hurt people, sequentially, you won't be eligible for parole anymore. But most people who are in prison are going to get out. And most people can be helped before they commit crimes. So we try to find ways to deal with all these other issues.

I can't help saying one thing about drugs that I think is important, and that is that we see some evidence now that drug use, after going down among young people for several years, may now be on the rise again. And I just have to tell you that one of the things that I learn every day as President is to be a little humble about what I can do. That is, I get up every day and I try to do what I can to make the future better for you. My job really is about guaranteeing the future for America, preparing America for the 21st century, trying to keep the American dream alive for you. I've lived most of my life, and I hope more than I can say that none of you have lived most of your lives. I hope the vast majority of your life is still out there ahead of you. But I know that there is a limit to what even the President can do. The President can't keep anybody off drugs. The President can't keep anybody from getting in trouble with the law. The President can't keep anybody from resorting to violence. These are decisions you have to make.

And so I came here to this school today on the first day the Brady bill is effective—a bill for which people fought for 7 years to give you a better chance to be free of violence—to tell you that we're going to keep on fighting against violence. We're going to fight for more police. We're going to fight to have them be friends of the community. We're going to fight for tougher penalties, but we're going to fight for better chances, for young people to have things to say “yes” to.

But in the end, what matters more than all of that is whether you believe what's up there on that wall. And if I do my part and

the Congressman d and the administrat parents and others theirs, in the end w you believe what's your parents and y sume our responsi tough problems no what's on that wall will grow up in th country has ever k we don't do our pa then what you saw were shot outside t ago is the beginnin be. The choice is y I'm going to make r And that's the cho too. Thank you very

Now, where ar here? One, two, th make sure everyb three. So if you ha ment, get it to the name and what clas

Health Care Refor

Q. I'm a sophom School. I was just w uating senior who p next year, what sho eral medical expens reform program?

The President. question. You sho depending on hov should expect to pa payroll out of you someone else. And somewhere betwe and just under 8 pe pending on how bi what the average p ing there is.

Now, having said plug. I just had so that I'll give back t much to health car go to work after yo In 1992, the unemp school dropouts nat cent, and that incl years old. For your

the Congressman does his, and the teachers and the administrators do theirs, and all these parents and others who are here today do theirs, in the end what still counts is whether you believe what's on that wall. But if we, your parents and your grandparents, will assume our responsibility to deal with these tough problems now, and you will believe what's on that wall, then I believe that you will grow up in the most exciting time this country has ever known. And if we don't, if we don't do our part and you don't do yours, then what you saw here when those people were shot outside this school a few months ago is the beginning of just how bad it can be. The choice is yours. The choice is ours. I'm going to make my choice for your future. And that's the choice I want you to make, too. Thank you very much.

Now, where are the microphones out here? One, two, three. Okay wave them. Just make sure everybody can see. One, two, three. So if you have a question or a comment, get it to the microphone. Tell us your name and what class you're in.

Health Care Reform

Q. I'm a sophomore here at Hillcrest High School. I was just wondering, if I were a graduating senior who planned to work full-time next year, what should I expect to pay in general medical expenses under your health care reform program?

The President. Good question. Good question. You should expect to pay, again, depending on how much you make, you should expect to pay about 2 percent of your payroll out of your pocket if you work for someone else. And your employer would pay somewhere between just under 4 percent and just under 8 percent of your payroll, depending on how big your workplace is and what the average payroll of the people working there is.

Now, having said that, let me get in a little plug. I just had some statistics given to me that I'll give back to you that relate not so much to health care but to your decision to go to work after you get out of high school. In 1992, the unemployment rate among high school dropouts nationwide was over 11 percent, and that included people 40 and 50 years old. For younger people it was much,

much higher. Okay? The unemployment rate for high school graduates was 7.2 percent. The unemployment rate for people that had had at least 2 years of a community college or further training was 5.2 percent. And the unemployment rate for college graduates was 3.5 percent. In 1992, the average high school graduate made \$4,000 a year more than the average high school dropout; and the average person who had a high school diploma and at least 2 years of further training made another \$4,000 more.

So my answer is, if you go to work when you get out of high school, enroll in a community college at night or something else and get further education and training so you can get your income up. Then you won't mind paying for health care. *[Laughter]*

And the good news is that right now, under the system we have now, you might or might not get health care, it just depends on the accident of whether your employer provides it. Under our plan, everybody will get it for the first time in the history of the country, and no one will lose it, even if somebody in their family has been sick. That's the biggest problem now: almost everybody in America is at risk of losing their health insurance if something happens to somebody in their family.

Law Enforcement Careers

Q. I'm a junior. And I'd like to know if I was interested in becoming a CIA or FBI or national security agent, what would I have to do as far as education? What would I still have to do to get there?

The President. That's a good question. I think one of my Secret Service agents should talk to you when this is over. You come down here when this is over. I'll introduce you to one of the Secret Service agents and they can tell you about it, okay? What do you think? *[Applause]*

But wait, wait, I'm going to answer the question. The answer to your first question is, though, as an absolute minimum you have to go to college and finish a 4-year college degree. And a lot of the—particularly in the FBI, depending on what they're doing, have further education over that. And a lot of people in Secret Service were once in other kinds of law enforcement. But it's not nec-

essary for you to have a particular degree in law enforcement. A lot of them have done different things. But what I would suggest you do is to literally talk to one of my agents after it's over. But what I suggest you do: go to college, get the best education you can, do well, and keep up with what the requirements for joining these various Federal law enforcement agencies are, so that as you move toward the end of your college career, you can do what it takes to qualify. And if you have to do something else for a year or two before you get in, then that's all right as well.

But it's important that you keep up because, for example, suppose you decide to go do some other kind of law enforcement work first—under our national service proposal, you might be able to start when you're a junior in college working with law enforcement in the summertime, so you get a little leg up on that.

Funding for Education

Q. I'm a junior here at Hillcrest High School. And I would like to know, Mr. President, why is the Government cutting the cost for a college education?

The President. Wait a minute. Why are we—why aren't we cutting the cost, or why are we—

Q. Why are you cutting the funding?

The President. Well, we're not. You may be doing it in Illinois, and at the national level—I don't know that you are. I'm not accusing anybody or anything. [Laughter] But let me tell you this: For several years student aid levels were frozen at the national level, so that, in effect, they were being cut because inflation meant that the money didn't go as far anymore.

This year I have asked the Congress to put more money into the Pell Grant program, which is the college scholarship program for low-income kids that comes out of the Federal Government and also—did you give up on your question? And also, also, we have reorganized the college loan program. This is very important. I want you all to listen to this. We have reorganized the college loan program so that now you can borrow money at lower interest rates, and you can pay it back, no matter how much you borrow, as

a percentage of what you earn after you go to work. Now, a lot of people quit, drop out of school because they worry about the cost of it and they worry about the burden of paying the loans back. So now we are giving everybody who wants it an option. You can pay your loan back basically on a regular loan repayment schedule. But suppose you want to do something that doesn't pay a lot of money, at least when you begin. Suppose you want to become a schoolteacher in the beginning, and you know you're not going to be a millionaire. You could pay your loans back, but you can't pay a whole lot at once. Under our new proposal, you can borrow the money at lower interest rates and you can pay it back over a longer period of time, a smaller amount every year based on your income.

So there will never be a reason not to go to college. In addition to that, this year 20,000 young Americans, and 3 years from now, 100,000 young Americans will be able to earn several thousand dollars in scholarship money by participating in our community service program. So I am trying to make it easier for people to go to college, because it makes a huge difference, as I just quoted to you the numbers, in your employability and your income.

Go ahead.

Public Housing

Q. Hi, I'm a senior here at Hillcrest. My question is, besides giving money to the city of Country Club Hills, in the future do you foresee giving money to the less fortunate communities in the city of Chicago, such as Cabrini Green, so that they as well can fight against drugs and gang activities?

The President. Yes—

Q. And if so, how do you go about completing—

The President. Yes—

Q. —so that we as people can work together instead of working against one another?

The President. Give her a hand. [Applause] First of all, in this last round of grants for law enforcement, where this small community got \$238,000, Chicago got \$4 million to hire more police officers.

But let me just tell you, there are two or three things that are quite important here.

Administration of V

If our crime bill money will come to police officers but also for alternative activities. And in addition to the Department of Housing, President Henry Cisneros over the big public major new initiative homeless, especially to try to deal with the basis and to try to reduce drugs in public housing.

You know, you've seen success in Chicago public housing projects, safe and providing jobs in the projects to work drug free and free of drugs. It is that we've not provided nationwide to do in the country what the housing projects here.

So in this new bill, and through the development Department to give the people a chance like that all across the country, need to do the job. A great question.

Somalia

Q. Mr. President, question, I'd like to ask my brother, who was like to thank you from Somalia.

The President. Well, and through him, the work they did over forever and solve all the problems. We can't run the country. We do was to save hundreds of people from starvation, and to give them a chance out their own problems they'll have to take responsibility at least we've given them a chance to survive. And your of the service he rendered that.

If our crime bill passes, then a lot more money will come to Chicago not only for police officers but also for drug treatment and for alternative activities for young people. And in addition to that, the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros, which has jurisdiction over the big public housing projects, has a major new initiative to try to work with the homeless, especially homeless young people, to try to deal with that on a more permanent basis and to try to improve security and reduce drugs in public housing projects.

You know, you've had some remarkable success in Chicago, actually, cleaning out public housing projects and making them safe and providing jobs for people who live in the projects to work to help to keep them drug free and free of violence. And the truth is that we've not provided enough money nationwide to do in every housing project in the country what has been done in some housing projects here in Chicago.

So in this new round of our budget, through those two areas, through the crime bill, and through the Housing and Urban Development Department, we're going to try to give the people of Chicago and in cities like that all across America the tools they need to do the job. And that was a good question, great question.

Somalia

Q. Mr. President, before I begin with the question, I'd like to thank you for sending my brother, who was in Somalia, home. I'd like to thank you from my family.

The President. Well, I'd like to thank him, and through him, through your family, for the work they did over there. We can't stay forever and solve all the problems of Somalia. We can't run the country. But what we did do was to save hundreds of thousands of people from starvation, to organize life again, and to give them at least a chance to work out their own problems. If they don't do it, they'll have to take responsibility for it. But at least we've given that country a chance to survive. And your brother can be proud of the service he rendered, and I appreciate that.

Education

Q. Welcome, President Clinton. I would like to know—I'm a senior—I would like to know how do you plan to improve the public educational system so that it's equal throughout Illinois and throughout the States?

The President. I'm going to tell you what I'm going to do and then I'm going to be honest with you on the front-end and tell you it's not enough, okay? Because let me say, most public education in America, over 90 percent of it, is funded from State taxes and local taxes, so that the President and the Congress provide a very small percentage of the money that comes to this school district. That's the way it's always been.

I don't know what the numbers are for Illinois, but if I were guessing, I would guess that probably 55 percent of the total cost of public education probably is paid for at the local level. Is that about right? Most of it comes from the State? No, most of it—well anyway, take my word for it—over 90 percent comes from the State and the local level in some relationship.

Some States pay a big percentage of it. Hawaii, for example, pays almost all; there's almost no local taxes in Hawaii. Some States pay almost nothing, and it's all local property taxes. New Hampshire is the most extreme. All the other States—Illinois, New York, everybody else is somewhere in between.

Whenever you use local property taxes to fund schools there will be unequal funding. Why? Because some school districts have more valuable property than others, right? So at any given tax rate—I mean, if you've got—you're going to have that. That is the fundamental problem with inequality in America.

Now, at the national level, we have certain programs designed to help low-income districts and low-income kids or kids from disadvantaged backgrounds, like special education programs or Chapter I programs. What we are doing with our money this year is to put some more money into programs directed toward low-income children, like the Head Start program, and to change—I'm asking the Congress to change the way we give the money out to give more money to the poorer school districts so that we can equalize the funding.

But the reason I tell you it's not enough is, if you put up 90 cents and I put up a dime, I can redistribute my dime, but it still may not overcome your 90 cents. You see what I mean? So what that means is that, in Illinois, if you think it's a real problem and you think a lot of your schools are not being properly funded and it's unequal, you have to solve a lot of this problem at the State level with the State legislature in Springfield. We'll do as much as we can, and I have asked the Congress to do more, but there's a limit to how much we can do.

Spending Priorities

Q. Hello. I'm a sophomore, and I was wondering, how do you justify millions of dollars being spent on space exploration when there are millions of homeless people in our country?

The President. Well for me, it's not a hard justification, but it's a very good question. The way I justify it is this: I think it's important for us to continue our lead in space because I think it helps our national security to be out there first and to always be in a position to shape developments in space, because space has given us a way to cooperate after the cold war with the Russians, the Japanese, the Europeans, and the Canadians. We're all working on the space station together because it creates new high-tech jobs for scientists and for engineers, and they create a lot of wealth for the rest of us, and because in space technology, a lot of things are found out that may have a lot of benefits for us right here on Earth.

I'll just give you just one example. I was down at the headquarters for the American space program in Houston, Texas, the other day, and I saw a motor that was used to pump water in space where it's gravity-free, so the motor obviously has to be very powerful to pump water and make it move where there's no gravity. And they discovered that the exact same technology could be used as a heart pump here on Earth to keep people alive, and it's lighter and better and cheaper to produce than what had been the case here. I also saw cancer cultures growing in space in gravity-free environments where the cells will grow differently, in ways that will enable all kinds of medical research to be done that

may keep a lot of us alive when they get cancer here on Earth.

So I think a nation like ours has to take some of its money and invest it in the future, even though you know it may not work out, even though you can't justify every penny based on immediate benefit. It's like investing in education, in a way. If I invest in your education, I think you're going to come out better. It may be 7 or 8 years down the road, and yet every dollar I spend on education is a dollar we don't spend on the homeless or feeding the hungry or some other problem.

So, I don't believe we're spending enough on the homeless, by the way. And under my budget we're going to spend more. So I can't defend that. But I think that if you were in my position, every one of you, one of the hardest decisions you would have to make is how much money am I going to spend taking care of problems today, and how much money am I going to spend investing in the future so we'll have fewer problems, more jobs, higher incomes, better opportunities? It's one of the hardest decisions I have to make. And like I said, I—by the way, a lot of people in Congress don't agree with me, a lot of people in Congress every year vote to cut the space program and put more money into problems just like you said. And if you were there, you might make the same decision. But as President, I always have to keep one eye on the future and one eye on the present and try to balance the needs in a proper way.

That was a great question. Give him a hand. It was a good question. [Applause]

Q. Hello. I'm a junior at Hillcrest High School. Mr. President, I would like to know why is it that the U.S. gives and helps other countries while we have our own people starving, nowhere to live, crime, no jobs, people on welfare, and gangs? Why don't we start helping our own country and not others? And how is it that you're going to change this around, where we'll become a more industrial country and not where Taiwan and Korea and Japan are beating us in industrial ways?

The President. Good question. Good question. First of all—that's a real good question, don't you think? Good question. First

of all, that's exactly what we have to do, to get us to take care of at home first, because we're not strong at home, and then abroad. So I believe that.

Now, I believe that in the last year, we've taken a economic course of the deficit down; we've created more jobs; we've opened up more economy; we're opening up more American products and services that can compete with the rest of the world.

But you need to know that our economy grew more than the economy of Europe and Japan, and that we are starting to create more jobs, and that we are beginning to realize that that is my first and foremost priority, the overwhelming priority.

Now, let me say to you that we're giving a smaller percentage of our foreign aid than the Europeans do, the Japanese give more aid than we do now. That's a big problem; indeed, that's the strongest count against us haven't even—I have to persuade Congress yet to increase what we owe just to pay off the United Nations.

And we have to spend more on this young market, this space program. It's hard to draw a dividing line here between what we do at home and abroad in the sense that we have to make sure that our income depends on our products and services, and we have to live in a global economy.

The next time you think about it, pay attention to everything that you buy some clothes, see where all it's made, and you'll see a global economy we live in.

So if the United States is to lead the world and avoid a war and not have the lady with the mic, we have to make sure that we're all over the world going to wars, we have to make sure that we're in the world. And that's why we need some money. And I

of all, that's exactly what I ran for President to do, to get us to take care of our problems at home first, because my belief is, if you're not strong at home you can't be strong abroad. So I believe that, okay?

Now, I believe that. And as a result of that, in the last year, we have changed the economic course of the country, we're bringing our deficit down; we're seeing more investment and more jobs coming into this economy; we're opening up opportunities to sell American products around the world so we can compete with these other countries.

But you need to know that last year, our economy grew more rapidly than the economy of Europe and the economy of Japan, and that we are starting to come back. We are creating more jobs than they are, and we are beginning to really compete again. And that is my first and most important job and the overwhelming priority that we have.

Now, let me say also, though, we spend a smaller percentage of our income on foreign aid than the Europeans or the Japanese do, the Japanese give more money in foreign aid than we do now. The foreign aid is not a big problem; indeed, even though we're the strongest country in the world, we haven't even—I haven't been able to persuade Congress yet to appropriate the money we owe just to pay our past-due bills to the United Nations.

And we have to spend—it's like the question this young man asked me about the space program. It's hard to—there is no easy dividing line here between at home and abroad in the sense that now a big percentage of our income depends on our ability to sell products and services overseas because we live in a global economy.

The next time you go in a store, just pay attention to everything you buy. The next time you buy some clothes, for example, just see where all it's made, and you just see what a global economy we live in.

So if the United States wants to be able to lead the world and preserve the peace and avoid a war and not have a lot of people like the lady with the microphone's brother going all over the world getting—to fight major wars, we have to maintain some leadership in the world. And that requires us to invest some money. And I think we should invest

some money. But the overwhelming priority should be on the problems here at home, and that's what I'm trying to do. But we can't run away from our responsibilities abroad. We just have to put the folks at home first.

And I totally agree with you that we have not invested enough in education and jobs and curing the problems of the homeless, especially in the distressed inner city areas. If we had the same policy on getting foreign investment into inner city America that we have in getting American investment overseas, we could cure a lot of these problems. And that's what I'm trying to do as President.

I'll take—we've got to quit. They're trying to get me to quit. Two more.

Q. I'm a junior here at Hillcrest. I was informed that the money that was granted to us was to use for gun control. Now, if we could use that money for education, to educate the people to give them a choice, not to go into gun control, why can't we do that? Not to go to gangs or to drugs.

The President. You mean the money that you got—that the city got to hire the police officers?

Q. Yes, the money that was granted to the city—

The President. You used that to hire police officers didn't you? That money was used just to hire police officers. But the money in the crime bill—you know, I talked about the bill that's now pending in the Congress—there will be money in that bill that can be used in this community and in this school to do just what you said. In other words, I don't want to mix apples and oranges. I think it's important to hire more law enforcement officers, too, because I know if they're in the community and tied to the folks in the community, they can reduce crime. But I agree that there also has to be money spent to do the things you said.

If this crime bill passes in anything like the form we're talking about, there will be money for that purpose. And I perfectly agree with you.

That was a good question. Give her a hand.
[Applause]

Homelessness

Q. I'm a junior here at Hillcrest. I was wondering, as we see, in the United States

there's an increasing amount of homelessness. And I was wondering why have there been cuts in welfare?

The President. Well, to the best of my knowledge, unless you've done something here in Illinois I don't know about, I don't know that there have been cuts in welfare unless there was a State program that got cut. At the national level, there's been no cut in welfare, but the welfare check has not kept up with inflation. However, that's not the primary problem with homelessness. One of the things that we find is, increasingly, you've got families that are out of work that are homeless as well as people who have some terrible problem in their lives. And what I think we've got to do is not only improve the welfare system, which I want to do—that is, I want to spend—people on welfare I believe should be required to work but only after they've had education and training and until their children are supported with health care. Then I think you can require them to work.

So I think that is very important. But the homeless problem is a different one. One of the things that I'm most proud of about my Government now is that the person in charge of this, Henry Cisneros, who used to be the mayor of San Antonio, has really spent an enormous amount of time trying to figure out all the different reasons people are homeless and why getting homeless people off the street involves a lot more than just building shelters where people come in and spend a night or two, and then they're homeless again.

And what we're trying to do this year is take an approach to the homeless problem which will really give us a chance to go in and, family by family, person by person, examine why are these people homeless, what would it take to put them in control of their own lives again, and what do we have to do to do it. And I believe that within a year or so, you will be able to see some real results from our efforts with the homeless.

I keep telling our Cabinet, if we could just do one thing, just one thing that would make America feel better about itself, it would be to get these folks off the street and into a constructive life. People in our country want that, I think. I think all kinds of Americans

want that. I think it breaks America's heart to see all these folks trapped in a life that they can't really seriously want to live forever. And we're going to do our best to do better. I'm glad all of you care so much about that. Thank you.

They say we've got to go. I'm on my way to Pittsburgh. It's an interesting story. You talked about the rest of the world—I'm supposed to meet with the Prime Minister of Britain tonight, Great Britain. His grandfather worked in a steel mill in Pittsburgh. And his father was a circus performer in the United States. Just shows you what a small world it is.

I really have loved being here. I wish I could stay all day and answer your questions. You asked great questions, those of you who asked questions, and I wish we could have taken some more.

Please remember what I said. If you have other questions like this, you ought to bring these concerns to your Congressman. That's what he's here for, to bring them to me in Washington. I feel a lot better about the young people of the country just being here with you and listening to you ask these questions and knowing how much you care. And I will say again, I'll try to do the best I can on the issues we've talked about today. And you do the best you can to stick with what's on the wall. And we're going to do fine.

Thank you. Good luck. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:15 p.m. in the gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Starr Nelson, vice president of the senior class, Mayor Dwight Welch of Country Club Hills, and to a sign the students addressed to him which pledged their commitment to fighting domestic and world problems.

Remarks Welcoming Prime Minister John Major of the United Kingdom in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

February 28, 1994

Thank you very much, Senator Wofford, Congressman Coyne, Mayor Murphy, Commissioners Foerster and Flaherty, and my friends. I'm glad to be back in Pittsburgh. I want to thank the band for their wonderful music and the Scouts for your fine salute and

your fine work, that to join me in welcoming Major back to the U

It's funny how the July in Tokyo of all I were sitting around he said, "You know in the steel mills in lived and worked 1800's before moving I thought the next to the United States and come to Pittsburgh

I want to emphasize the heartland of America relationship between Great Britain is. We port reform in the the Berlin Wall and in Russia and in all communist states, to the chance. We worked trade agreement to and open world market American workers together to make North adaptable, to reach in the former Communist them a chance to work rope in peace and will make America perous place for working together to terrible tragedy in Berlin end to the killing to keep that conflict that could threaten the ed States and Great conscience of the civil

And we do have Senator Wofford no burgh between Britain been a good thing for Tomorrow we'll have that and talk about issues that we face Russia. The Prime Minister been in Moscow in the A struggle over the future is underway. We have come. We have to democracy, respect for

gal. We'll make sure insurance you can de-

important, we'll pre-edicare. Older Amer-unt on Medicare and Ve also want to cover ler Medicare and to new choices for long-in their community. ple with disabilities, o are in their elderly institutionalized care ng less expensive and 's not covered today. r health benefits to Most jobs come with l jobs should. Over l businesses in this nsurance to their em-Americans who have rking families. These r. And our health re-e health benefits at will get these health a discount. And we help to cover the un-

status quo are trying naking it sound com-ent system is com-re a lot of details to principles of health simple. You'll get a u'll pick any doctor it one simple form you'll know exactly u'll have peace of se your health secu-amily can never be

Wall Street Journal orm to some citizens without telling them eat majority of that d our health reform mpeting plans. And Street Journal reads: Clinton's Plan They

months ahead, I'm cross America about and what it really

means: guaranteed private insurance, a choice of doctors and health plans, outlawing unfair insurance practices, preserving Medicare, guaranteeing health benefits at work. It's that simple.

I want to cut through the complexity, the confusion, and downright distortions. This issue should be decided by informed citizens, not by special interests spending millions of dollars to prevent progress and to promote their own narrow interest.

Let's face the facts, debate our choices, and make an historic decision to build on what's best and fix what's worst in our health care system. That's democracy at its best, just like the old-fashioned American town meeting I attended in New Hampshire last week. And the lesson of history is that when the American people have the information they need, they do make the right decision.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at a Children's Town Meeting

March 19, 1994

Mr. Peter Jennings. Good morning, everybody. Good morning, especially, boys and girls, and welcome back to the White House really. This is the second time that President Clinton has invited us back to the White House so that he and a group of children we've invited from around the country can exchange ideas about the state of the country and the state of the world. It's a chance for him and for them to talk about their dreams. So we hope you'll stay with us this morning.

If our timing is right, the President is just coming down from upstairs, in a house which we all know he loves very much.

Good morning, Mr. President.

The President. Good morning, Peter.

Mr. Jennings. Thank you for having us back, sir.

The President. I'm glad you're back.

Mr. Jennings. You really have spent a lot of time studying this house, haven't you?

The President. I have. Every President but George Washington has lived here. And so it's really the story of America. And it's

a great honor to live here. So I like to know the history of it, and I like to know the things that happened to the people who lived here and what happened in which rooms and things. I've kept up with it pretty well.

Mr. Jennings. You all know there are a lot of kids in the East Room waiting to see us. But surprising, to me at least, a number of them asked us whether or not the President had to live here. [Laughter] And I just asked you that a moment ago.

The President. I don't know.

Mr. Jennings. We'll have to find that—

The President. Isn't that funny, I don't know. I don't think anyone's ever volunteered to live anywhere else, except once when there was a big renovation of the White House when President Truman was President, I think he had to spend more than 2 years out of here, across the street.

Mr. Jennings. We have actually a little—we're going to go into the East Room now, but we have just to introduce you or reintroduce you in many cases to what this is like, a little history package while you and I walk it. Ready?

[At this point, a short film about the history of the White House was shown.]

Mr. Jennings. And there is the White House, on a very sunny, lovely day here in Washington here. And we are, of course, in the East Room, which has its own great sense of history. And here all these boys and girls have joined us from around the country.

You notice the President's tie, everybody?

Audience members. Yes.

The President. This tie was designed by a 13-year-old named Kelly. It's called "Save the Children," and it's part of a series of ties designed by children for the Save the Children Foundation. It's a group that works on the problems of children in poor communities and poor neighborhoods around America. And my wife and I have been involved in it for a long time. So they take the drawings of children, turn them into ties, and then sell the ties to raise funds. It's great; I have a lot of them.

Mr. Jennings. I bet people send you ties every day of the year, don't they?

The President. Every day of the year, just about. I especially love these. I bet I've had 20 of these ties; they're great.

Mr. Jennings. We have a lot of questions for you this morning, Mr. President, so we're going to go away for just one second. And then we'll have you and all these youngsters from around the country talk to one another.

We'll be right back.

[At this point, the television stations took a commercial break.]

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, I said a lot of these kids had questions. How many of you have got questions for the President? We're going to be here for several days. You don't mind that, do you?

The President. No.

Mr. Jennings. Let's get right to it. Kevin, how about you?

Education and Employment

Q. My first question is for those children who wish to pursue a college education: What are you going to do to guarantee that there are jobs for them when they get out of college? Today, many adults have graduate degrees, bachelors—they have a hard time finding jobs. They have as good a chance as those who are straight out of high school. What are you going to do to guarantee that when I get out of college, I have a job waiting for me?

The President. I don't know that I can guarantee it, but I think we can make it more likely. But perhaps the main reason I ran for President was to try to restore the economic health of the country. And what I am trying to do is to follow policies that will generate more jobs in America. I have tried to bring our deficit down, get interest rates down to create more jobs. I've tried to open more markets to our products and sell more American products overseas. I've tried to train people to do the jobs of tomorrow, and I've tried to take the technologies that we developed when we had a big defense budget and turn them into jobs in the peacetime economy. And in the last 13 months, since we had this meeting last, we created over 2 million new jobs in this economy.

And let me also say, I know it's tough for college graduates, but let me tell everyone

of you one thing: Your chances of getting a good job are still much, much better if you first graduate from high school, then get at least 2 years of further training, and finally, if you get a college degree. The unemployment rate in America for college graduates is 3.5 percent. The unemployment rate for high school dropouts is 11.5 percent.

Mr. Jennings. So the answer is, stay in school.

The President. So the answer is, even though it's tougher than it has been for college graduates, you still have a much better chance if you stay in school to have higher incomes and to have a job.

Mr. Jennings. Let's go over to the other side, here. Who's got a question there? Yes, go ahead.

Bosnia

Q. Mr. President, why are you fighting a war in another country when you have a war right here?

The President. Which war?

Q. The war in Bosnia.

The President. We're not fighting a war there. We're trying to help them bring the war to an end because many people are being killed and because the war could spread and because we have an obligation to try to support that. But we don't have soldiers on the ground there. I am trying to fight the war right here at home. There's a bill in the Congress now that I am supporting, which would put another 100,000 police officers on the street to make the streets and the schools safer, that would give more money for young people for programs to help them resolve their differences peacefully, would take semi-automatic weapons off the street, and would help us to fight the war here at home. I agree that the war here at home is killing more people than a lot of wars overseas, and we're trying to fight that one. And you're right, we should be fighting it.

Mr. Jennings. Right here in the front row. What's your name.

Race Relations

Q. Gary.

I was wondering, with all the racial problems going on, such as people not treating

each other the same plans for solving the

Mr. Jennings. on their questions

The President is a lot of racial tension. And I think there's a lot to do about it. First, the American people have been a multiethnic country. We've always been different racial and ethnic groups. At one time a new group has been subject to persecution in our country. Great efforts have been made to successfully blend the different races and religions and to have them respect each other and still live together. We've always been working on that, talking to groups together. I brought my Government to the past.

The second thing is to give a future to the country. A lot of times people say if they think they can't live here, if we had more jobs and a better climate, then people would be able to appreciate the past.

I don't know if Los Angeles, but just Los Angeles County alone has a lot of racial and ethnic groups. In Bosnia, people of different groups have been killing each other. So our problems, we have to solve. But we've got to look around this country. America are our strengths, a smaller economy, a smaller fact that we have different religions and things for America. Like it.

Mr. Jennings. are you happy with it?

Q. Yes.

Mr. Jennings. not, you're entitled

each other the same way, do you have any plans for solving that problem?

Mr. Jennings. A lot of people worked hard on their questions here.

The President. Yes, they're great. There is a lot of racial tension in this country today. And I think there are two things that we have to do about it. First of all, we have to remind the American people that we have always been a multiethnic, multiracial country. We've always been a country with a lot of different racial and ethnic groups. And every time a new group came along, they've often been subject to prejudice. But what's made our country great is that we have been able to successfully blend in people of different races and religions and ethnic groups, let them respect what's different about them, and still live together. And I spend a lot of time working on that, talking to young people, talking to groups, trying to bring people together. I brought more diverse people into my Government than any President has in the past.

The second thing we have to do is to try to give a future back to all of our people. A lot of times people fight with one another if they think they don't have any opportunity. If we had more jobs and better education and a better climate in America, less crime, then people would be more relaxed and better able to appreciate one another.

I don't know if anybody's here from Los Angeles, but just for example, Los Angeles County alone has people from 150 different racial and ethnic groups. In Bosnia, you mentioned Bosnia, people from basically three different groups have been fighting and killing each other. So we've been, with all of our problems, we've been pretty successful. But we've got to know that our differences—look around this room—our differences in America are our strength. We live in a global economy, a smaller and smaller world. And the fact that we have so many different races and religions and ethnic groups is a good thing for America, and we have to learn to like it.

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, you—Gary, are you happy with that answer, by the way?

Q. Yes.

Mr. Jennings. You are, are you? If you're not, you're entitled to tell him.

We know a lot of these kids, Mr. President, because we went out and we looked around the country to find kids who were sort of representative of various ideas in the country. One of them is Tanya up there. Hi, Tanya. Show the President just a little bit about you on the monitor here, and then we'll get you to talk to him.

[At this point, a videotape of Tanya talking with the Vice President at Dunbar High School was shown.]

Mr. Jennings. This is Tanya. Tanya sort of came to our attention when she met your Vice President at a meeting.

The President. At Dunbar. Are you a student at Dunbar? Good, I recognize the film.

Mr. Jennings. All right, so let's come out of the film now. All right Tanya, your turn.

Urban Youth

Q. Good afternoon. My question is going towards inner city kids. We feel as though the baby boomers have forgotten that the chaos that we create was given to us by you all. We want the problem to be stopped, but we need help. A lot of us are tired of hearing that we are a lost generation when we are not. We are a generation of renewal. And we want to know, what steps are you going to take to give us the hope, the pride, and the strength that we need to succeed in the future and to become strong, black, white, Chinese, African-American people in the society, 10 and 30 and 20 years in the future?

Mr. Jennings. Tanya, can I ask you a question before the President answers? Do you think the President can do a lot about that? Do you think he makes a really enormous difference here?

Q. He makes a very enormous difference, but one thing a lot of people fail to realize, if you don't come into the communities on positive notes, when you come for negative notes, it really angers a lot of people. It's angered me a lot. And I want the media and you, also, to know that I wanted to leave Mr. Gore very baffled, and I'm glad I left him baffled because I want him to understand that you need to come when positive things happen and not just come when negative things happen.

The President. I agree with that. Let me just make two comments about that, and then I'll try to answer your question.

We, at least, do come. I mean, he and I have been out there. My wife has been out there. We have been in inner city communities. We have walked streets that you don't normally see the President walking. We have been to places you don't normally see the President go. And I agree that we should support success stories.

I was in Detroit last week, and sure, Detroit has a lot of inner city problems. They also have, perhaps, the best job training program of its kind in America for inner city kids, putting them in very high wage, high-tech jobs. So I visited that program because it's a success story. It proves that all children can learn. So I agree with that. We shouldn't just show up when something terrible happens.

The second thing I want to say to you is that, essentially, everything that I do is designed to try to give young people like you some hope and some structure and some opportunity back. I agree that generations ahead of you have left you a pretty lousy situation. You've got all these kids that are born into families where there was never a marriage. You've got all these neighborhoods where the jobs have disappeared. You've got all these places where the schools have, in effect, been given up on. And that's not your fault. You just showed up. I mean, you're a child; you shouldn't have to deal with that, except to do your best. So what we're trying to do is to find ways to rebuild communities, rebuild schools, and bring the jobs back into the community and, at the same time, to follow policies which strengthen the family unit instead of undermine it, which encourage people to take responsibility for their children and reward them if they do it.

Let me just give you an example. The welfare system has often encouraged families to break up. We're supporting a welfare reform program that will encourage families to stay together as well as to get jobs. We've got a tax system that we've changed so that when taxes are due this year, 16 and a half percent of the American taxpayers, working parents with very modest wages, are going to get a tax cut to help them raise their children bet-

ter, to strengthen them. We've got school reform bills going through Congress now to try to help strengthen schools to have more uniform excellence.

Now, those are things we're doing. I also have to tell you though, when kids get in trouble, they get in trouble one by one, and they have to be saved one by one. So we also need—the President needs soldiers, common workers in this battle. And that's why what people do in every school, in every neighborhood and every family and every church is important.

Mr. Jennings. Probably got some potential soldiers here.

The President. You bet, a lot of them.

But you're right, we owe you a better deal than you're getting, and I'm trying to give it to you. But you all are going to have to do your part, too.

The President's Schedule

Mr. Jennings. Now, there are a lot of serious questions, I know, here. But somebody had a question about the White House itself and about the President's day. They've all got shy and serious on me. A lot of them wanted to know whether or not you find this too big a job sometimes and wonder how you get everything done in one day.

The President. Sometimes I don't, and sometimes it is too big a job. But I have a lot of help, for one thing. A lot of good people work here, and we work hard to try to organize the day well. So I try to get up in the morning, go run, see my daughter before she goes off to school. And then I come in and I start every day with a briefing on national security, has anything happened in the rest of the world that could affect the United States, that we have to be concerned about? Then I get briefings on what's happened in the United States, and I read clippings from newspapers around the country to see what's happened. And then we start work, and we just work through these problems. And normally I finish at about 7 p.m. at night, sometimes a little later.

Mr. Jennings. You work every day?

The President. Yes.

Mr. Jennings. Don't take a day off every week?

Administration of

The President. day off, but I do try to work a half day off, but Monday until pretty late at that.

Mr. Jennings. that.

The President a.m. or 1 a.m. at h

Children and Vic

Mr. Jennings. pretty trying even and a bit since y one of them occu have a young lady.

Hi, Annie. You

Q. Not really.

Mr. Jennings. good. I want the the television m little bit more ab

[At this point, which Annie Nichols sister, Polly Klauder, she no longer complained that she had ropes in her her to feel safe at

Mr. Jennings Annie Nichols who, as you know California, because she wanted we talked to kid mous numbers of their safety.

So Annie, awa

Q. Well, the plane coming he think I'm going sister, Polly, did feel that safe. As feel very safe, as for children.

Mr. Jennings dent can do som

The Preside

Let me say, fir to come here a you probably ki

The President. Sunday. I try to take Sunday off, but I don't always make it. But I try to work a half day on Saturday, take Sunday off, but Monday through Friday I work until pretty late at night.

Mr. Jennings. I think some of us know that.

The President. And sometimes until 12 a.m. or 1 a.m. at home when I read.

Children and Violence

Mr. Jennings. Now, there have been some pretty trying events on your watch in the year and a bit since you've been President. And one of them occurred in California. And we have a young lady here this morning.

Hi, Annie. You're getting tired, aren't you?

Q. Not really.

Mr. Jennings. Oh, you're not. Oh, good, good. I want the President to take a look at the television monitor here so he knows a little bit more about you.

[At this point, a videotape was shown in which Annie Nichol explained that since her sister, Polly Klaas, was kidnapped and murdered, she no longer feels safe. She also explained that she keeps items such as loud bells and ropes in her bedroom because they help her to feel safe at night.]

Mr. Jennings. Well, of course, that is Annie Nichol who is the sister of Polly Klaas, who, as you know, was kidnapped in northern California, became enormous news in the country. We asked Annie to come partly because she wanted to, but partly because when we talked to kids around the country, enormous numbers of them are concerned about their safety.

So Annie, away you go.

Q. Well, the other day when I was on the plane coming here, I asked my Mom, do you think I'm going to live to grow up? And my sister, Polly, didn't live to grow up, so I didn't feel that safe. And my question is, I just don't feel very safe, and I want America to be safer for children.

Mr. Jennings. And you think the President can do something, don't you?

The President. I agree. I think I could. Let me say, first of all, you're a brave girl to come here and let us see your story. As you probably know, I talked to some of your

family members. And I'm doing what I can to change some laws.

Let's talk about it a little bit. First of all, there are people who get paroled out of prison who have serious problems and who are very likely to repeat them who should not be released. That's one thing that your sister's case has made people sensitive to. And that's why we're working on some laws to identify people who are serious threats to society who will likely repeat their crimes and not let them out.

The second thing we have to do is to try to make our communities and our streets safer. That's why I'm trying to pass a bill to take these assault weapons off the street and to put more police officers on the street to make the streets safer.

And then there's a lot of violence against children that occur in their own homes from family members and in schools, and we are trying to start programs now all across America where people learn to resolve their differences in nonviolent ways, to stop hurting each other and shooting each other and acting on impulse.

You do live in a country that's too dangerous. And we have to make it less dangerous. And it is a huge obligation that I feel, and I think about it every day. You know, I have a little girl, too. I want the children of this country to be able to grow up on safe streets and safe schools and safer homes. And I think that there are some very specific things we can all do about it.

We also need to change our attitudes. You may see pretty soon a public service announcement I did with a young woman from Washington, DC, a 14-year-old girl named Alicia Brown. She went to the sixth funeral of a friend of hers just yesterday. Six of her friends have been shot. So we did this public service announcement together—it's going to be on television—talking to young people and asking them to help us turn America away from violence.

Mr. Jennings. When you were young, Mr. President, do you ever remember being in a room with kids and people asked you if you felt safe?

The President. Never. When I was a kid, people beat each other up. I mean, the only thing you ever worried about was somebody

coming up to you on the street or in an alley or something and jumping you and beating you up. Nobody ever shot anybody, there were none of this—I mean, to speak of—there was very little of this, the kidnappings, the kind of thing that happened to your sister—much more rare then. It's much worse today.

Mr. Jennings. What do you think, Annie?

Q. Well, for one thing, that I think is that I think that other people shouldn't be released from jail, and they shouldn't be stealing as much children as they have been stealing.

Mr. Jennings. I was looking at some figures; 4,600 kids were abducted last year.

That stuff you put in your bedroom, did you really feel the need for that?

Q. I did feel the need.

The President. Did it make you feel better when you did it, that you were taking charge of your life and you were trying to protect yourself?

Q. Yes.

Mr. Jennings. You think the President's on the right track, though?

Q. I think so.

The President. I'll try, Annie. I think about your sister and the children like her all the time. I'm working hard on it.

Mr. Jennings. Okay, let's go over here. Thanks, Annie, my dear. Annie's had such a good time in the White House today. Where's your dolphin? He's had a tour of the White House, hasn't he?

The President. Good for you.

Mr. Jennings. Yes, this was a very rewarding morning for her.

Yes, love.

Q. Well, Mr. President Clinton, I know you get a lot of questions, but this is just a little thing about you. I think you're such a decent and honest person, and I really believe in you in trying to make everybody happy. And I think we kids have to take the responsibility, because we should know who's bringing in the drugs, the guns. And if we just report it in, that would really make a difference. And also that would make a really big difference is that most of the criminals and people who sell drugs, they don't feel loved. And so I think from the moment you're born you have to feel loved. You

should tell your child that you love them very much.

Mr. Jennings. What a nice idea.

The President. Let me just say two things. First of all, remember what I said, no matter what I do, the President has to have partners all over America. Everybody's got a role to play. Everybody is important. In most schools where there are drugs and guns, some other kids who don't do drugs and don't have guns known about it. They could report it; they could help to get it done; they could organize themselves into groups in each school and say, "We don't want drugs in our schools, we don't want guns, we don't want knives, we don't want violence in our schools." That could make a bigger difference in that school than anything the President could do.

On the other question, I think you're right. One of the things that we have to do is to find young people who are likely to get in trouble and try to reach them before they get to the point where they are hurting other people, because a lot of young people never felt like they were loved. That's obvious to me; I see it all the time.

Mr. Jennings. Do you know a lot of people who work here in the White House have children? And one of the things—this is a nice treat for you, Mr. President, perhaps—we asked several members of your staff to show us different rooms in the White House with their kids. And if we look at the monitors here now, we can see Henry Cisneros, one of your members of your Cabinet, showing his kids the Cabinet Room.

We'll be right back.

[At this point, the videotape was shown, and then the television stations took a commercial break.]

Mr. Jennings. Welcome back to our morning in the White House.

Physical Fitness Test

Q. I had a fun question to ask you, and I was wondering, Mr. President, in elementary school we had to pass a physical fitness test to pretty much get an A, and you got a President's award or a certificate. And I was wondering if you've ever tried or ever thought of passing the test, or if you've even looked at the test that we have to pass?

The President. I should. I imagine t I jog every day and weights and do some could, but I'll do it. make it then I'll hav

Socks the Cat

Q. I read a book c House," and it said proof case. Does he

The President. something that's bu time he's just out a funny thing to say.

Mr. Jennings. W from around the c year, sir, we had s phone. Well, this ye ficult so we've asked the country to ask wanted to, and here

Education

Q. My name is Je old. I am from Re question is, what a improvement of pub

Mr. Jennings. Th should keep you goi

The President. Y got two bills in to c schools. One encour kinds of new and c improve education b standards so we kno ing or not no matter

The other one giv to move from scho they don't go on to that don't go to col to get a good educ living.

Mr. Jennings. No overseas. Somebody morning. Right over is Zlata Filpovic, wh And a lot of the kids knew all about you Perhaps we should little bit first about y

The President. I haven't, but I probably should. I imagine that I could pass it since I jog every day and do a little work on my weights and do some other things. I probably could, but I'll do it. I'll check on it. If I don't make it then I'll have to get myself in shape.

[At this point, a videotape was shown in which Zlata described the horrors children face living in war-torn Bosnia.]

Mr. Jennings. Welcome to Washington again, Zlata. Your question for the President.

Socks the Cat

Q. I read a book called "Socks in the White House," and it said that Socks had a bullet-proof case. Does he really?

The President. He can stand behind something that's bulletproof, but most of the time he's just out in the open. That's just a funny thing to say. It was a joke.

Mr. Jennings. We have a couple questions from around the country. Remember last year, sir, we had some people on the telephone. Well, this year—that was kind of difficult so we've asked some people out around the country to ask you questions they've wanted to, and here's one on tape.

Education

Q. My name is Jessica Jones. I'm 11 years old. I am from Red Bank, Tennessee. My question is, what are you planning for the improvement of public education?

Mr. Jennings. That's pretty general. That should keep you going for a while.

The President. Well, very briefly, we've got two bills in to design to help the public schools. One encourages schools to try all kinds of new and different experiments to improve education but gives them some real standards so we know whether kids are learning or not no matter where they live.

The other one gives opportunities for kids to move from school to further training if they don't go on to college. So young kids that don't go to college still have a chance to get a good education and make a good living.

Mr. Jennings. Now, we have a guest from overseas. Somebody mentioned Bosnia this morning. Right over here to your right, sir, is Zlata Filipovic, who comes from Sarajevo. And a lot of the kids in here last night, Zlata, knew all about you because of your diary. Perhaps we should show people at home a little bit first about your recent history.

Bosnia

Q. Usually people when they start war they say with this war we will get things. But I think usually they—all of them lose things. And I think it's really big stupidity. And I would like to ask you, is it war—is it end of that stupidity close? Is it closer?

The President. I think it is closer. And I agree with you. These people started fighting in your country because they wanted territory for people who were just in their own ethnic group. And yet as you pointed out, people who lived in Sarajevo, they had friends—they didn't know if they were Serbs or Croats or Muslims. They lived together. But people from outside brought this war on to try to divide the country up. I think it is closer.

Yesterday we signed an agreement here in Washington between the Croats and the Government of Bosnia, which is mostly Muslim but not entirely. And now the question is, will the Serbs agree to sign on? Will they agree to give up some of the territory they took so that everybody can live with a fair piece of land and we can stop killing the adults and the children? I think we're closer, and we're working very hard on it.

Mr. Jennings. Okay. You've been very determined back there. Ram, is that your name? Mustaq, I'm sorry, Mustaq. I apologize.

Health Care Reform

Q. Do you like to be known as the President of the health care program?

The President. Be known? Yes.

Mr. Jennings. Sounds a bit like a set-up, doesn't it, sir?

The President. Yes, I do. Because I want every American family to have health care. And a lot of them don't now, and millions who have it can lose it. And every other major country in the world with a good economy like ours, gives all the families health care. We don't, and it's not right.

Mr. Jennings. Has anybody else got a question about health care, because—oh goodness, lots of them.

Q. My name's Mickey. I was on welfare. And you say you encourage people to get jobs when they are on welfare. But as soon as I started working, they took away all my benefits, including my medical benefits. I was better living off welfare than I am now working, because I'm not receiving any medical benefits anymore.

The President. I talked about you and people like you in my State of the Union Address. I pointed out—you asked a health care question—if you're on welfare in America today and if you have children or if you're just yourself on welfare, you get covered by a medical program paid for by the Government. If you get off welfare and you go to work in a job that has no health insurance, you start working and paying your taxes so that someone who stayed on welfare can still get health care and you don't get it anymore. It's not fair. And you're right, the best thing we could do to end welfare as we know it is to give everybody health coverage so people would never be encouraged to stay on welfare.

Good for you. Thank you for saying that.

Public Expectations

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, do you think the people have too high expectations of what you can really accomplish?

The President. Well, sometimes. That's why I always try to say, here's what I can do, here's what I can't do, and remind the American people that in a democracy, the people have to do a lot of things. We have to change this country from the grassroots, and a lot of the changes we have to make have to happen inside us: our attitudes about violence and our attitudes about young people, without regard to their race and what they can do. We've got to change our whole way of thinking about things.

Mr. Jennings. Okay, here's a question right over here.

Education

Q. My name is Ebony. My major concern is education. My question to you is, why is it necessary to bus children out of their

neighborhoods, to get a, quote, unquote, "equal education"? Shouldn't all schools offer the same programs, since we're all being taxed?

The President. The answer is yes, all schools should offer the same programs and should achieve the same high standards of excellence. One real problem we've had in America—let me just say this real quick, I don't want to get into a long answer—but in America, our school system has usually been a local school system, run community by community, paid for by the State and local governments and a little money from us at the national level. What we're trying to do now is to move toward greater equality. The State of Michigan just voted in a historic vote to take most of the property taxes away from schools and give State taxes so everybody could get a more equal education. And it's going to be one of the great crusades of the next 10 years, giving all kids, no matter where they live, a decent education.

Q. Thank you.

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, I'm going to follow that up, if you don't mind, because we have a young man here more than determined to ask you a question about education. Reginald, right? Reginald, we've got a piece of tape of you at your school. Before you ask the President your question, let's take a look at that.

[At this point, a videotape was shown in which Reginald explained how his school building had deteriorated over the years.]

Mr. Jennings. Somebody observed, Reginald, you're at least going to make an investigative reporter when you grow up. You've got all the moves there.

The President. Didn't he do a great job? Give him a hand. He was good. *[Applause]* Good job.

Mr. Jennings. What's your question for the President?

Q. A lot of the students are drawing away from their education. And one thing, a lot of kids are talking about Super Nintendo and things like that. What do you think about video games? And do you know that you are on a video game?

The President. No, am I?

Q. Yes, you are. I saw you play this. On Super Nintendo called "NBA Jam." And you and Al Gore, sort of slam-dunk and dunk.

Mr. Jennings. You're right.

The President. I hope the President's a better basketball player than I am, but I like the sport more than he does.

Let me tell you what happened yesterday. A lot of the schools got new buildings and it was easier to take care of things instead of laying off teachers. And it's a terrible thing to think there's going to be a crisis in every State in the country with schools up. A lot of the schools are better structurally, but nobody's taking care of them. I appreciate your bringing this up.

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, I asked a little while ago what it was like between having a press conference. Do you like to have a press briefing room?

The President. I sometimes I meet the press. I have foreign leaders come to press conferences, we have them.

Mr. Jennings. We've got your Deputy Comm. give us a tour of the White House. We'll be right back.

The President. That's hard questions.

[At this point, a videotape was shown then the television station cut.]

Mr. Jennings. We've got on tape from across the country to know what you think.

The Media

Q. Hello, my name is [Name], 17 years old, and I live in [Location], Florida. My question to you is, with all the [Name] you have been receiving,

a, quote, unquote, couldn't all schools be, since we're all

answer is yes, all same programs and high standards of problem we've had in y this real quick, I long answer—but system has usually m, run community y the State and local money from us at we're trying to do reater equality. The ed in a historic vote rty taxes away from taxes so everybody education. And it's eat crusades of the ds, no matter where ion.

resident, I'm going don't mind, because re more than deteron about education. l, we've got a piece ool. Before you ask on, let's take a look

ape was shown in ed how his school over the years.]

body observed, Regi- g to make an inves- ou grow up. You've

he do a great job? as good. [Applause]

your question, for

ts are drawing away nd one thing, a lot Super Nintendo and lo you think about u know that you are

Q. Yes, you are. I'd just like to tell you this. On Super Nintendo it's a basketball called "NBA Jam." And it's a code for Bill Clinton and Al Gore, and you have your own sort of slam-dunk and everything.

Mr. Jennings. You're kidding.

The President. I have to confess, the Vice President's a better basketball player than I am, but I like the sport, I think, even more than he does.

Let me tell you something about this. What happened was in the last 12, 15 years, a lot of the schools got in financial problems, and it was easier to put off repairing the buildings and taking care of the buildings, instead of laying off personnel or other things. And it's a terrible problem. And I think there's going to have to be a real effort in every State in the country to fix these schools up. A lot of these old school buildings are better structurally than newer buildings, but nobody's taking care of them. And I appreciate your bringing that to public attention.

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, somebody asked a little while ago what the difference was like between having this and meeting the press. Do you like to go to meet the press in the press briefing room?

The President. I do. I do that there—sometimes I meet the press here when we have foreign leaders here and when I have press conferences, we do it here sometimes.

Mr. Jennings. We've asked David Dreyer, your Deputy Communications Director, to give us a tour of the press briefing room. We'll be right back.

The President. This is where they ask me hard questions.

[At this point, a videotape was shown, and then the television stations took a commercial break.]

Mr. Jennings. We have another question on tape from across the country. I'll be curious to know what you think of this one.

The Media

Q. Hello, my name is Michael Marcus. I'm 17 years old, and I live in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. My question to you, Mr. President, is with all the unfavorable press that you have been receiving, how are you able

to focus and concentrate on the policies that you wish to pass through Congress?

The President. Well, what I do is I answer the questions the best I can. And I recognize that the press is like a herd of cattle sometimes, they just get swarming on some issue and they become obsessed with it. But the American people are obsessed with their own lives. Look at the questions I've been asked today. I try to focus on those things. I try to respond to the press, deal with the negative questions, and then keep my time and my attention devoted to the things I was elected to deal with: the crime problem, the health care problem, the jobs problem, the education problem, the things that I've been asked about today.

Mr. Jennings. Is that hard sometimes, though?

The President. Sometimes it's very hard, but that's a big part of the test. I mean, this whole job is like a character test, you're always being measured and tested and pushed. And I believe it is my job to keep focused on the things I was elected to do. So that's what I have to do. And no matter how hard it is, in the end that's how I'll be judged in history, and that's how I'll judge myself.

Mr. Jennings. All of these questions, you're perfectly right, are very much on the news. In fact, you mentioned cattle. This is Cotton over here, Cotton who is from Boulder, Wyoming.

The President. Wyoming?

Mr. Jennings. I know you have a question about cattle. Where's the microphone for Cotton there, guys? First of all, hold it, let's show the President a little bit about where you come from.

[At this point, a videotape was shown in which Cotton explained that an increase in grazing fees could be detrimental to his family's cattle ranch.]

Mr. Jennings. Okay, Cotton, what's your question?

Cattle Grazing Fees

Q. Mr. President, my family are ranchers and so are many of my neighbors. Part of the year, we graze our cattle on the BLM and U.S. Forest Service lands. I know a lot about ranching, and I know a lot about taking

good care of the environment. Mr. Babbitt and your administration's new plan is to double the grazing fees. This will really hurt my family, and our business cannot afford it. But it won't just hurt our family, it will hurt all of our neighbors and all the businesses in our town.

Mr. Jennings. What's your question, Cotton?

Q. The grazing fees is not the total cost of grazing on public lands. So, Mr. President, I want to know, do you understand what it actually costs to graze on public lands? Because there are a lot of nonfee costs. And if you don't understand that, I'd like to explain them to you.

The President. After the program, I'll be glad to talk to you more about it. But let me briefly say to all of you what this issue is about.

A lot of the land in the West belongs to the Federal Government but has to be used and should be used by farmers and ranchers out there. The fees they pay are about one-fourth the fees they pay to graze on private land, much less. So there's a big push in the Congress, and has been for years, to ask them to pay more fees.

On the other hand, if you charge them too much, they can't stay in business. Your Governor, Mike Sullivan, basically told Secretary Babbitt and me that the original plan that we proposed was too burdensome. And he went out there and started having meetings with the farmers and ranchers and basically changed that plan.

While this plan would call for the doubling of the fees over 3 years, it would also give farmers like you, who take good care of the land, a rebate, that is, the fees wouldn't go up that much if people are actually proving that they're doing their best to maintain the land.

So the real purpose of the fee increase is not to get more money for the Government—it's not that much money—it is to encourage us to keep the land, maintain it, and make sure people will be able to graze it for generations to come.

So it's a question of how to strike the right balance, and I'll be glad to talk to you about it after the program.

Mr. Jennings. Another very contentious subject, right in front here. Brodie.

The President. We'll talk some more after the program.

Go ahead. Brodie, you're up.

Smoking

Q. As you know, Mr. President, this has been concerning me for years, but as you know, all the illegal drugs, we get told how these can really hurt your body, they can mess you up, not to smoke marijuana or sniff cocaine, or anything like that. But there's one drug that kills a lot more people than all those illegal ones combined. This drug is legal, and it's a cigarette. And every day, about 1,000 Americans die from smoking. I have a three-part question here. The first part is why are cigarettes still legal? The second part is what is your administration doing to try to help—oh, God—

The President. Discourage people from smoking?

Q. No, it's not that. It's to prevent smoking—cigarette companies from targeting their ads at children, with Joe Camel and all those other people?

Mr. Jennings. Brodie, why don't you just hang on there for a second—there's a third part. Brodie works—I just met him a few minutes ago—he worked so hard on this question over night. You've done terrific. It's a subject that every kid here is interested in.

The President. The truth is, the reason cigarettes have not been declared illegal is because most Americans don't believe it should be illegal. They know that it's dangerous, the warnings are printed there. But most people believe that it's not as immoral as using drugs or as destructive to the fabric of society. And so there's not much sentiment to make cigarette smoking illegal. It's a deeply embedded part of our culture.

On the other hand, for many years, cigarette smoking was declining, thank goodness, among Americans. Now we see some evidence that smoking is increasing among some people, particularly younger women, which I'm very concerned about. So our Surgeon General, Dr. Elders, who's responsible for talking to the American people about their health, has really launched a real aggressive initiative against cigarette smoking

and especially against tobacco. I've talked about, which is tobacco, which I think is really, really wrong. I want to speak out against it and encourage people to change their practices. I also favor increasing taxes to discourage people from smoking. People in Michigan just passed a pack tax on cigarettes to raise money to the schools. I have many more initiatives like that.

Mr. Jennings. How much?

Q. Ten.

The President. Let me make another comment. Just to answer your question, there are a lot of good people who still raise tobacco. We have funds set aside for them to help them convert from tobacco to doing other kinds of things. They can actually make a living. A lot of good people who are in our country, and we want to help them do other things.

Mr. Jennings. Brodie, just two down, one to go. Oh, it's that third part.

The President. What?

Q. And I've got the question.

Mr. Jennings. Is it?

Q. And it is, will your administration make sure the ingredients on cigarette labels are accurate so companies have to put them there?

The President. Oh, yes. I've been making a big deal out of the fact that more nicotine is in some cigarettes. And I want to get to the bottom of what's going on. And I want to bring that up. That's why when I heard that there was going to be a tax on cigarettes, I went in to make sure they were hooked on them.

The President's Wife.

Q. I have a fun question. I wish, what would it be?

The President. I don't know. What would it be?

Q. Yes.

and Robert C. Byrd, President pro tempore of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 13.

Proclamation 6668—National Day of Prayer, 1994

April 12, 1994

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

In a country built by people from hundreds of nations and with as many beliefs, we rely upon our religious liberty in order to preserve the individuality and great diversity that give our Nation its unique richness and strength of character. America's founders saw the urgent need to protect religious freedom and opened debate on the important subject when the Continental Congress gathered in Philadelphia to chart a course for our nascent country. After hearing Massachusetts delegate Samuel Adams' plea, the Congress voted to begin its session with a prayer. When the framers of the Bill of Rights set down our fundamental rights, the free exercise of religion rightfully took its place at the head of our enumerated liberties.

As our Nation has grown and flourished, our Government has welcomed divine guidance in its work, while respecting the rich and varied faiths of all of its citizens. Many of our greatest leaders have asked God's favor in public and private prayer. From patriots and presidents to advocates for justice, our history reflects the strong presence of prayer in American life. Presidents, above all, need the power of prayer, their own and that of all Americans.

We need not shrink as Americans from asking for divine assistance in our continuing efforts to relieve human suffering at home and abroad, to reduce hatred, violence, and abuse, and to restore families across our land. By following our own beliefs while respecting the convictions of others, we can strengthen our people and rebuild our Nation. As Micah reminds us, we must strive "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly" before God.

The Congress, by joint resolution approved April 17, 1952, having recognized the

role of faith and prayer in the lives of the American people throughout our history, has set aside a day each year as a "National Day of Prayer." Since that time, each President has proclaimed an annual National Day of Prayer, resuming the tradition begun by our leaders in the Nation's earliest days. Pursuant to Public Law 100-307 of May 5, 1988, the first Thursday of each May has been set aside as a National Day of Prayer.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 5, 1994, as a National Day of Prayer. I encourage the citizens of this great Nation to gather, each in his or her own manner, to recognize our blessings, acknowledge our wrongs, to remember the needy, to seek guidance for our challenging future, and to give thanks for the abundance we have enjoyed throughout our history.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twelfth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-four, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 9:32 a.m., April 14, 1994]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 13, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on April 15.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session With the American Society of Newspaper Editors

April 13, 1994

The President. Thank you very much, Bill, for the introduction. And thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the invitation to come by again.

I can't help noting some satisfaction that the president of this organization is not only the editor of the *Oregonian*, which endorsed my candidacy in 1992, the first time it ever endorsed a Democrat for President—I hope they haven't had second thoughts—[laughter]—he also spent the first 8 years of his

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first 8 years of his

life in Arkansas, which didn't seem to do him
too much harm.

I am delighted to be here. I want to make
a few remarks and then open the floor to
questions. We probably have some things in
common. Both of us battle from time to time
with reporters. [Laughter] And I recently did
some light editing on my mother's autobiog-
raphy, so I appreciate the difficulty of editing
things. It was a little easier for me; my moth-
er, when she got very ill, I said, "What are
we going to do if you don't finish your book?"
She said, "You finish it, don't touch anything
I said about you." [Laughter] "Check the
facts. Don't let me be too hard on the living."
So it was easier for me than it was for you.

But let me say I've been thinking about
it a lot lately because it gave me a chance
to relive a period in American history that
spanned my mother's life as well as my own,
starting in the Depression. In many ways, like
everybody's family, her life was unique. But
it was in many ways like that of so many peo-
ple who grew up in the Depression and
World War II and exemplified and made pos-
sible the rise of the American middle class.
Most of those people were obsessed with
working hard and taking care of their families
and building a better future for their chil-
dren, and they never doubted they could do
it. There's a reason, I think, we ought to think
about that today, and that is that there are
a lot of people who doubt that we can con-
tinue to do it. Our mission at this moment
in history, I believe, is to ensure the Amer-
ican dream for the next generation, to bring
the American people together, to move our
country forward, to make sure the middle
class grows and survives well into the 21st
century.

My mother's generation knew what we are
learning, and that is that the preservation of
these kinds of dreams is not as simple as just
talking about it. She had to leave home after
she was widowed to further her education
so she could make a good living. And my
earliest memory as a child is of my grand-
mother taking me to see my mother in New
Orleans when she was in school and then see-
ing her cry when I left the train station as
a little child.

But our generation is full of parental sto-
ries about the sacrifices that were made for

us so that we could do better. And all of us
in this room have been exceedingly fortunate
in that regard. The generation that our par-
ents were a part of built the houses, the
schools, educated the children that built the
explosion of American energy and industry
after the Second World War.

Underneath the magnificent material
mileposts, which left us with only 6 percent
of the world's population then and 40 per-
cent of the world's economic output, was a
set of values. They believed we had to work
hard, that we had a duty to do right by our
community and our neighbors, that we were
obliged to take responsibility for ourselves
and our families. Without those values, the
successes would not have occurred, and
nothing else passed on to us would amount
to much for we would quickly squander
whatever material benefits we had.

Most of my mother's generation, at least
that I knew, would never have put it this way,
but they lived by a creed that I was taught
by a professor of Western civilization at
Georgetown, who told me that the great se-
cret of Western civilization in general and
the United States of America specifically was
that always, at every moment in time, a ma-
jority of us had believed that the future could
be better than the present and that each of
us had a personal, moral responsibility to
make it so. In pursuit of that dream, the
Americans in this century have made a sol-
emn bargain with their Government: Gov-
ernment should work to help those who help
themselves.

Forty-nine years ago today, Harry Truman
spent his first full day as President of the
United States. No one ever did more to
honor that solemn bargain. After World War
II, our country chose the course of con-
fidence, not cynicism, building a stable world
economy in which we could flourish with the
Marshall Plan and the General Agreement
on Tariffs and Trade, which we have just con-
cluded of the Uruguay round.

We lifted a majority of our people into the
middle class not by giving them something
for nothing but by giving them the oppor-
tunity to work hard and succeed. In just 2
months, we'll celebrate the 50th anniversary
of the G.I. bill of rights, which helped more
than 20 million American veterans to get an

education and millions more to build businesses and homes.

These great achievements did not belong to any particular party. They were American decisions. They were not the reflection of a country pulled to the right or to the left but a country always pushing forward. They reflected the vision and the values of leaders of both parties. After Truman, Eisenhower continued the tradition by building the Interstate Highway System and by investing in the space program and science and technology and in education. The tradition continued in the next administrations, all working toward greater prosperity but rooted in certain values that enabled us to go forward.

But the seeds of our new difficulties, that we face in such stark reality today, were sown beginning three decades ago in changes in our social fabric and two decades ago in changes in our general economic condition. We have seen the weakening slowly of the institutions and the values which built the middle class and the economic underpinnings which made it possible, in theory at least, for all Americans to achieve it.

Three decades ago, in 1960, births outside of marriage were 5.3 percent of total children born. In 1980, the rate had risen to 18.4 percent; in 1990, to 28 percent. There are many of those who say, "Well, Mr. President, you're overstating the case because the birth rate among married couples has dropped so much." It may be. All I know is that those kids are our future, and the trends are inescapable and disturbing. And the rates for teen mothers in poverty and for all mothers without a high school education of out-of-wedlock birth rates are far, far higher than the 28 percent that I just said.

The fear of violent crime has made neighbors seem like strangers. And as Senator Pat Moynihan of New York has said, Americans have begun to "define deviancy down." We're simply getting used to things that we never would have considered acceptable just a few years ago.

In the post-war economy, a high school diploma meant security. By the time of the 1990 census, it was clear that a high school diploma meant you'd probably be in a job where your income would not even keep up

with inflation. Most middle class families have to work longer hours to stay even. The average working family in 1992 was spending more hours on the job than it did in 1969. And in too many neighborhoods, the vacuum that has been created by the absence of work and community and family has been filled by crime and violence and drugs.

In the 1980's, the world continued to change dramatically economically. And I would argue that, in general, our collective response to it was wrong, even though many of our best companies made dramatic productivity gains which are benefiting us today. We reduced taxes for some Americans, mostly the wealthy Americans, and we increased the deficit. But increases in Social Security taxes and State and local taxes put further strains on middle class incomes. From 1981 to 1993, our Nation's debt quadrupled, while job creation and the general living standard of the wage-earning middle class stagnated or declined.

So we have these problems that, let's face it, brought me to the Presidency in 1992, the abject conditions that Americans were groping to come to grips with. You can be proud that so many newspapers have done so much to not only call attention to these problems to make them really real in the lives of people and to cry out for new thinking.

In its remarkable series, "America: What Went Wrong?", the Philadelphia Inquirer showed how the National Government's policies had undermined the middle class already under stress by a global economy. Of all the facts cited by Donald Bartlett and James Steele, one stood out to me. In 1952 it took the average worker a day of work to pay the closing costs on a home in the Philadelphia suburbs. In the 1990's, it took 18 weeks.

The Chicago Tribune on its front page underscored the epidemic of violence killing so many of our children and robbing so many others of their childhood. The Los Angeles Times explored the loss of a sense of community that prompted the riots there 2 years ago. Recently when I was in Detroit for the jobs conference, the papers there talked about the changing job market and the State that was the automobile capital of the world, the good and the bad dislocations that have occurred and what was working.

Recently, in were awarded Raspberry got his commentaries. And Isabella children growing up in New York—the New

Our administration Eileen Welsome Tribune exposition experience which have contributed to the pride of the operation Energy, Hazel (Energy Department)

There are lots of things: The Akron Tribune's edition of race relations Star Tribune's edition of other day, and I think and rewarding care conditions had in a long time

Every day, you and to care through is to act. As I think that is basically Oh, they want us we live in a cynical that the Government a one-car parade

The future of depends upon what we do about the most important agreements, the GATT agreement had with the communities. But too. By attempting them in a world hope to preserve America can grow rich, whether it is nuclear program. troops on the P interests of all Americans forms in the Soviet destroy missiles create new market or by harnessing ice of diplomacy will help to prevent

Recently, in the Pulitzer Prizes, which were awarded yesterday, I noted that Bill Raspberry got a well-deserved Pulitzer for his commentaries on social and political subjects. And Isabel Wilkerson's report on children growing up in the inner city in New York—the New York Times won.

Our administration owes a special debt to Eileen Welsome's series in the Albuquerque Tribune exposing secret governmental radiation experiments conducted decades ago which have consequences today. And I'm proud of the openness that the Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary, has brought to the Energy Department in dealing with this.

There are lots of other things I could mention: The Akron Beacon Journal's examination of race relations there; the Minneapolis Star Tribune's editorial board hosted me the other day, and I had one of the most searching and rewarding discussions of the health care conditions in our country that I have had in a long time.

Every day, you are challenging us to think and to care through your newspapers. My job is to act. As I travel the country, I see that that is basically what people want us to do. Oh, they want us to be careful. They know we live in a cynical age, and they're skeptical that the Government would even mess up a one-car parade. But they want us to act.

The future of our American leadership depends upon what we do at home, but also what we do abroad. Last year among the most important developments were the trade agreements, the NAFTA agreement, the GATT agreement, the historic meeting we had with the leaders of the Asian-Pacific communities. But we have a lot of problems, too. By attempting to come to grips with them in a world increasingly disorderly, we hope to preserve an environment in which America can grow and Americans can flourish, whether it is in addressing North Korea's nuclear program, which protects not only our troops on the Peninsula but ultimately the interests of all Americans, or supporting reforms in the Soviet Union, which helps to destroy missiles once aimed at us and to create new market opportunities for the future, or by harnessing NATO's power and the serv-

a flood of refugees. Our efforts to stop the shelling of Sarajevo and the attacks on Gorazde, to bring the Serbs back to the negotiating table, to build on the agreement made by the Croats and the Bosnian Muslims, enhanced both Europe's security and our own.

Here at home, for the past 15 months, we have focused on starting the engines of upward mobility to try to make sure we can remember the values of the so-called forgotten middle class with an economic plan that is fair, with cuts that are real, investments that are smart, a declining deficit, and growing jobs.

Last year, our budget cut 340 programs, including most major entitlements. This year, the budget calls for cutting 379 programs, including the outright elimination of a hundred of them. As we cut unneeded programs, we're investing more in education, in medical research, in the technologies of tomorrow that create jobs now, whether in defense conversion or in environmental sciences. We're fighting for a revitalized Clean Water Act, a safe drinking water act, a reformed Superfund program. All of them will clean the environment, but they will also create the jobs of tomorrow, everybody from engineers to pipefitters.

As April 15th approaches, people will see that I did tell the truth last year about our economic program: 1.2 percent of Americans will pay more in income taxes, including me and some others in this room. All that money will go to reduce the deficit. One-sixth of America's workers will get an income tax cut this year because they are working hard and raising children but hovering around the poverty line. And we are attempting to reward work over welfare and to prove that people even in this tough, competitive environment can be successful workers and successful parents. That's why the earned-income tax credit was expanded so much. I believe it was the right thing to do.

The economic plan creates new opportunities to send people to college by lowering the interest rates and broadening the eligibility for college loans and then changing the terms of repayment so that young people can

There is in this economic plan a new business capital gains tax, rewarding investments for the long term. People who make new investments for 5 years or more will get a 50-percent tax cut in the tax rate and a 70-percent increase in the small business expensing provision—something that's been almost entirely overlooked—which makes 90 percent of the small businesses in the United States of America, those with taxable incomes of under \$100,000, eligible for an income tax cut.

The economy has generated a 20-percent increase in auto sales and 2.5 million new jobs; 90 percent of these new jobs are in the private sector. That's a far higher percentage than the new jobs of the eighties.

The combination of declining deficits, which will amount to 3 years in a row—if this budget is adopted, we'll have 3 years of declining deficits in a row for the first time since Harry Truman was the President of the United States. And it has produced steady growth and low inflation, leading many of our most respected economists, from the Fed Chairman, Alan Greenspan, to Allen Sinai, to say that our economy and its fundamentals has the best prospects it's had in two to three decades. Inflation is projected to be lower this year than last year.

We've come a long way, but there's a long way to go. There's still too many people out of work, too many people working for low wages, too many people who know that they can work harder and harder and harder and they still won't have the opportunity of doing better. And there are too many people who are left out altogether, living in environments that are, at worst, downright dangerous.

Our country is more than an economy; it is a community of shared values, values which have to be strengthened. This year, we are working on things that will both strengthen the economy and strengthen our community. We're working on a welfare system which will continue to reward work and family and encourage people and, in some cases, require people to move from welfare to work through welfare reform.

We are working on lobbying and campaign reforms which, if the Congress will pass them, and I believe they will, will help us to change the culture of Washington in a very

positive way. The national service program this year will have 20,000 young people earning money for their college educations by solving the problems of this country in a grassroots fashion in their communities or in others all across America. And the year after next we'll have 100,000 young people doing that.

The Vice President's reinventing Government program has been a dramatic example of giving us a Government that will work better for less by slashing paperwork and regulations and again, if this budget is adopted—thanks to the work already done by the Congress—will lead us in a 5-year period to a reduction of the Federal Government by 252,000 workers, in a 6-year period by 272,000 workers; so that in the end of 5 years, we will have the smallest Federal Government since the 1960's, the early sixties. I'll tell you what we're going to do with the money in a minute.

But we are moving in the right direction. The health care reform debate is a big part of that. I know there's a lot of good in our health care system. We don't want to mess with it. We want to fix what's wrong. But nobody who has seriously analyzed it can doubt that we have the worst and the most inefficient system of financing health care of any of the advanced countries. No other country spends more than 10 percent of its economy on health care. We spend 14.5 percent of our income. Part of that's because we're more violent; part of it's because we have high rates of AIDS; part of it's for good reasons: We spend more on medical research and technology, and we wish to continue to do that. No one would give up that premium. It's an important part of our world leadership and our global economy. Indeed, we need to find ways to do more in some of these areas, in biotechnology, for example.

But a part of it stems from the fact that we have a system which is plainly inefficient and which, in paperwork burdens alone, may cost as much as a dime on the dollar more than any other system in the world. We are also the only advanced country in the world that has not figured out how to provide health care to all its citizens. Everybody else has figured out how to do it. The result of that is that almost all of you work for compa-

nies that pay too much because when people get real health care when it's at the emergency room, the cost on to the rest of the country. If you live in rural areas, it can be passed along, then to another way, in low-income areas when the hospital closes or the last doctor moves.

Eighty-one million people live with someone who's been sick, who's been in the hospital too much for insurance to cover, who never change jobs. It's the cost of rebuilding a failed system, no accident that there's been a million layoffs, us their personal stories. They're people who work hard, who care for themselves in the end of the way we find it. We haven't been able to do it.

The education and training are important. Goals 2000 bill I just signed in American history. It's the first time in world class excellence encourages schools to achieve them. There will be more people than ever before.

And finally this year we will change the unemployment system. We will pay unemployment benefits to people who are laid off when laid off was created. The system was just sort of a system where the employer was just sort of a ployer to contribute that person at a low cost to unemployment. But we will get called back to the system. We have to find new ways to no longer ask people to leave people idle after which they're coming, no skill, and not a future. So we believe

nies that pay too much for your health care, because when people who don't have health insurance get real sick, they tend to get health care when it's too late, too expensive, at the emergency room, and they pass the cost on to the rest of you in higher premiums. If you live in rural areas where the costs can't be passed along, the cost is passed along in another way, in lower quality of health care when the hospital closes or the clinic closes or the last doctor moves away.

Eighty-one million Americans live in families with someone with a preexisting condition, who's been sick before, so that they pay too much for insurance, can't get it, or can never change jobs. This is an important part of rebuilding a faith in the middle class. It's no accident that the First Lady and I have received a million letters that people—telling us their personal stories. They aren't pikers. They're people who have paid their dues, who work hard, who want to make something of themselves in this country. And because of the way we finance health care, they haven't been able to do it.

The education initiatives of our administration are important in this regard. The Goals 2000 bill I just signed for the first time in American history sets national standards of world class excellence in education and encourages schools to use grass roots reforms to achieve them. The student loan reforms will open college education to more young people than ever before.

And finally this year we're going to try to change the unemployment system into a re-employment system. All of you as employers pay unemployment taxes into a system that is fundamentally broken. The average person when laid off was called back after a period to his or her old job when the unemployment system was created. And the unemployment system was just sort of a fair way for the employer to contribute to the maintenance of that person at a lower wage level while on unemployment. But today, most people don't get called back to their old jobs. Instead they have to find new ones. And we should no longer ask people to pay for a system that leaves people idle for a period of months after which they're out of work with no training, no skill, and not a good prospect for the future. So we believe from the day a person

is unemployed, he or she should be involved in a retraining and a new job placement program immediately. It will cut the period of unemployment. It will increase the national income, and it will certainly honor the values of the American middle class if we change this system.

For all of this, there are still a lot of things, maybe the most important things about America, that Government can't do. Nothing has reminded me more of that than the headlines in today's Washington Post. I'm sure you saw the story. Two 10-year-old boys were taken into custody yesterday in an elementary school not far from here, just across the line in Maryland. They were charged with planning to sell crack cocaine found in one of their school bags. Even in this jaded age most everybody, including the school officials at the school, were shocked.

We can do a lot of things to put this country back where it belongs. We can and must pass the crime bill to deal with a lot of these problems. It's a good crime bill: 100,000 more police officers; a ban on 28 kinds of assault weapons; the most innovative prevention programs we have ever supported at the national level to try to keep young kids out of trouble and give them something to say yes to as well as things to say no to; tougher punishment in what I think are sensible ways. And how are we going to pay for it, \$22 billion over 5 years? With a 250,000 reduction in the Federal work force, not with a tax increase.

But even if you do that, we cannot live the lives of children for them. So every one of us, every parent, every teacher, every person, has to somehow find a way to reach these kids before it's too late. Somehow the young people who make it know that they're important. They understand that their lives matter. They understand that there can be a future. They think about the future in terms of what happens 5 or 10 years or 20 years from now instead of what happens 5 or 10 minutes from now. They understand that they have to fight to find ways other than violence to solve their problems or deal with their frustrations. They have to come to understand that children having children is just wrong and can't lead to anything good for them, that drugs will ruin their lives. We've

got a lot of kids now who are beginning to creep back into drug use just because they think it's hopeless out there. We have to change that, and we have to help them change that. And a Government program, alone, cannot do it. We have to do it with the kinds of things you do with these special reportings in your newspaper and galvanizing and organizing people all over this country, community by community.

Finally, let me just say this. A couple of night's ago, we marked the end of the year honoring the 250th birthday of Thomas Jefferson. For you as journalists, of course, his commitment to freedom of expression was his greatest gift to us. I don't know how many journalists I've had quote Jefferson's famous line that if he had to choose a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, he would unhesitatingly choose the latter. My response is always, he said that before he became President. [Laughter]

But there's a line, or a lesson, that we often overlook. Jefferson was also a slaveholder, even though he wrote three or four times in various places attempts to limit slavery or do away with it. If you go to the Jefferson Memorial, you find that wonderful quote when he says, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just and his justice cannot sleep forever." He knew it was wrong, but he couldn't change it.

But Jefferson's great legacy, in some ways, was the advocacy of relentless change. He said that we'd have to change our whole way of doing things once every generation or so. He said the Earth belongs to the living. In other words, the great power of the idea that change and progress is possible if rooted in fixed principles is really the idea we need to bring to American life today.

We all share the responsibility in achieving that kind of change and progress. I think we have got to get together. We've got to go on with the work before us. We cannot afford to be diverted or divided in this town. We cannot afford to ignore the urgent tasks at hand. And we cannot afford to ignore the possibility that we can really make a difference, that we can ensure for the next generation of children the values and the life that were given to us by the generation which

preceded us. And that, I submit to you, is the job of the President and the job of the American people in 1994.

Thank you very much.

[At this point, the emcee announced that the President would take questions. The first participant asked if delinquency and crime among children were not symptoms of the disease of adult delinquency.]

The President. Well, in some ways I think it is a symptom. I think it is the outgrowth—if you think about what makes all societies work, basically what makes societies work, what makes them function, what guarantees a healthy environment, it is basically a devotion to the family unit, a devotion to the idea that everybody ought to have some useful work to perform, and an understanding that while the rights of individuals are important, the interests of the community at large are important, too, and that all of us find most personal fulfillment when we live in a community that itself is succeeding. So we have obligations to a larger community. If you go to the places that are in the worst trouble in America today, all three of those things are in deep distress, not very much sense of community, not very much work, and families in ruins.

And what I'm trying to do, sir, is to try to create an environment in which we support family, work, and community, both with incentives for people to do the right thing, like giving a tax break to working people so they won't feel that they'd be better off on welfare—they're hovering at the poverty line—to dealing with the kinds of things that Secretary Cisneros dealt with when he spent the night in the Robert Taylor Homes Project of Chicago the other night, trying to find ways for the people who live in public housing to be secure, to build their own communities, take control of their own destiny, and to be safe from that.

But I agree with you, I think a lot of these problems we identify are the consequences of the fundamental stress on those three things: work, family, and community.

[A participant cited the watchdog role of the press and asked what could be done to open up Government to the people, make Government more accessible to the press in terms

Administration of

of technology and information via the Fr grant greater access and effect change stances when the overseas.]

The President

I mentioned one marks. And that Department is doing with the whole have under the secrecy rules of G to change them more records than past.

You made a speech technology, and whether to facilitate this... of people at the V nately, I'm not o whole lot about things like E-mail. But that's one of our people to study so-called information the news media or ernment more for available anyway facilitated. Just think, would make

On the fourth a satisfactory answer up my own mind know enough to is, the relationship operations in time ing you, I'm just thought it through my options are.

But on the other in accord, and I work on the whole fer and interconnecting moving forward to

[A participant in had advocated P the strike involving asked if he still be appropriate.]

The President hard through the

of technology and access to electronic information via the Freedom of Information Act, grant greater access to Presidential materials, and effect changes in Pentagon policy in instances when the press covers military action overseas.]

The President. Well, first of all, I think I mentioned one example in my opening remarks. And that is, I think that the Energy Department is doing quite a good job in dealing with the whole radiation issue. We also have under the review all the sort of, the secrecy rules of Government, and we expect to change them and make available a lot more records than have been available in the past.

You made a specific comment about technology, and whether technology can be used to facilitate this. And we do have a couple of people at the White House—and unfortunately, I'm not one of them—who know a whole lot about this. And we've tried to use things like E-mail more and things like that. But that's one of the things that I've asked our people to study, is how we can use this so-called information superhighway to hook the news media of the country into the Government more for things that are plainly available anyway and whether that could be facilitated. Just the technological transfers, I think, would make a big difference.

On the fourth question, I can't give you a satisfactory answer because I haven't made up my own mind yet, and I don't think I know enough to make a decision, and that is, the relationship of the press to our military operations in time of combat. I'm not rebuffing you, I'm just telling you I have not thought it through, and I don't know what my options are.

But on the other three things, I think we're in accord, and I will try to do a little more work on the whole issue of technology transfer and interconnection. And I think we are moving forward to open more records.

[A participant indicated that the President had advocated Presidential intervention in the strike involving Caterpillar, Inc., and asked if he still believed such action was still appropriate.]

The President. Well, we have worked hard through the executive branch to resolve

other labor disputes, as you know, including the one involving the airlines recently. So I am not averse to that. But if you'll remember, at the time I said that there was an actual strike in place that was of significant duration for a company, Caterpillar, that is very important to this whole country. A lot of you may not know this: Caterpillar has as much as 80 percent of the Japanese market for some of its products. It's a very, very important company.

And so, I guess what I have to tell you is if the strike occurs and if it is of significant duration and if there is something that I think we can do about it, I would be glad to look into that. But what I have tried to do on all labor disputes is not to prematurely intervene—there is no strike at this moment—not to prematurely intervene and to take it on a case by case basis depending on what the national interest is and whether or not there is a positive role we could play. In the case of the airlines, there was; and one or two other cases—a railroad issue, and several others—there has been something we could do. And if it happens, you can be sure that I will look into very closely.

[A participant asked the President to grade the performance of columnists and editorial writers in covering his administration and Whitewater.]

The President. Well, let me first of all say, the grade that they gave me is not as important to me as the grade, sort of objective criteria, that many of the journals here went through: just how much did we get done last year as compared with previous first-year Presidencies. And all the objective analysis concluded that we had the best first year in a generation, in 30 years or more, just in terms of the volume and significance and the difficulty of legislative achievements and advances. So I felt quite good about that, and that's how I measured my own.

Secondly, if I could grade the press, I wouldn't, especially not now. *[Laughter]* But let me just say—let me make three points very quickly about it, either in general or on Whitewater. If you have any doubts about it, then that's good because you ought to be having doubts about things like this. But I want to make three points. One is, you can't

[A participant asked the President to respond to a veteran who had stated that the way the Veterans Administration runs its hospitals is an example of why the Government should not run the health care system.]

The President. That's why we don't recommend a Government run the health care system. I have two responses to that. First of all, our plan does not provide for Government-run health care. In fact, that's very rare in the world. The British system is the only one where the government actually delivers the health care, just about. There are some other systems, like the Canadian system, where the government finances it all. We have Government-financed health care through the Medicare program. Most people think it's pretty good who are on it. But it's all—you know, if you are on Medicare, you get to choose your own doctor; it's all private care, all private.

The veterans hospital system worked quite well, sir, for a while, but it doesn't work now because the Government can't run it without its being able to compete. I mean, what basically happened is, there are fewer and fewer veterans who choose to use the veterans hospital network. They have other options for pay—they're eligible for Medicare; they have private insurance or whatever. The veterans hospital can't take that kind of pay, so it becomes more underfunded while the population it's treating goes down; and those difficulties feed on itself.

I think we've got a—basically, we have proposed to give the veterans hospital network the chance to compete and do well, but when those veterans hospitals are in trouble, that's why they're in trouble. What I proposed to do instead is to have guaranteed private insurance, and all I want the Government to do is to require guaranteed private insurance for the employed uninsured, give organized approval to give discounts to small businesses so they won't go broke providing the insurance, and then organized buyers co-ops, so small business, farmers, and self-employed people can buy insurance on the same terms that big business employees and Government employees can. And I don't want the Federal Government to do that, I just want it set up so that can be done at the State level.

The President. Thanks.

But I certainly do have a Government—I think the Government in which we have insurance; we can beat inflation—the right managed care are there; we can have the same chance of affordable care. That

The President. W

All I can tell you, best to answer the question. Maybe you have total collection of every question is—might be asked of things that happened years ago. Maybe you have records up for 17 years. I can answer any question. I want to go back to the beginning. You think I should have a general Government down there. I should study these things for

I would remind you on by the press and the a special counsel to grounds that then about it, and let the job, and I could go could give all the record he had a question in

But I certainly don't think we ought to have a Government-run health care system. I think the Government could create an environment in which everybody can get health insurance; we can bring cost in line with inflation—the right economic incentives for managed care are there—and the little folks have the same chance as the big folks to get affordable care. That's all I want to do.

[A participant asked how he should respond to his daughter's statement, "He sounds just like me when I'm trying to explain why I don't have my homework," after she heard the President's explanation of events that happened 15 years ago.]

The President. Well, let me tell you, let me give you an example. I'll just say one thing. Garrison Keillor said last night, he said, "You know, all I know about Whitewater is what I read in the papers, so I don't understand it." [Laughter] He made two statements; I'm just repeating what he said. He said, "I really wasn't going to talk about Whitewater tonight, but I was afraid if I didn't say anything, you'd think I know something about it." [Laughter] Then he said, "I suppose I ought to tell you that I've never been to Arkansas." But, he said, "I'm reluctant to tell you that, because then you will attack me for not telling you that 30 days ago." [Laughter]

All I can tell you, sir, is I have done my best to answer the questions asked of me. Maybe you have total and complete recollection of every question that might be—not is—might be asked of you at any moment of things that happened to you 12, 13, 14 years ago. Maybe you could give your tax records up for 17 years and, at the moment, answer any question. Or maybe, instead, you want to go back to the homework question: You think I should have shut the whole Federal Government down and done nothing but study these things for the last 2 months?

I would remind you that I was asked early on by the press and the Republicans to have a special counsel look into this on the grounds that then everyone could forget about it, and let the special counsel do his job, and I could go on and be President. I could give all the records up, and then when he had a question in his document search,

he could ask me, we could work it out, and the issue could be resolved. So I said, "Sure," even though the criteria for appointing a special counsel weren't met. No one had accused me of any wrongdoing, certainly nothing connected with my Presidency or my campaign for the Presidency. I said, "Let's do it so I can go back to work." And that is what I have tried to do.

Since then, the same people who asked for the special counsel so that these issues could be resolved in an appropriate and disciplined way and I could go back to work, have decided they were kidding. And they wanted to continue for us to deal with this. Well, I'm sorry, I'm doing the best I can while I do the job I was hired by the American people to do.

I have been as candid and as forthright as possible. Sam Dash, the Watergate special prosecutor, said, "This is a very different administration than previous ones. These people have resisted no subpoenas. They have claimed no executive privilege. They have cooperated. They have turned all the documents over." I have done everything I know to do.

But can I answer every question that anybody might ever ask me about something that happened 10, 15, 17 years ago on the spur of the moment and have total recall of all of that while trying to be President? No, sir, I cannot. But the special counsel has a process for dealing with that which would permit us to focus on the truly relevant questions and deal with it. And I have cooperated very well. I will continue to do that.

I will also do my best to give information to the press. But I would just like to point out that the people who asked for the special counsel asked for it and said, the President ought to do this so we can clear the air and he can go on and be President. Now the suggestion is, the implication of your remark, sir, is that instead of that, I should stop being President and do my homework on this issue.

Q. All I was asking is what I should tell my daughter for her response, and I think the response was wonderful. And I thank you very much for it.

The President. Thank you.

Q. We have time for one more question right here.

Q. Mr. President, I'm Tom Dearmore, retired from the San Francisco Examiner and a native of your home State—

The President. Mountain Home, Arkansas.

Q. —who used to long ago stir up lots of trouble in Arkansas.

The President. You're still legendary down there, Mr. Dearmore. [Laughter]

Q. My father helped run your campaign for Congress 20 years ago—

The President. He sure did. And I'm grateful to him.

[The participant then asked if the President favored the unrestricted use of U.S. money that goes abroad for population control or if he favored any limitation at all on the use of American taxpayers' money for abortion.]

The President. Yes, I do. I do, and let me say first of all, I have asked—I did about 2 days ago—I saw a story on this, and I received a couple of letters about it. And I have asked to see the language that we are advocating and the language that is in the present draft so that I can personally review it.

My position on this, I think, is pretty clear. I think at a minimum that we should not fund abortions when the child is capable of living outside the mother's womb. That's what we permit to be criminalized in America today under Roe against Wade. And secondly, we should not, in any way, shape, or form fund abortions if they are enforced on citizens by the government, if they're against people's will.

There may be other restrictions I would favor, but I can just tell you that on the front end, I think that those are the two places where I would not support our funding going in. And so I think that we ought to be very careful in how we do this.

On the other hand, I don't necessarily think that we ought to write the Hyde Amendment into international law, because there are a lot of countries who have a very different view of this and whose religious traditions threaten it differently.

So I think that there is some room between the original draft and where—it appears, from the news reports, some folks in the State Department may be going to write a

policy that most Americans could support. But I'm glad you brought it up.

I, myself, did not know about this until just a few days ago. And I have asked for a report, and I've asked to see the documents myself so I can get involved in it and at least try to have some influence on what happens. Of course, it's an international conference. We don't know exactly how it will come out in the end, and there will be countries and cultures that have widely clashing views on this.

But, anyway, I've answered you what I think.

Q. Thank you.

Q. Mr. President, thank you very much. We're looking forward to a more informal gathering with you Friday night.

The President. I'm looking forward to it, too. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:31 p.m. at the J.W. Marriott Hotel.

Remarks Honoring the United States Winter Olympic Athletes

April 13, 1994

The President. Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President, the First Lady, thank you for coming out here, in this case not warming up but trying to cool down the crowd—[laughter]—while I was trying to get out of the Oval Office; to all of our distinguished guests, and especially to the Olympians.

Let me say, first of all, that the Olympics for me, like most Americans, is primarily a personal experience, not something I experience as President but something—I'm just another American cheering for our teams. I'm proud of the fact that we brought home more medals than any U.S. Winter Olympic team in history. I'm proud of the astonishing achievements of this Paralympic team and the fact that at least two of the athletes won four gold medals.

I was elated and a little resentful, frankly, when my wife and daughter were able to go to Lillehammer, and I couldn't. But you can bet your last nickel that all of us will be in Atlanta—[applause]—to our friends from Georgia there.

There's not much I can say about the First Lady and the Vice President except to first say how much I enjoyed what was at the reports I saw about Chelsea about their experiences from the Olympics. I think a kind of young people what kind of courage that they made. It's a great impression on me.

And second, to tell you that I started, I experienced this primarily as a citizen. As I have endangered the cause I stayed up every night off the air. [Laughter] I saw every last interview of the "Spangled Banner" played. I did it first then when Hillary and I we did it together. A very personal thing.

What you did there I hope with all my heart to the children that went to the schools. And if I could ask you it would be to try to tell some of you that a lot already—but to try to for as long as you can to expose yourselves to this country. Because so many troubles, they have no one to spur them on or get in the morning the way to become what you are by seeing you they are in the light of your life.

And I can tell you here every day, all of the ways to pull this country forward a lot of opportunities to live up to our capacities. But in the great because of what people's spirits and in families. And there are people whom you can

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NOTE: The President spoke at 10:37 a.m. in the Mellon Auditorium. H.R. 3450, approved December 8, was assigned Public Law No. 103-182. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Exchange With Reporters at Blair House

December 8, 1993

Violent Crime

Q. Give us your reaction, sir, to the shootings on Long Island—[inaudible]—in the shootings.

The President. First of all, it's a terrible human tragedy, and my sympathies go out to all the families involved.

I will say, I think we have to note that the gun that was used contained, apparently, two 15-round clips that were expended while this man in a manic state was walking down the subway aisle. And one of the reasons we ought to pass the crime bill is that Senator Feinstein's amendment to limit assault weapons would make those 15-round clips illegal. They're not necessary for hunting or sports purposes, and it simply allows you to shoot and wound more people more quickly. So I hope that this will give some more impetus to the need to act urgently, to deal with the unnecessary problems of gun violence in the country.

The second thing I would say is that while no one believes that there is anything we can ever do to solve every problem of someone who snaps mentally and does something terrible like this, and we have to acknowledge that honestly, there are a lot of things that we're going to have to do in this country to get violence under control that relate to rebuilding our communities and healing across racial lines and economic lines. But we need to start with public safety. Put those 100,000 police officers on the street. Pass this ban on assault weapons and these multiround clips. And let's get about the business of making the country safer.

Q. [Inaudible]—requirement for licensing and testing to purchase a gun?

The President. Well, that was recommended to me, as you know, by the

Mayor-elect of New York and the Mayor of Los Angeles, and I've asked the Attorney General to review it and make a recommendation to me on it. I think I should wait to hear from her on it. It is interesting how we regularly have requirements, for example, for getting and driving cars that don't apply to the use of guns. When I was a boy and first started to hunt, you know, one of the first things I was told was you have to learn how to use a gun safely and responsibly. And it's something I think we ought to look at. But I want to ask the Attorney General for an opinion before I discuss it further.

Lobbyists

Q. Sir, Roy Neel and Howard Paster are getting very lucrative jobs in PR and lobbying. Doesn't that, at the very least, give the impression of a revolving door that you spoke against?

The President. What I spoke of was not that citizens should go back to their private lives from Government and not that they shouldn't be able to use the knowledge and experience they have, but they shouldn't be able to abuse it.

What we did was to erect bigger walls against abuse. Neither one of them can ever lobby for a foreign interest and neither one of them can lobby the Executive Office of the President for 5 years on any matter even though the law only requires one year. So we've raised the wall higher, which is exactly what I promised to do.

Now if, in addition to that, the House will follow the Senate's lead and pass the lobby bill, lobby restriction bill, which will put restrictions on the activities of lobbyists and disclose more of them, and if the House and Senate will agree to a good campaign finance reform bill and the Congress will agree to live under the laws it imposes on private employers—if they'll do all that, which is on our agenda, then I think the public confidence will be much, much higher.

Surgeon General Elders

Q. Dr. Elders, obviously, has said a lot of things that have created a controversy, but unless I'm mistaken, this is the first time I can remember her making a comment that was a fundamental disagreement with you and that a member of your administration

talked about reining her in—that she needs to only speak for the administration.

The President. I just don't agree with that position. When you have someone as outspoken and energetic as she is, there's going to be times when she'll be outspoken and energetic in a way that I don't necessarily agree with.

Q. Is she allowed to disagree with you?

The President. But I certainly stand behind her foursquare as Surgeon General. I think she's done a good job, and she's beginning to really focus the country on a lot of these public health problems. So, she needs to make it very clear that—and I think she did, to be fair—that I just disagree with that. I have thought about it a lot, and I think the cost of legalizing drugs would far outweigh the benefits. But I think the fact that everybody in America feels overwhelmed and determined to do something about crime and violence and drugs and gangs is a very positive thing. So we'll just go from here.

President's Health

Q. Mr. President, how's your back?

The President. Much better, thank you. It just happens every couple of years. I wait for it to heal up, and I go back to running. It's fine.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:11 p.m. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks to Mayors and Chiefs of Police on Violent Crime

December 9, 1993

Thank you, Mayor Abramson, and thank all of the rest of you for coming here. I have looked forward to this meeting and to receiving this plan ever since the first discussion we held.

I believe that this Nation is really prepared in a way that it has not been before, at least in my experience, to do something about violent crime, to do something about all of its causes, and to try to come together across the lines of region and party and the size of the units in which we live to deal with these things that are tearing the heart out

of our country. I think the rapid change of opinion and movement on the Brady bill at the end of the last session is an example of that. I think the size of the margin by which Senator Feinstein's amendment was added to the crime bill in the Senate to ban 35 kinds of assault weapons was evidence of that. And so I think we are prepared to begin.

I would just like to make a couple of points, and then I came here, I'm sure along with the Attorney General and FBI Director and Dr. Brown, our Director of Drug Control Policy, as much to listen as to talk. I want to listen to you. But I would like to just put a few things on the table.

The first thing is that it is important that we get a good crime bill out early when the Congress comes back. And we'd like your help in defining what that is. The Senate and the House versions are different. The most clearly manifest difference is that the Senate version has more money in it and therefore would enable us to fund in this crime bill the full 100,000 extra police officers that I have supported since I began running for President.

As you point out in your report, it will take some time to train and deploy those people, but I know that it makes a difference. I think the margin of Mayor Lanier's reelection is evidence that people know that if you properly deploy trained personnel, it just doesn't serve to catch criminals quicker, but because of the relationships they develop in the community and their visibility, it actually reduces crime. I think there should be some alternative punishment for youthful offenders, boot camps and perhaps other things. I think that is very important.

Beyond that, we ought to talk about what else we do and where we go. But I want to emphasize that even with intense commitment in this city, you have to do the things that are before you. You have to get done what you can do at the moment and then move on to what's next on the agenda. So I think it is imperative that we move on the crime bill and the 100,000 police officers in the street and the boot camps as soon as we can when the Congress comes back.

I also think we ought to recognize that we don't have all the money in the world, and we don't want to spend a lot of money on

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things that will be of marginal significance. I was glad to see you advocating in this paper—I've just been skimming it over—that we ought to give attention to drug treatment as well as drug enforcement, that we needed to deal with supply and demand in an even-handed way. We need some more investment to do that.

The last point I want to make is that this is the first step, but only the first step we have to take in restoring the conditions of civilized life to a lot of our cities. The reason a lot of these things are happening is that there has been a simultaneous decline of work, family, and community, the things that really organize life for all the rest of us. And we are going to have to rebuild them all. And it is not going to happen overnight, because these deteriorations have happened over a period of decades. But people can sense whether you are going in the right direction or the wrong direction, and I think we have to work together to change the direction. I am confident that we can. There are also maybe some things we can do administratively. And you have the people here who want to hear from you about that, and we want to go forward with that.

And finally let me say I think we ought to set up an ongoing relationship so that you can continue to work with us, get input, and help us to work through some of the difficult decisions that are always required when you move from the level of speaking to doing. And so we'd like very much to have, Mayor, some sort of ongoing mechanism that this administration can relate to from the membership of this group.

Lastly, let me say that I'm grateful for the participation here, not just of the mayors but of the several police chiefs. It's good to see all of you here. I think we can do something. I think the American people are tired of hurting and tired of feeling insecure and tired of the violence, and it makes such a huge gap between what we say and what we do and how we want to live and how we are forced to live. And it's affected now so many more people beyond the immediate victims of crime. It's changing everyone's life in ways that are quite destructive. We have to move. And I think we're prepared to move. And

I think with this document, you've given us a good basis to begin.

I thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:41 a.m. in the Indian Treaty Room at the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Jerry Abramson of Louisville, KY, president, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and Mayor Bob Lanier of Houston, TX.

Remarks on Conversion of the Federal Fleet to Alternative Fuel Vehicles

December 9, 1993

Thank you very much. Please be seated. Thank you, Mr. Vice President and Secretary O'Leary and my longtime friend Garry Mauro.

I want to thank this task force for a job well done. I'd be remiss if I didn't ask the members of the task force who are here just to stand so we can be recognized. If you served on the task force, please stand up. [Applause] Thank you.

I also know that we had about 250 others, many of whom are in this room, who worked on the various subgroups of this task force. And I thank all of you. I thank Garry Mauro, the Texas land commissioner who has been my friend for more than 20 years, for his backbreaking work on this. I also want to thank the staff director, Tom Henderson, who is over here, who worked so hard on it. Thank you, Tom, for your work. Stand up. [Applause] Thank you. I thank Susan Tierney. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Hazel O'Leary for the statement she just made. One of my better predecessors, Harry Truman, once said that his job consisted largely of trying to talk people into doing what they ought to do without his having to ask them in the first place. [Laughter] So I didn't even have to ask her to comply. She has removed a major part of my job. But I thank her for that.

Today I am directing the White House Office on Environmental Policy, headed by Katie McGinty, to cooperate with the Department of Energy in their ongoing programs to put these recommendations into ac-

OCTOBER 3, 1993, SUNDAY

SECTION: WHITE HOUSE BRIEFING

LENGTH: 14117 words

HEADLINE: CALIFORNIA TOWN HALL MEETING WITH:
PRESIDENT CLINTON

MODERATORS:
STAN ATKINSON
CAROL BLAND
PETE WILSON
PAUL MOYER
MARTY LEVIN

BODY:

... countless hours on since I've been president, but I want to talk a minute just about the health care issue, because it relates to so much else.

We're in a time of great change. You know that out here. You've benefited from some of these changes in the last 10 years, now you've suffered for the last three years from a lot of those economic changes. In order for America to make change our friend instead of our enemy, we have to have a certain base level of personal security and family security in this country. In order for us to do that, we have to be competitive with other nations, too, and both of those things bring us always back to health care, where we spend more money and have less to show for it and where we're the only advanced country that doesn't provide health security for all our people. So the thrust of this health care effort is, first of all, to guarantee American security -- health care that's always there, health care that can never be taken away -- and to do it in a way that is fair to the American people and that lowers, not cuts health care costs, but lowers the rate at which it is increasing so that it helps the economy as well as helps the health security of American families. And it is the key to dealing with so many of our other problems and to giving the American people the security they need to face the future. I hope we'll get to talk more about it tonight. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. ATKINSON: Mr. President, while we are here tonight to address the matters of health care, the economy, and other domestic issues, we certainly can't ignore the events taking place today and tonight in Russia. It has been a bloody day there, with anti-Yeltsin forces fighting police and military units in the streets. Well-armed protesters won most of the battles, ramming trucks into government buildings, even launching rocket-propelled grenades. Russian President Yeltsin has issued a state of emergency, and military reinforcements in the form of his crack, best troops are en route to Moscow. MS. BLAND: And before we begin tonight, Mr. President, we're wondering whether or not you could update us on the situation in Russia -- in particular, this government's response to it. PRES. CLINTON: Well, first of all, let me say what happened is that the opponents of

reform, the people who don't want a new constitution, the people who don't want an election, basically in the person of Mr. Rutskoi and Mr. Khasbulatov and their supporters, who basically started all this disorder and violence today. President Yeltsin has bent over backwards not to have the soldiers fire on anybody, not to promote any violence, and he may be thinking today he went too far on that, because they basically got up a head of steam and the situation got out of control. I believe that he will be successful in the end because the people support him, and I think the United States should support Yeltsin as long as he is the person who embodies a commitment to democracy and to letting the Russian people chart their own course, and he does. The people who started this opposition are people who represent the old Communist system that Russia's trying so hard to move away from. So I wish him success. I thank him for not trying to promote any unnecessary violence, and I hope that this will be as peaceful a resolution as possible, but it's going to be pretty tough for the next few days. MR. ATKINSON: Thank you, Mr. President. Now, on to our program. In addition to the audience here with you at KCRA in Sacramento, we're also going to hear from a lot of other people in California -- up and down the state, in fact. They're in cities tonight waiting to listen to you. For instance, may I do some introductions? Joining us by satellite from KRON television in San Francisco, reporter and news anchor Pete Wilson, along with a live studio audience. Moving south to Los Angeles, Paul Moyer is there with a group assembled at KNBC television. Welcome to all of you. And also from southern California, Marty Levin. Marty and our fourth studio audience join us live from KNSD television in San Diego. And from Sacramento and KCRA, I'm Stan Atkinson. Mr. President, my partner, Carol Bland. MS. BLAND: Thank you, Stan.

Mr. President, I'd like you to meet Shelley Chase. Her son had leukemia and he died four weeks ago. They wanted to have a bone-marrow transplant for him, but their insurance company denied coverage. They raised the money anyway and -- by borrowing it and now may need to sell their home. We're not sure about that yet. But Shelley has a question for you regarding experimental treatments.

SHELLEY CHASE: Mr. President, I wanted to know if your new plan provides a way for people with life-threatening illnesses to be able to make the choice to have a procedure that could be considered experimental, if that's the only choice they have. PRES. CLINTON: The answer to the question is that in most cases, the answer would be yes, and the reason I say "most cases" is that under our plan, people will have coverage as they do in insurance today for certain conditions like leukemia, and when there is evidence that that is the best available treatment and a doctor for the child -- in this case for the child or for an adult -- wants to pursue that treatment, then the insurer will not take that option away. But there has to be -- I don't want to mislead you. There has to be at least a doctor -- there has to be some substantial evidence that the treatment might work. You never know if it will in experimental treatment, but that it might work. So in the case of a bone-marrow transplant, where there is evidence that it often has been effective, it should cover that, and that's the way we've tried to set it up. In other words, to be less restrictive than most insurance policies are ...

... instead of telling them how to run every minute of every day in the

classroom. Take account of these other things, and I think you'll see some substantial improvements. I also will tell you that our bill provides for, I think, a better option than the option that's on the ballot out here for choice. We give states incentives to allow more choice of schools than in the public school system and we give incentives for school systems to empower people to set up schools, license them, and run them according to high standards as a part of the public school system -- like you give a group of teachers permission to start their own school, but it would be part of the school system and it would have to meet, then, the standards of that school system and give the students and their parents the choice to go there. I think that's a better way to go than the initiative that's on the ballot out there. (Applause)

MR. ATKINSON: Mr. President, we're going to switch southward now to Los Angeles, and at the studios of KNBC, there's Paul Moyer. MR. MOYER: Stan, thank you. We're going to continue on the vein of education in schools, but this is a different aspect of the life in schools, Mr. President. I would like to introduce you to a very, very brave young man. His name is Deon Brown. He's 15 years old, and he has seen and experienced something that hopefully none of us ever will. About three weeks ago, he was in line at Dorsey High School here in Los Angeles with his brother, simply trying to register for class, and his brother was shot in the stomach, caught in gang crossfire. His brother was supposed to be here. He's so afraid of retaliation we couldn't find him. We're not going to show you Deon face, because he, too, is afraid, but, Mr. President, he has a question for you. He's a little nervous, so bear with us. DEON: On September 7, 1993, while attempting to enroll at Dorsey High School as a 10th grader, I was standing in line and a fight broke out between some students and a gang member. Shortly after the fight began, one of the attackers pulled out a pistol and shot my brother in the chest. When he was shot in the chest, I thought he was dead. They rushed him to the hospital. He lost a kidney and had to have his intestines reconstructed. Mr. President, the reason why we wanted to transfer to Dorsey from our neighborhood school, Manual Arts (ph), was because we thought Dorsey was a safer school to go to. Now I am afraid to go to any school. Mr. President, what can you do about guns and violence in our schools? PRES. CLINTON: Thank you for coming tonight, and thank you for saying that. Let me say first of all the story you just heard unfortunately is becoming all too common and not just in California or not just in big cities, and we ought to start with first things first. This is the only country, the only advanced country in the world, the only country I know of where we would permit children access to weapons that make them better armed than police forces. So I'll tell you what we ought to do. I have asked the Congress to pass the Brady bill, which would give us a national system, a waiting period, to check the backgrounds of people for age, criminal records, and mental health history before we sell weapons. There are several bills before the Congress which would ban assault weapons, which have no purpose other than to kill. We ought to pass one. We ought to do it this year. States all over the country are looking at ownership laws which make it illegal for minors to have guns unless they're in the presence of their parents either hunting or on a target range, and we ought to do that in every state and we ought to look at the laws by

which we regulate gun sellers. We've got to get the guns out of the hands of the children. It is imperative. Now, in addition to that, I do have a part of this education bill that I just spoke to, the Safe Schools Initiative, which would give schools the ability to have more security forces. And in the crime bill which includes the Brady Bill, the waiting period, there are funds which would help people all over the country, cities all over the country, hire another 50,000 police officers, which would allow hard-strapped cities to deploy these police officers around schools and at the places of greatest need. It makes a 50 percent downpayment on my desire and commitment from the campaign to put another 100,000 police officers on the street over the next four years. Now, let me just say one final thing. I also think -- so, I think, make them safe first, make the schools safe, get the guns out of the hands of the kids, put more police on the beat. Start there. Then you have to take these young people who haven't had the family supports, the neighborhood support, the community support that a lot of us have had that we've taken for granted and realize they are the tip-end of a generation of change. This has been going on for 30 years, getting worse every year. And we have got to find ways to give these kids a structure, an order, a hope to their lives. We have ten closed military bases today around the country where we've got an experimental program going with the National Guard teaching high school dropouts to go back and go to school and going through boot camp-like exercises. These are kids that didn't commit crimes. And we've been flooded with kids who want it because they have no structure in their lives. And we also have more boot camps in the crime bill for first time offenders. You've got to give these kids something to say yes to, instead of telling them no all of the time. But first there has to be a re-establishment of order and safety in the schools and on the streets. And, I hope, if you care about this -- I know I'm going on a little long, but this is a big deal -- the Congress should not drag its feet. They have been debating this for two years. It is time to pass a crime bill. It is time to pass the Brady Bill. It is time to ban assault weapons -- get them out of the hands of kids, so the police can do their jobs, and put more police on the street. (Applause.) MR. ATKINSON: President Clinton, we're going to move even farther south over to San Diego now. Your audience awaits you at the studios of KNSD. And there's Marty Levin. MR. LEVIN: Stan, thank you. Mr. President, our first question comes from Roberto Martinez, who is a migrant rights activist and advocate, I should say as well, that deals with questions of policy and also questions of interchange between the border patrol and individual migrants over what Mr. Martinez sees as abuses by the border patrol. ROBERTO MARTINEZ: Mr. President, do you support the use of blockades at the U.S.-Mexico border to control illegal immigration? And how does this affect mutual cooperation and understanding between Mexico and the U.S., especially in light of NAFTA negotiations? PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, I think we should have more border patrol guards, and I think we should do more to restrict illegal immigration. I certainly do. I think the fact that we have so much illegal immigration and that half of all the illegal immigrants in America are in California -- a state with an unemployment rate three percentage points above the national average -- is endangering the historic attitude of America that has pro-immigration. I mean, Los Angeles country has people from 150 different

racial and ethnic groups alone. Immigrants made this country, but they did it by and large by operating within our laws. If we permit our laws to be regularly violated, and flagrantly violated, and impose those costs on the state that has the biggest economic problems, I think we run the risk of undermining support for immigration, which I think is a very important American value. So, yes, I believe we should stiffen our efforts to control the border. I don't think it undermines the NAFTA negotiations. The President of Mexico has never asked me to do anything illegal or to continue what is a policy that is inconsistent with our law. And, as a matter of fact -- I hope we get a chance to talk about this later tonight -- one of the reasons that I so strongly support this North American Free Trade Agreement is, if you have more jobs on both sides of the border and incomes go up in Mexico, that will dramatically reduce the pressure felt by Mexican working people to come here for jobs. Most immigrants, keep in mind, come here illegally -- not for the social services. Most of them come here for the jobs. If they have jobs in ...

... in mind there are people like you all over America who may be doing different things and the needs of every economy are different. I want to try to do two things. First of all, I think we need more funds for job training given to states so that the states can direct those funds in the way that they're best needed. So in the case of California, most of the unemployed people are in the south, although the whole state has problems; but most of the unemployment is in Southern California. And the people at the local level are best able to judge what programs are working. So you've got a wildly successful program. If your state had more job training funds, they could direct them to you. And that's part of what we're trying to get done in this whole reemployment system that I just described to you. And we'll be going up to Congress soon with a bill that tries to do that, to get more funds with fewer strings attached given to local communities for the programs that work. The second thing that we need to do is to vigorously attempt to get more private investment in the distressed inner city areas. If you think about it, it is not rational for there not to be more locally owned businesses and more people working in these distressed inner city areas because most of the people who live there have jobs, make money, have checks, could spend it there, but there is no investment going into those areas. So we passed a bill earlier this year which we are in the process of implementing that will give big incentives for people to invest private dollars to create more jobs so that your training programs will be able to find work for people after they're trained. And those are the two things we're trying to do. But when you see this training bill come up before the Congress in the next several weeks, I think you will like it because it will not only provide more money, but it will be with few strings attached so that communities can direct it to people like you who are making things happen. MR. ATKINSON: We're back to San Diego.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: That's real impressive -- 400 jobs, isn't it? That's good.

MR. ATKINSON: We're back to San Diego again, and there's Marty Levin. MR.

LEVIN: Mr. President, I'd like you to meet Stan Hay. He is a church-based community organizer, works out on the street with two things that seem to constitute one very large problem -- PRESIDENT CLINTON: Good for him.

MR. LEVIN: Crime, drugs. Stan?

Q:

MR. STAN HAY: Mr. President, the organizing effort that I work for is a part of a national network that is now in about 28 cities throughout the country. And one of the overriding concerns that we hear throughout the country is people's fear and being overwhelmed by the crime and violence, especially as it relates to drugs. What I'd like to know from you is what do you see your administration being able to do to help us with that problem? Also, in the next week, we do have representatives that will be meeting with Dr. Brown to talk about the issue, and what I'm wondering is are you going to be able to take the experiences of the grass roots people and learn something from them so that you can help us throughout this nation to deal with a problem that is just getting worse and worse and worse?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, let me tell you, first of all, I'd like for you to have a chance to say maybe to me and all these people what you think ought to be done, but let me begin by responding to your specific question. He is coming to see -- Dr. Brown is Lee Brown, who is the director of drug policy for our country -- the drug czar. He was formerly the police chief in New York and Atlanta and in Houston. He started a community police program in New York, and believe it or not, New York City now, for two years in row according to the FBI statistics, has had a decline in their crime rate in all seven major areas of crime. So the first things we've got to try to do is to make the police and the community work together better with the proper allocation of resources with a view toward preventing crime from recurring as well as catching criminals quicker. That's why we need more police officers so cities can afford to deploy the resources that way. The second thing we've got to do, I'll say again, is to try to take the guns out of the hands of people who shouldn't have them. The third thing we're trying to do, as Dr. Brown will tell you, is we want to change the emphasis of the federal government's drug control efforts. With regard to enforcement, we want to concentrate more on kingpins, really big dealers, to try to break the financial back of a lot of these networks -- not just on how many arrests we can make of people in the middle, but really go after big people and money networks. Then, with people who are actual users and who may commit crimes in the course of that, we're trying to have much more comprehensive alcohol and drug abuse treatment. One of the really important things about our health care plan that I would think you would support is that it includes substance abuse treatment for people who now don't have any insurance. So that will stop a lot of these long, long delays for adequate treatment. Drug treatment works in an extraordinary percentage of the cases -- not in all the cases, but in a lot of the cases if it is there. So those are the things that we're working on. But the other thing we want to do is to listen to people like you who've actually done things that work. We have not only Lee Brown, but Janet Reno, the attorney general, was a prosecutor in Miami, one of the toughest towns in America for drugs problems, and Louis Freeh, the director of the FBI, was a U.S. attorney, a federal judge, and an FBI agent working principally in drug cases. He broke big, international drug cases as well as dealing with drugs on the street. So we've got these three crime fighters who basically came up from the grass roots. And it's the first time we ever had a team of grass roots crime fighters dealing with the drug issue. They want to hear from you and people like you all over the country about what would work for you.

MR. LEVIN: Mr. President, while we have you and since you've asked, Mr. Hay does have a couple of suggestions. MR. HAY: Well, the first thing I think is that

--

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I want to know.

MR. HAY: -- we tend to automatically believe that more police and more laws will solve the problem. I think that the drug problem is an epidemic and that we need to begin to look at the systemic problems that are at the root of what's going on. We can build more jails and we can put thousands and thousands of police on the street, and I don't think that it will solve it because in the last 10 years, we have increased policing, we have increased the amounts of laws, and the problem has just gotten larger and larger. I think what you say about national health care and providing a way for people to get treatment is one of the ways, but also we need to find ways to get at our children while they are young and to begin to change the image of the drug culture. PRESIDENT CLINTON: Let me say this. If you take what he said plus what the young man said here who wanted the job for his friends, plus what the young man said whose brother got shot, it goes back to the bigger point. The problems you see that you're all horrified about today have been festering and developing over a generation in America. There were poor communities in this country 30, 40, 50 years ago that had no difference in the crime rate, no difference in the drug abuse rate as communities today, but they had locally-owned businesses, coherent community organizations and intact families, all of which you have going away today. So if you want to do something fundamental, we have to give these kids people like him to relate to. Like you, sir. People who can be almost the kind of role models you used to take it for granted that the parents would be, who can create their own kind of gang in a community organization. We all want to be in a gang, don't we? I mean, your church is a gang, your basketball team is a gang. In other words, we have a need to be with people who are like us, who share our values, who make us feel important, who reinforce us. And there is no simple answer to this, but you've got to start with these children when they're very young, and you have to give them a way of belonging and a way of learning and a way of growing that is positive. Let me say I agree with you about the jails. You can build more jails and not make society safer. And we need to distinguish between people who need to be kept out of society for a very long time and others that we may be jailing we could do something else with. There's a difference in police. More police won't necessarily make you safer, but if they relate well to the community, if their neighbors trust them, if they like them, if they're on the street, they can lower the crime rate by keeping crime from occurring, by deterring the thing from occurring. If you have the right kind of relationships, they can be an enormous weapon. But I want you to talk to Dr. Brown, and you're absolutely right, and I thank you for giving your life to this. There's not any more important work in America today than what you're trying to do. (Applause.) MR. ATKINSON: I think we're going to switch gears. This is a Sacramento physician with Carol. MS. BLAND: Exactly. He's our first doctor of the evening, as a matter of fact, and his name is Bruce Ermann. He is a primary care internist, and he's concerned about the formation of physician groups, or alliances, I believe as your health plan refers to them.

Doctor?

DR. BRUCE ERMANN: Yes. First, Mr. President, thank you for coming and meeting with us tonight. I'm an independent physician. I'm a primary care doctor who has been in practice for four years. In Sacramento and in California, the trend towards managed care has already been occurring for several years, and as this has occurred, the insurance companies have only really chosen to contract mainly with physician groups instead of independent physicians, forcing physicians in independent practice to move more towards IPAs and multispecialty medical groups. I have a concern regarding patient care and the quality on occasion because the experience in Sacramento is that many or most of the groups formed to manage these contracts in their early years, due to lack of experience and poor information services, lost significant sums of money. This will be now multiplied potentially across the nation as thousands of new physician groups are forced to be formed. The regulations within the groups that were formed to try and recoup those losses have a potential to adversely affect patient care by trying to deny or to slow delivery of expensive services. Is there anything in the plan that will, number one, help new and struggling physician groups to get better information services, get accurate data to try and help in managing their care better? And number two, is there anything that's going to try and help independent physicians who choose or wish not to have to join large multispecialty alliances? PRESIDENT CLINTON: Yes. First of all, let me say that there are things in this plan which will give much better access to data of all kinds through physicians, both business management data, health outcomes data, a whole lot of things that you don't get now, particularly if you're in individual practice, and to help people to set up and operate things without losing money -- you know, just without making business ...

... shortage of teachers for a couple of years, and they can wipe off a big portion of their loans. In addition to that, we're making a real effort to try to encourage a lot of these wonderful people who are coming out of the military, as we downsize the military, to go into teaching, to try to encourage them to do it. And we need, I might say, a lot more cooperation from a lot of the states in passing easier ways for them to become certified to go into the classroom. But if you think about it, the military has had a stunning amount of success in educating and training people. On a continuing basis, if you go back to what the gentleman said who was an older, high-tech worker that lost his job -- and that's the kind of thing that we need in a lot of our schools today. So a lot of these military people are being encouraged to go into teaching -- (audio break) -- a special program passed by Congress some incentives to do that, and I hope we can expand that program because I'd really like to see -- a lot of those folks are still young, they've got the best years of their lives ahead of them, and they could make a major contribution to the classroom. And a lot of come from previously disadvantaged backgrounds and from all different races and ethnic makeups, so they could make a major contribution to what we need to do in our schools in our cities. Thank you.

MR. ATKINSON: President Clinton -- (applause) --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Let me just say this. You didn't ask that, but since we've got a lot of doctors, there is also the National Health Service Corps, which

helped a lot of doctors to get through med school, but has been shrunk in the last ten years, will be dramatically expanded if the health care program passes, so you -- (audio break) -- doctors in urban and rural underserved areas, too, with the same plan. MR. ATKINSON: Okay? We're going to switch back to KORN in San Francisco.

MR. WILSON: Mr. President, I want you to meet Ray Choy (sp). About a month ago, in a story that became headlines here and has remained headlines here and in the month following -- Ray's brother Talbert (sp) was murdered, a random shooting typical of the kind of thing you've already talked about tonight, but he has a question for you, I think, on a slightly different tack. MR. RAY CHOY: Good evening, President Clinton, as Mr. Wilson has just said, about one month ago, my younger brother was shot, and he was murdered in a random act of violence. Our family has been devastated by this whole act, and I know you've touched on many of the issues here tonight, but there are a couple of issues that still remain untouched. You've mentioned the Brady bill and I've heard you talk about human values and teaching our youth human values and that is -- those are very important topics. But what do you see could be done more with gun control and more with making stiffer penalties for violent crimes? It appears as though these criminals are not afraid to use guns and are not afraid of the punishment that pursues. PRESIDENT CLINTON: Well, a lot of the younger ones, unfortunately, aren't afraid of anything because they have no sense of the future, they're not invested in their own lives, they're not invested in what they might be doing two or three or five years from now. We're raising a generation of young people for whom the future is what happens 30 minutes from now or what happens tomorrow, and that's a terrible problem. Now, I believe we should have stronger gun control measures than the Brady bill. For example -- let me say again what I think we should do. I think we should pass one of a number of good bills that are in the Congress which would ban assault weapons. There are a lot of them out there for the sole purpose of killing people and they should be banned. Either at the national level or in every state, we should follow the lead of the 17 states which have now made it illegal for young people to possess handguns unless they are -- I'll say again -- with their parents hunting or at some target range, some approved place. We should have much stiffer penalties against possessing these weapons illegally. And we should then -- every community in the country can then start doing major weapon sweeps and then destroying the weapons, not selling them. Another thing you ought to look into in your area, if the murder weapon is ever recovered, which it may not be, it would be interesting to know where it comes from and what tracking is on it, because one of the things that I learned when I got into this is that every state of any size has hundreds of gun dealers that may be licensed only by the federal government for a \$10 fee a year. And there are cities and states which may have other laws, but you can still be a gun dealer if you've got this little piddly federal permit. So another thing that ought to be done is that the price of getting into that business ought to be raised and people ought to have to comply with the local laws and not just the federal permitting laws. All these things would help us to deal with the sheer volume of weapons that are out there in the hands of people that are totally disconnected

from our society while we try to deal with these deeper problems that we talked about earlier.

But your -- I feel terrible about what happened to you, but we have to face the fact that this is the only advanced country in the world where anybody who wants to can get any kind of gun they want to to do anything they want to with it. It's crazy. It doesn't happen in other countries. And we'd better make up our mind to change it if we ...

enough money in America to have a publicly funded revitalization of America's most distressed communities. But wherever in America there are people who are underutilized there is a market opportunity, because when people are working up to the fullest of their capacity, then they have money to spend and they create jobs for others. So when I look at all these places in America which for too long have been without businesses on their streetcorners or in their small towns or in their hamlets, I see enormous opportunity. I see in people whose potential is not fulfilled the opportunity to make free enterprise work again. We all know there are certain considerable barriers to dealing with that. I'm trying to make some of the high crime areas much more attractive by simply lowering the crime rate. We know we can do that through community policing, and I've asked the United States Congress to give us some money to put more police on the street in these communities to help make them safer and lower the crime rate. We know that works. There is clear evidence of that. In New York City alone, after the comprehensive community policing program established by the man who is now our drug czar, Lee Brown, for the first time in 36 years the crime rate actually went down in seven major areas. So we know these things can be done. We know we have responsibilities to make these areas more attractive. But if this empowerment concept can pass, then it will be more attractive for you and people like you all across America to take that extra risk to go into places where there is an enormous prospect of return if a whole lot of people with no income all of a sudden wind up having income and can be customers as well as employees. And I hope all of you will support the empowerment zones. We've talked and talked and talked about our cities and our drying up rural communities for years. Democrats and Republicans have wrung -- they wring their hands every year. And nothing ever happens. I say let's try this, let's see if it works. Let's see if we can have a public-private partnership that works. If it doesn't work, we'll try something else. But the one thing that we know doesn't work is more words. We've had more words for years. We've had wars of words from people across the political and party and regional lines, and that hasn't worked, and that's not ever going to work. So I hope we can try this and see once and for all whether the government can create an environment which makes it more attractive for free enterprise to flourish in areas where it hasn't. Finally, let me say again, I appreciate the burdens under which you labor. I recognize that some of you, perhaps most of you in this room would pay higher personal tax rates under the program I have proposed. I hope you will support it anyway, because if we do it right, most Americans will save more in long-term lower interest rates than they'll pay in ...

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BODY:

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you very much. See, Erskin's only been here a day, and he's already become one of us. (Laughter) You just saw an illustration of Clinton's Third Law of Politics: Whenever possible, always be introduced by someone you've appointed to high office. (Laughter) I want to introduce the people who are here with me first, starting on my left: Frank Neuman (sp), the Undersecretary of the Treasury, and Roger Altman, the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, Laura Tyson, the chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, you met Erskin Bowles, and next to Erskin is Andrew Cuomo, the Assistant Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, who among other things is responsible for developing and implementing our empowerment zone proposals for cities and small towns and rural areas that are economically distressed and that need more free enterprise.

... in completely new projects.

That was one put forward by the American Venture Capital Association and sponsored in the previous Congress among others by the senior senator from my state, Dale Bumpers, who's the chairman of the Small Business Committee. I think that should stay in the law. We're working hard to make sure that it does. I think it now has virtually unanimous support. Finally, we have decided we should try to offer some very special opportunities in a network of empowerment zones and enterprise communities all across America. In the empowerment zones we're offering small businesses an employment and training credit of 25 percent of the first \$20,000 in wages for employees who live and work in the zones, a targetted jobs tax credit of 40 percent on \$6,000 of the first year of wages for these workers, and an increase in the ability to deduct appreciable property. All these things are our effort to help communities that are willing to help themselves by developing a long-term strategy to grow through private sector and private-public cooperation, to do that to attract capital and businesses. I am convinced, and I think you are all convinced, that with the size of the deficit we have, there is not

THE WHITE HOUSE

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For Immediate Release

March 14, 1995

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE NATIONAL PTA LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

The Washington Renaissance Hotel
Washington, DC

9:15 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, Katherine. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I am delighted to be here with you. More importantly, I am delighted to have you here with me. I need all the help I can get. (Laughter and applause.) I feel like reinforcements have just arrived. (Laughter.)

I want to say, too, a special word of thanks to the PTA for presenting Secretary Riley the PTA Child Advocacy tomorrow. He's here with me. And I think he's done a magnificent job. And I thank you for giving him that award. (Applause.)

Such a beautiful sort of premature spring day outside. I almost feel that we should be having recess instead of class. (Laughter.) But unfortunately events compel us to have class, for we are in danger of forgetting some of our most fundamental lessons.

I want to start by thanking a kindergarten class taught by Linda Eddington from Jackson Hole, Wyoming -- (applause) -- for the wonderful letters they sent up here with her. I reviewed the letters. I had some favorites. Charlie Wheeler said, "You are a good paper-writer, because you practice." (Laughter.) My favorite letter, regrettably, was unsigned, otherwise I would be writing a letter back. It said, "You're one of the best. I never have seen you, but I like your speeches." (Laughter.) I am sending to the Congress today a proposal to lower the voting age to five. (Laughter and applause.) We might get better results. (Laughter.)

I want to thank the PTA for now nearly 100 years of help to children and to parents and to schools. The PTA has meant a lot to me personally. I have been a member of the PTA -- Hillary and I both were active when I was the Governor of Arkansas. Essie used to come sell me my membership every year. (Laughter.) And I actually paid and actually -- (laughter and applause). You know how Presidents never carry any money anywhere they go? (Laughter.) I brought some money today, because I knew she was -- (laughter). I did. (Applause.)

I also, besides being an active member of the PTA, and spending a lot of time at Chelsea's school, had a chance to work with the PTA for a dozen years in my state, and throughout the country as we worked to implement the recommendations of the Nation at Risk Report, starting in '83. And then we worked up to the national education goals in '89. And then, of course, ultimately culminating in my service as President in the last two years.

At a time when many of our most important citizenship organizations have been suffering and civic institutions generally are often in decline, the PTA has grown, as parents have come back in droves to understanding that they had to do more to make their children's education work and that they had to be involved.

MORE

PTA embodies the three ideas that I have talked about so much for the future -- opportunity, responsibility and community -- what we call the New Covenant.

This is a period of profound change in the life of America and in the lives of Americans. There are many things going on which are wonderful, exhilarating, exciting, and others which are profoundly troubling. The biggest challenges we face on the eve of this new century relate to our economic and social problems, which threaten the middle class economics of the American Dream and the mainstream values of work and family and community. We see it everywhere in every community. About half of the American people are making the same or less money than they made 15 years ago.

We have an enormous divide opening up within the great American middle class based largely on the level of education. And in spite of the fact that -- and I'm very proud of the fact that we've had an economic recovery that has produced the lowest rates of unemployment and inflation combined in 25 years, and 6.1 million new jobs; a whole lot of Americans are still worried about losing theirs, or losing the benefits associated with their job -- their health care, their retirement, or never getting a raise.

And in spite of the progress we are making on many fronts, there is still an awful lot of social turmoil in this country, from drugs and violence and gangs and family breakdown. And these things are profoundly troubling to the American people. So we have a lot of good news and a lot of bad news. And a whole lot is happening. In 1993 we had the largest number of new businesses started in the United States in any single year in the history of the country.

So we're all trying to work through this as a people, as we must. I believe our common mission must be to keep the American dream alive for all of our people as we move into the next century, and to make sure our country is still the strongest force for peace and freedom and democracy in the world. To do that, we've got to have a strong economy. We've got to be able to grow the middle class and shrink the under class. We have to support all these wonderful entrepreneurial forces that are bubbling up in our society. We have to dramatically change the way government works. But our goal must be, always, always, the same -- to make sure that every American has the chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. And that is what the PTA is all about.

Education has always been profoundly important in American life from the very beginning. Thomas Jefferson talked about it a lot. But it has never been more important to the prosperity and, indeed, to the survival of the American we know and love than it is today -- never. (Applause.)

Now, as we move away from the Cold War and the industrial age into the post-Cold War era and the information age where most wealth generation is based on knowledge and technology is changing things at a blinding pace. We know that there will be big changes and there must be in the role of government. There's a huge debate going on here in Washington which can be seen in almost every issue about exactly what the role of the government should be as we move toward the 21st century.

On the one side is the largely-rejected view that Washington still knows best about everything and that there is a one-size-fits-all big answer to every big problem in the country. On the other side is what you might call the Republican Contract-view which is that the government is the source of all the problems in the country, and if we just had no government, we'd have no problems; and unless something is going on at the state and level that they don't

years, we have worked very hard here to both create more opportunities and insist on more responsibilities. And we're making progress. The deficit is down. The federal government is smaller by over 100,000. We're on our way to the smallest federal government since Mr. Kennedy was the President. We have more jobs, more police on the street, more prosperity, than when I took office.

And we have invested more in our children. In the last two years, we have, I believe, had the best year in terms of legislative advancements for education that we've had in 30 years. (Applause.) And I might say, it was done in a largely bipartisan way. We expanded and reformed Head Start. We passed an apprenticeship program for young people who don't go on to four-year colleges, but do want to move into good jobs after high school. We made college loans more affordable and the repayment terms better for millions and millions of middle class and lower income students. We made a new commitment to help you to get drugs and guns out of our schools and to end the mindless violence that too many of our children still suffer from. And of course, with your help, we passed Goals 2000 -- something that was very, very important to me and very important to you. And it's a clear example of government as a partner, not a savior and not on the sidelines.

No one disagrees with the fact that education is largely a state matter when it comes to funding, and a local matter when it comes to teaching and learning. But global education and global competition will go hand in hand. There must be some idea in our country of the world class standards of excellence we need to really meet the challenges of the future.

As Secretary Riley reminded me when we were governors working together and the Nation at Risk Report came out, that's what the name of the report was, and it came out in a Republican administration. It was a nation not -- at risk, not one place here and another place there and not somebody somewhere else. It was a nation at risk.

And Goals 2000 responds to that. It sets those standards, reflecting the national education goals that were adopted by the governors in 1989, working with President Bush and the Bush administration, plus a commitment to continuing development of our teachers, plus the very important parental involvement goal that the PTA got in this -- (applause).

If it was a good idea last year with bipartisan support, it didn't just stop being a good idea because we had one election. We worked for 10 years on this in a bipartisan way. It didn't stop being a good idea because we had an election. That is not what the election was about. It was not about turning our backs on world-class excellence in education and a partnership to make our schools better and the support that you need to succeed in all of your communities. That was not what was going on.

The success we've had in the last two years is building on what has been done in the last 10 years. You know, after all, I think it's important to remember that there's been a lot of progress in our schools in the last 10 years. To hear these folks talk about it, you'd think that it's all gotten worse and only because we had a Department of Education in Washington -- ran the whole thing into the ditch. (Laughter.) I don't know what they're doing in Idaho today, carrying the burden of the Department of Education around all day long in their schools. (Laughter.) That's the kind of talk we've got.

The truth is that kids are staying in school longer, more of them are going to college, math and science performance is up, because we emphasized, we worked on those things. We did it together. Are there a lot of problems? You bet there are. But this

agree with, in which case they want federal action. But, basically, that's the argument stated in the most extreme forms.

I believe that the truth is somewhere both in between and way beyond that. I believe we have common problems that require common approaches. I believe we need a government in Washington that is leaner but not meaner, one that does not pretend to be the saviour of the country, but does not presume to sit on the sidelines, either. One that, instead, is a partner in working with the American people to increase opportunity while we shrink bureaucracy, to empower people to make the most of their own lives and to enhance the security of the American people, both here at home on our streets and around the world.

I believe that such a government would promote both opportunity and responsibility. And I believe that such a government should have clear priorities that put the interests of the American people first, the interests of all the American people.

Now, there are strong feelings on both sides of this debate. And a lot of what is said may be hard to follow. But I think it's important that we keep in mind what is really the issue. The issue is, how are we going to get this country into the 21st century? How are we going to give our children and our grandchildren a chance to live out the unlimited aspirations of the human spirit, and to fulfill the traditions of America.

Now, let's look at this thing on an issue by issue basis. There is broad agreement that we should cut the size of government, that we should send more responsibility back to the state and local level, and that we should work more in partnership directly with citizens -- with businesses, with other organizations, and less in a regulatory government-knows-best way. There is broad agreement on this. Indeed, we started this movement.

But the question is, how do you implement these challenges, and what does the government still have to do? For example, I believe we should downsize the government, but I think we should invest more in education, training, technology and research. Why? Because I think it's in our interest. (Applause.)

It looks to me like walking away from our opportunities to succeed in the global economy and to develop the capacities of all of our people, at a time when we have so much diversity in our country and the world is getting smaller, so all this racial and ethnic diversity is a huge advantage to us; at a time when we have people who have phenomenal abilities who live all over the country in tiny, tiny places and big, big cities, to walk away from our common objective of developing their capacities, it seems to me, is not very smart. I just don't think it makes much sense. And I don't think that any theory of what we should or shouldn't be doing should be allowed to obscure the clear obligation we all have to help our people get into the next century. This is about a fight for the future.

Now, let me put it another way. It seems to me like trying to cut back on education right now would be like trying to cut the defense budget in the toughest days of the Cold War. Because that what -- our competition for the future, our security now, is going to be determined in large measure by whether we can develop the capacities of all of our people to learn for a lifetime. (Applause.) That is it. (Applause.)

For the 12 years before I came here, there was this political tug of war where government was regularly bashed, but the deficit quadrupled and we walked away from our obligations to invest in our future. For the four years before I came here, we had the slowest job growth in America since the Great Depression. For two

country is the most remarkable experiment in diversity of all kinds in all of human history. And we are doing better because we are working together and setting goals and working as partners. And that's what we should continue to do.

Dick Riley in a way has been perfectly suited to be the Secretary of Education at this time. I can't imagine why anybody would want to abolish his job after watching him do it for a couple of years. (Applause.)

I'd just like to point out something to the people who say on the other side that the answer to our problems in education is to abolish the Department of Education. I noticed one of the Republicans leaders said the other day that they had actually -- the Department of Education actually made things worse.

Well, here are the facts. There are fewer people working in the Department of Education today than were working for the federal government in education when it was part of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in the '70s. That's an inconvenient fact for the people who want to abolish it. (Laughter.)

Here's another interesting fact. Secretary Riley has proposed to end in this present rescission package that we sent up, or in the coming budget, 41 programs, and to consolidate 17 others -- 58 of the 240 programs in the Department of Education. Inconvenient facts for those that are saying that it's terrible, and they're throwing money away. It happens to be true.

But we don't agree with what they're trying to do in the House -- to cut \$1.7 billion from education, to eliminate all the funds for the Safe and Drug-Free School Program -- all the funds at a time when, disturbingly, young people are beginning to use drugs casually again, forgetting that they're dangerous and illegal, when schools still need the funds they need to be literally more secure in difficult areas. They want to eliminate all the funds in that bill for teaching homeless children, all the funds for the parent resource centers, which you know are very important. We're dealing with a lot of parents, folks, who want to do a better job by their kids but need some help and some support from people like you who have been showing up in the PTA for years, some of you for decades. (Laughter.) They need it. (Laughter.) -- kid stays in school. (Laughter.) Listen, I got to keep laughing. Otherwise, we'll be in tears thinking about this. (Laughter.)

They want to eliminate much of the money for computers and new technologies. The amount they propose to cut from Goals 2000 is equal to all the funds now allocated for poor and rural communities, and all the funds necessary to help 4,000 schools raise their academic standards. And they want, of course, to cut back on the school lunch program.

Now, how are we going to cut? Dick Riley found a way to cut 41 programs without doing this. This school lunch program is a mystery to me. Everybody wants to cut funds in the Agriculture Department because the number of farmers is smaller.

You know what we did? We finally concluded a world trade agreement so that our competitors would have to cut agricultural subsidies, so we cut agriculture subsidies. And then we realized we had basically an outdated structure in the Agriculture Department. The best line in the '92 presidential campaign was Ross Perot's line about the employee at the Department of Agriculture who had to go to the psychiatrist because he lost his farmer. (Laughter.) Because the number of farmers had gone down.

So what did we do? We closed 1,200 agricultural offices. They want to cut the school lunch program. I think we know

how to cut better than they do. (Applause.) I think that's the way to do it. (Applause.)

So let me say again, every effort we had in the last two years from Head Start, to apprenticeships, to Goals 2000, to the reformation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act -- everything we did was done in a bipartisan way. And now, we see education becoming both a partisan and a divisive issue again. We cannot walk away from this. You need to be here.

You are the reinforcements for America's future, and I want you to go up there today and say that. Say this \$1.7 billion in a \$1.5 trillion budget is a drop in the bucket, and it should not be eliminated to pay for \$188 billion in tax cuts. It should not. (Applause.)

You know, I want us to have the right framework here so that you can go back home and do your job. I've done everything I could and Secretary Riley's done everything he could to devise Goals 2000 so that we would really have a partnership. We'd say, here are some resources, here are the goals, here's what we know, you decide how to implement. We want more responsibility for principals and teachers and parents at the grass-roots level. We want less control of education in Washington. We have done a lot in the legislation that we have passed to reduce the degree of federal control and rulemaking below that which previous administrations imposed. But we don't want to walk away from the kids and the future of this country. (Applause.)

I want to just mention one other thing. I want to thank Secretary Riley again for taking the lead in creating the National Family Involvement Partnership for Learning. It includes many members of the private sector, more than 100 organizations, including the PTA. He's been proposing seven basic steps for all parents to take. And I like them so much that I want to repeat them for every parent now here at the PTA meeting, because if these things are not done, then our efforts won't succeed. And if these things are done, then our efforts here become even more important to support the parents who are doing them.

Find more time to spend with your children. Read with them. Set high expectations for them. Take away the remote control on school nights. (Laughter.) Check their homework, check their grades, and set a good example, and talk directly to your children, especially to your teenagers about the dangers of drugs and alcohol and the values you want them to have.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary. That's about as good as it gets. (Applause.)

Let me say again in closing my remarks, I am doing my best to work in good faith with this new Congress. There are deep trends going on here which can make this a positive time if we stop posturing and put our people first. We do have to change the way government works. We need dramatic reform in the government. And we are working hard to get it.

But what is the purpose of all this? The purpose of all this is the same purpose that you have. To elevate the potential of the American people to make the most of their own lives, to keep the American dream alive and to guarantee a future for their children. So go up there on Capitol Hill and remind everybody that we need to work together, tone down the rhetoric, and put the kids of this country and our future first.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Los Angeles, California)

For Immediate Release

December 4, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
DURING CREATIVE ARTISTS AGENCY RECEPTION

Beverly Hills, California

6:48 P.M. PST

THE PRESIDENT: I want to thank you, Michael, for that wonderful introduction. Even more I want to thank you and Judy for meeting me at the door with your three children, which reminded me what my job is all about. Are they great looking kids or what? (Applause.)

I want to thank you and Bill and Ron for hosting us all here. It's good to be back in this gorgeous building. And I'm delighted to be here with my good friend David Wilhelm and Secretary Ron Brown, who has been to California more than a dozen times in this first year of our administration trying to put together an approach that will help our government to help you recover economically. I thank Kathleen Brown and Gray Davis, and especially my good friend Senator Dianne Feinstein for being here with us. (Applause.) I hope you will send me back to the Senate. (Applause.)

I also want to say a special word of thanks to so many of you in this audience who worked for me in the last election, who made appearances for me, who helped to raise funds and helped to make arguments and who stood up for me in the face of some pretty wilting criticism.

I appreciate what Michael said about the fullback presidency. One of my predecessors, Woodrow Wilson, who interestingly enough I learned had the biggest feet of any president until I came along. (Laughter.) Woodrow Wilson was a great scholar, and he wrote a book, a much criticized book about George Washington. But he said that the most important thing about George Washington when this country was getting off the ground was he never knew when he had been defeated in battle. (Laughter.) He did not have enough sense to know when he was beat, so he just kept on going. (Applause.)

Well, there's something to be said for that. We measure out our lives too many times in short durations. And we measure defeat in the moment instead of over the long run. I did not run for this office for so long under such difficult circumstances either to squander the opportunity to change this country by not trying to or by giving up in the face of opposition or even my own mistakes; for it is clearly true that in a time of great change with unprecedented challenges, if you try to do a lot of things every now and then, you won't do the right thing. But I think if your ears and eyes are open and your

heart's in the right place, better to make a mistake and correct it than to sit on the sidelines and not try to change the country. (Applause.)

I came to California today to meet for a period of what turned out to be about three and a half hours, which is why we're a little late tonight, with a lot of community leaders from all walks of life to talk about what we had done together in the last year and what we could do in the year ahead to help to rebuild this economy and to rebuild hope and opportunity and community here.

And afterward I went into the plant where we were at Rockwell and talked to a lot of folks who were working in the plant and gave an account of this last year. I don't want to do that tonight except to say that when I was upstairs meeting some of you, it was interesting to me what was mentioned going through the line. Some people said, "I'm really glad you fought so hard for NAFTA and passed it." Others said, "I'm glad you're trying to get a new world trade agreement through GATT, but I'm glad you're fighting for the interest of the entertainment industry while you're doing it." Many said, "Thank you for the Brady Bill." And some talked about the speech and encounter that I experienced on World Aids Day.

But everybody who talked to me at least had a sense of possibility, a possibility of change, a possibility of improvement, a possibility that we were really doing things again. I ran for president because I thought this country had two great problems. I thought we were going in the wrong direction economically and otherwise, and I thought we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together.

I ran because I wanted this country to go into the 21st century still the greatest country in human history and because I want every person who lives in this country to have a chance to live up to their God-given potential, something most of us in this room have had to such an extreme degree that we almost take it for granted that it's there for everyone.

And in the last year we have made a good beginning. Michael was kind enough to read the list of most of the important initiatives. This economic program to bring the deficit down and keep interest rates down and inflation down is very important. We've had a 14 year high in home sales. We've got the employment rate going down. We've got more private sector jobs in 10 months than in the previous four years. We are moving in the right direction even though, to be candid, most Americans haven't felt it yet, especially here in California. Plainly the direction is the right one.

We tried to help families put their lives together and help people who are working and who have children succeed as parents and as workers. It is one of the biggest challenges in America today -- one we all face, many of us. But since most parents have to work and most workers are parents, we can't go where we need to go unless we are committed to the proposition that people ought to be able to succeed in both roles. That's why the Family Leave Law was so important.

Perhaps the most moving experience I've had inside the White House occurred a couple of Sundays ago, maybe about six

now or eight. I came in from my morning run and there was a family there, a father, a mother, three children. And I noticed the middle child was in the wheelchair. And I went over and shook hands with them; it's very unusual for people to be touring the White House on Sunday morning, but this little girl was part of the Make-A-Wish Foundation. And she was desperately ill, and she wanted to see the White House and meet the President, so they brought her here. And I shook hands with them and I was a little embarrassed to be in my jogging outfit so I went up and got cleaned up and I came down looking like a real President -- (laughter) -- and stood there to shake hands with the family and to take a picture. So we took a proper picture. And I was walking off and the father grabbed me by the arm really strong, and I turned around and he said, just in case you think what you do doesn't matter around here -- he said, my little girl is probably not going to make it. But I have been able to take time off from my job to spend time with her. It's the most important time I've ever spent in my life, especially if she doesn't make it. And because of that Family Leave Bill, I could take that time off without fear of losing my job and hurting my wife and my other two children. Nobody should ever have to make that decision and now we don't. Don't you ever think what you do here does not have an impact on people where they live. (Applause.)

I say that to make this point: In the end, the true test of our endeavors is whether they enrich the meaning of the lives of the people who live in this country. In the end, all the statistics and numbers and did you pass more bills than anybody else and all that sort of stuff, really matters that were they the right bills, and did they affect people, and are the moving people both forward and together.

And I came here tonight really to ask for your help for this reason: I believe that we can move this economy in the right direction, even though the decisions are unbelievably difficult when you're trying to reduce the deficit and increase investment where you need to increase it at the same time. I believe we can get a good set of trade agreements to expand global trade. I believe we can have a good technology policy. I believe we can redo the unemployment system and have a good training system in this country again. I believe, in short, that we can make the kinds of changes, public changes we need to make to move this country forward.

But we have to face the fact that millions and millions and millions of our fellow Americans are caught, not only in an economic under class, but almost in an outer class totally apart from the life that the rest of us take for granted. And it is because they are the ones who have been hardest hit by the combined force of a loss of economic opportunity, the destruction of community support, and the erosion of family itself. And the vacuum that is created has been filled for all too many of them by organized violence, organized around guns and gangs and drugs with no offsetting forces.

And as Michael implied, some of that has been aggravated by the fact that there are not sustaining forces in our culture, which tend to offset that. As I told the ministers in Memphis a few weeks ago at the Church of God in Christ Convention, when they invited me into the pulpit where Martin Luther King gave his last sermon, there are problems this nation has that cannot be fixed by the passage of a law, or by an

official decree from the President of the United States. They require us to change from the inside-out and to change family by family, community by community.

I have a good friend with whom I grew up at home who wrote me of a conversation she had with some other people who were bemoaning the fate of all these kids in trouble, and this person said, well, how in the world are we going to save these kids? And my friend said, we're going to save them the same way we lost them, one at a time. If you think of that -- (applause) -- if you think of that, society is largely organized around work and family. We have too many people today living in this world without either. And nature, and to be sure they represent nature, abhors a vacuum. And that vacuum is being filled by all kinds of forces which are fundamentally destructive of those people ever becoming what they ought to be.

Now, we are trying to deal with that as much as we can through public policy -- through the Brady Bill and through Senator Feinstein's effort to ban assault weapons, and through -- (applause) -- that's worth an applause. (Applause.) And I met your distinguished police chief for the first time tonight, even though I've been bragging on him for years now. Through the effort to provide another 100,000 police officers in properly-trained, properly-deployed in community policing settings throughout the country, because that will actually diminish crime and provide alternative role models for young people.

There are a lot of other things we are trying to do. But I am telling you, the fact is it is awfully hard to put lives back together in an environment in which there are no lives organized fundamentally by work, by family, and by other community organizations that shape values and behavior.

When impulses govern the lives of young people who cannot even fully understand the implications of what it means often to pick up a gun and pull the trigger; and when madly we permit many of these children, who themselves were never even given the fundamental basics of self-esteem and self-control and respect for others, weapons that make them better armed than the police who are supposed to be patrolling their streets.

But the fundamental problem is what has happened to all of them inside, and what does not happen to them day by day. One hundred and sixty thousand kids in this country stay home from school every day because they are afraid of being shot or not knifed on the way to school or in the schoolhouse.

Now, what's all that got to do with you? First of all, you have the capacity to do good -- culturally to help to change the way we behave, the way we think of ourselves. You have, clearly, many of you, reinforced the awareness of our obligations to our environment and we have begun to change in fundamental ways. Look at the way we changed our ideas about smoking in recent years. Culturally, not because laws made us do it but because as a people we just decided to move in a different direction.

You've helped to battle world hunger and make people more realistic as well as caring about AIDS; and you've promoted world peace; and through the people at MTV and others who have promoted the Motor Voter Bill you've really advanced a civil

rights cause by opening up a franchise to young people and to many who would otherwise not have registered and voted.

Now what we have are people who are vulnerable to cultural forces that the rest of us find entertaining, that are not in and of themselves bad when made part of a culture that is organized by work, by family, and by other institutions. I love television. I saw two or three of you tonight and quoted about sometime I'd seen you on television recently. I love that. I am a movie-goer almost to the point to compulsion -- have been since I was a small boy.

But you think of it, all of us who love that. How is our life organized? We spend most of our time working. We spend a lot of free time, most of us, with our families. We have other ties to a community which shape our values, our conduct, our priorities, what we do with our money, how we think about our obligations. But what might be entertaining to us -- a violent, thrilling movie or television program, a torrid but fundamentally amoral use and manipulation of people in what may be for us just an entertaining 30 minutes or an hour. If it's 10 or 11 hours a day of relentless exposure into the minds of people who have never been taught to understand the consequences of their action, never had any kind of internal structure motivated and driven by seeing their parents go to work everyday and having a regular relationship with family and having other institutions, then these things can unintentionally can set forth a chain reaction of even more impulsive behavior, even more inability to deal with conflict in nonviolent ways and to pass up the aggressive influences and impulses that all of us feel but most of us learn at some point in our lives not to act on. And it all gets worse if the void left by the loss of family and work and other institutions is filled by gangs and guns and drugs.

So, what I ask you for tonight is not to wear a hair shirt and say, mea culpa, I wish I hadn't done this, that or the other thing, but to recognize that what may be one person's moment of entertainment, even exhilaration, that's taking your mind off the pressures of the day, can, when multiplied by 1,000, have a cumulative impact that at the very least does not help to bring a whole generation of people back from the brink. I'm telling you, if we don't find a way to deal with this, the rest of these endeavors ultimately will fail. We will not be able to make a strength out of our diversity. We will not be able to restore the ladder from poverty to the middle class that can be climbed through work and education. We will not be able to put our people back together again and use our money on education and opportunity instead of crime and jail.

So what I ask you to do is to join a partnership with me, not to stop entertaining or even titillating, not to stop frightening or thrilling the American public, but to examine what together you might do to simply face the reality that so many of our young people live with, and help us as we seek to rebuild the frayed bonds of this community; as we seek to give children nonviolent ways to resolve their own frustrations; as we seek to restore some structure and some hope and some essential dignity and purpose to lives that have been dominated by chaos of worse.

We must do this. Make no mistake about it. No society, no society can prosper allowing huge pockets of people

to go on forever without the opportunity to work; allowing huge pockets of children to go on without the opportunity to get a decent education; allowing huge sections of cities to be no-man's lands, where the law of the automatic assault weapon controls. We cannot do well if we permit that to happen.

We need every last dollar we can to invest in growth and opportunity and positive good things. And we have to use every means at our command. There are few things more powerful in any time and place than culture. The ability of culture to elevate or debase is profound. You know it and you sense it in the power you have when you do something you're really proud of. Does that mean we should never have any violent movies? Of course not. I think to mention one, "Boys in the Hood" was a great movie because it showed the truth about what happens when chaos is replaced with destruction. (Applause.)

I know the young man who made the movie is here tonight, but I ask you to think about this. We have got to do this for our country. Together, so many of you have more influence over different kinds of people that you will never meet, that you're not aware of, than a president's speech can bring to bear.

For 30 years the American family has been under assault. The assault attacked black families first because they were most vulnerable economically. The same thing is now happening to other families. More and more children are born out of wedlock. More and more children are being born without parents, more and more children being abandoned, more and more kids growing up in violent neighborhoods. The racial differences were largely determined first because of economic vulnerability. But now it is happening to everybody. So 30 years of family assault, 20 years where most working people had stagnant wages, 20 years of developing huge pockets where no one had a job. There have always been poor people in this country, but most of them have always been able to work. Twelve years in which we exploded public debt by consuming in the present instead of investing more in the future. These things happened over a long period of time.

Meanwhile, we want more and more entertainment more and more instantaneously, as Michael said. We want more and more news more and more instantaneously -- just give us the thing and let us focus on something else. For all of us who have highly structured, successful lives where our attention is diverted to the big fundamental things in our life, this works fine. For people living in chaos, it is a disaster.

And so I ask you, while you entertain the rest of us, let us together do something to rebuild the bonds of community; to restore the spirit of these children; to give people a chance to build whole lives around solid values so that they, too, will have internal structures that will permit them the luxury of the diversion some of us call entertainment.

We must rebuild this country fundamentally. And we have to have the support of people who can shape our culture to do it. It is our job, and if we do it, we will be proud we did. (Applause.)

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

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(New York, New York)

For Immediate Release

March 10, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT AMERICORPS PUBLIC SAFETY FORUM

Center for Performing Arts
Brooklyn College
Brooklyn, New York

12:21 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, President Lattin, and my good friend, Congressman Chuck Schumer. And in a moment you'll hear from Eli Segal, who is the head of our National Service effort, so I won't introduce him more now. I want to thank all the members of all the service groups who are here from -- not only from New York, but many from other states, and recognize the chair of the board of the Corporation of National Service, Mr. Jim Josephs, who came. Thank you for being here, sir. (Applause.)

I also want to thank three distinguished New Yorkers for their presence in the audience -- your new Attorney General Oliver Koppell -- (applause) -- New York City's public advocate and my longtime friend, Mr. Mark Green -- (applause) -- and the man who first introduced me to the local government of the city of Brooklyn, the Brooklyn borough president, Howard Golden. Thank you. (Applause.)

Before Chuck Schumer sits down, I want to ask him to come back up here to show you, this man has a broken arm, as you can see. And he's slightly incapacitated. (Laughter.) So I asked him if I could join his two children and sign his cast. (Applause.) I do this to make a point I try to make at every speech, which is that government cannot solve all the problems of America. That's why we need all of you in service. And government cannot solve all these problems, either, because he is not the victim of a crime but his own awkwardness. He fell. (Laughter.) This is a problem I can't solve, so I'm just putting my stamp of approval on the treatment of it. (Laughter and applause.)

CONGRESSMAN SCHUMER: Mr. President, what I wanted to say is, you saw our senator wearing a cast, but he broke his

arm the Republican way -- skiing in Vail. (Laughter.) I broke my arm slipping on the ice 11:00 p.m. Saturday night to go to a community event at the Good Shepherd School in Sheepshead Bay. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: That wasn't on the program. (Laughter.) But it was pretty funny. (Laughter.)

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the first of a national series of programs on our National Service Program which we called AmeriCorps. The topic we are here to discuss today is how to bring people together and communities together to encourage them to assume some responsibility for dealing with the violence that has become all too common in almost American communities.

It's appropriate that we begin here in New York City, that we begin in Brooklyn in the congressional district of Chuck Schumer, because he has been the architect and the strategist behind almost every major anticrime initiative that the Congress dealt with in recent years.

It took seven years and a change of administrations, but we finally got the Brady Bill to become the Brady law. (Applause.) There were skeptics who said this will not make any difference, but you ought to see the results in the first couple of weeks of the Brady Bill becoming law. All over America, in little communities and big, people who had criminal records were actually buying guns, formally legally in gun stores; they were found out, illegal guns were collected, criminals were apprehended. This law is going to make a difference.

Chuck Schumer has also worked for community policing and for safe schools and for the ban on assault weapons that he talked about so strongly. That ban on assault weapons is in the crime bill that has already passed the United States Senate. And tomorrow Mr. Schumer goes back to Washington to work with his sub-committee to begin to mark up the crime bill that also will put another 100,000 police officers on the street; ban 28 kinds of assault weapons; and give us the chance to give people like you the chance to do some things to prevent crime from happening, and give our young people something to say yes to, as well as to say no to. (Applause.)

I'd also like to say a special word of appreciation for the work that has been done by New York Senator Daniel Moynihan on this issue. (Applause.) He asked me to say to you how sorry he was he couldn't be here today. He had originally planned to come with me, but had an obligation in Washington which prevented him from leaving. But for 28 years, he's been warning us about the fragile state of families and communities, the social institutions that hold us all together.

About a year ago, he gave a speech at the 50th

anniversary of his own high school graduation from Benjamin Franklin High School in East Harlem. In that speech he talked about how much New York had changed in 50 years. In 1943, he said, there were exactly 44 homicides by gunshot in the entire city of New York, when the population then was only 150,000 more than it is now -- but was more. In 1992, instead of 44, there were 1,499. He sent me a chart that tracked the murder rate in New York since the turn of the century, and it was only a generation ago that the murder rate began to explode.

About that time, on a New York night 30 years ago this very Sunday, a 28-year-old woman known to the neighborhood as Kitty Genovese parked her car outside her home, as she always did. She was coming home after a long day working as the manager of a nearby bar. She had come to New York to work, to make a life for herself in this great city, drawn like so many before and since by the power of opportunity and enthusiasm that I see in this room.

As she walked to her building, a man grabbed her and stabbed her. She cried for help. She screamed for help so loudly that it woke people up in the middle of the night. Lights came on in the apartment building; a window opened; the attacker got nervous and left. Now, this was 30 years ago, not 30 days ago. But not a single person came to the aid of the woman as she tried to get herself to safety. So the man came back and stabbed her again. As 38 witnesses watched or listened from the safety of their own homes, Kitty Genovese screamed that she was dying. So the attacker fled again, but still no one came to the rescue; no one even called the police at a time when the average response time was two minutes.

So the attacker came back a third time, stabbed Kitty Genovese again and killed her, over 20 minutes after she first cried for help. A call to the police would have brought a patrol car in two minutes. But as one man told investigators, "I don't want to get involved".

Well, that story shocked us all 30 years ago, not just because of what happened to that woman, as tragic as it was, but also because of what had happened to her neighbors. It sent a chilling message about what had happened at that time in a society, suggesting that we were, each of us not simply in danger, but fundamentally alone. It was a message that was both resonant and at odds with the times. I still remember it as if it were yesterday, even though I was much younger then than almost all of you are now.

Modern technology was connecting everyone even then, with the television set, a telephone and an automobile. New highways let us reach out to each other faster than ever before. Rockets were already taking astronauts into space -- even the moon was getting closer. These new inventions made the world a smaller place. We were becoming more aware of the great

diversity of America, of people who lived beyond the borders of our neighborhoods, or past the railroad tracks at the quiet end of town. More Americans of more races and backgrounds than ever before even then could chase the promise that lay before them. Young families left their streets or their farms in search of better jobs in the cities; factories hummed; industries then, as now again, were the envy of the world.

But the unintended result of all this chasing around is that we became uprooted. The more folks moved around, the more they became strangers to their neighbors. More doors were shut, more locks were bought and turned; more curtains were drawn as they were on the night that Kitty Genovese was killed. On that night, it was as if the value of responsibility had already come to mean only responsibility for yourself.

Four years after that incident, a young United States Senator from New York, running for the office I now hold, said this: The real threat of crime is what it does to ourselves and our communities. No nation hiding behind locked doors is free, for it is imprisoned by its own fear. A nation which surrenders to crime is a society which has resigned itself to failure. Thus, the fight against crime is, in the last analysis, the same as the fight for equal opportunity, or the battle against hunger and deprivation, or the struggle to prevent the pollution of our air and water. It is a fight to preserve the quality of community, which is at the root of our greatness -- a fight to preserve confidence in ourselves and our fellow citizens, a battle for the quality of our lives.

Two months later the man who spoke those words, Senator Robert Kennedy, himself lay slain. And a line of mourners more than a mile long wrapped around St. Patrick's Cathedral, tied to his coffin in their common grief, but still too far apart from one another.

Many, many times in the years since, in this city and in others, we have honored memories of the fallen. But we have failed to heed their warnings or finish their work. Time after time, we hear the lonesome sound of pipes at the funeral of a police officer killed in the line of duty. We hear the soft sobs of a mother bearing another child gunned down on another city playground, or in another school. We read the tragic news of the young student shot while simply riding a van across the Brooklyn Bridge.

This very morning back in Washington, people are reading about how one student shot another student four times yesterday in an argument arising out of the fact that they bumped into each other in a school hallway in what we all thought was perhaps our safest public high school in Washington.

Too often our reaction to the violence is to simply hunker down and turn our backs, raise the drawbridge, buy a

better lock, and leave the problem to others: the thin line of blue or the gray mass of government.

Justice Edwin Torres who grew up in the Barrio and is now a justice of the New York Supreme Court, sees this problem in his court room every day, and he wrote a stunning letter to Senator Moynihan not too long ago in which he described people so beaten down by the daily barrage of violence that they almost apologize for being the victims. As if you were smart enough or strong enough, no matter how bad things got, you could just figure out a way not to be a victim.

No citizen of this great nation should ever have to apologize for that. And no American should live in fear. No one should surrender to any of this for a moment. And so I come to you to ask for your help and those like you all across America to take back our neighborhoods, to take back our future, to take back the basic quality of our lives.

Thirty years ago, if Kitty Genovese's murder taught us that we can't look away, the years since surely teach us that we cannot look to others. Thirty years ago, her life might have been saved if she had simply called, or had someone who was looking at the whole thing unfold call the local police. Today, even that is not enough. We have to help, each and every one of us, to reclaim our streets, our schools, our communities, and our lives.

This is not a call for blind heroics, but practical action if we want to save our own citizenship. I have met some heroes who deserve our praise. I met, when I came to New York a few weeks ago, the three men who subdued the gunman on the Long Island Railroad. I met in Ohio just three weeks ago Anne Ross from Dayton, who organized a neighborhood group to sweep drugs off their streets. They've taken down the numbers of license plates of drug dealers. They've shared photographs of dealers with the police. They've shut down crack houses and turned them over to families who don't deal drugs or use them. All the while having their lives threatened -- she, her husband, and the others who she's mobilized.

Two weeks ago in Chicago, I met a woman named Carol Ridley, whose own son was shot by someone who said he was his son's best friend, when the boy was only 22, in a foolish argument. But instead of withdrawing into her own grief, she's gone outward, working in Save The Children seminars to try to stop children from killing other children; to try to end the madness of all these weapons being in the hands of people who shouldn't have them; and to try to teach young people that there are other ways in which they can deal with their anger and frustration.

These ordinary people have done extraordinary things. The first is to prove that there can be something more

powerful than fear, and that is our will and our collective ability to change the way things are. We have reached a time when we have to change not only our laws -- not only the Brady Bill and the crime bill and put more police on the street -- we've got to change the basic attitudes of this country. Not only about crime and violence, but about how we think about ourselves and one another.

None of us any longer can pretend not to hear these cries for help. And each of us has a serious personal responsibility to do our part. Government cannot do this job alone. Neither can the police forces themselves. But together there are things we can do, and one of the best is this new national service program, AmeriCorps.

It represents the best of our country. It will give Americans, especially the young, a chance to serve our nation by helping their communities, helping to make our schools and streets safer, immunizing our babies and turning our children into better students, cleaning up our parks and caring for the elderly.

Today we'll hear from Americans from all walks of life who are as different in background, age, and experiences as the AmeriCorps can possibly be. Some will have had the fabric of their lives ripped by crime. But what makes them alike -- and what makes me so hopeful -- is that out of their tragedies they each made a choice to make a difference.

As extraordinary as their stories are, keep this in mind: There are thousands; indeed, tens of thousands, legions more like them everywhere in this country, in every community. Ordinary Americans doing extraordinary things. Americans reconnecting others in their communities. That's what AmeriCorps is all about. For all the miracles of mankind's technology and discovery, nothing still -- nothing connects us to one another like an outstretched hand, an open heart, and the certainty that each of us has made a difference.

We will make a difference if we can give our people something to say yes to, introduce them to people they can look up to, give them a chance to live and learn the meaning of responsibility and opportunity and community.

When I was a young man, I read a book by a fellow Southern named James Agee, called Let Us Now Praise Men. It was the story of desperately, desperately poor people in my region of the country, the South, during the Great Depression. It remains a book as powerful today it was the day it was written. You cannot imagine, I don't think, what it was like to live in times when whole states had half the people living below the poverty line; when there were massive stretches of communities where more than half the people were out of work; where people could only eat because they were able to grow a little food in the ground

that they held on to.

And in that time, James Agee wrote this -- and I think it is something that we ought to remember as we drive up and down Flatbush Avenue in Brooklyn. Listen to this: In every child who is born, under no matter what circumstances and no matter what parents, the potentiality of the whole human race is born again. And in him, too, once more, and of each of us, our terrific responsibility toward human life; toward the utmost idea of goodness, of the horror of error, and of God.

It is not enough for any of us to ever to say again, what was said here 30 years ago, "I don't want to get involved." We must not only want to get involved, we must be involved. We must be good neighbors again. And in being good neighbors, we will reclaim for ourselves the promise of this great nation.

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

Q President Clinton, as you've been speaking, thousands of people across this country and around the world are dying of AIDS. During the campaign you promised -- process to cure AIDS. That -- process -- Why haven't you come out and supported that publicly? Have you read it? Why aren't you publicly supporting the AIDS cure act introduced by Gerald Nadler? Answer the question. People are dying across this country and around the world, and you have not publicly come out and said you support this plan. It's the only plan that will call for a cure for AIDS. The -- will never come up with a cure for AIDS, and you have not publicly come out to support this plan. It's the only plan that's viable and it's in Congress right now as we speak. HR-3310 and it is as it is renamed -- not yet renamed. How come you have not come out and publicly supported this plan?

THE PRESIDENT: I'll be glad to talk to Mr. Nadler about that. Every time --

Q Have you --

THE PRESIDENT: No. Nobody has ever mentioned it to me before. But let me say this --

Q -- about this plan.

THE PRESIDENT: I've listened to you. Will you listen to me? Will you listen to me? I've listened to you. (Applause.) It is always convenient to me when you interrupt my meetings how often you ignore what has been done. The first AIDS Czar, the first time we have ever had a really national strategy, dramatic increases in funding in research, dramatic increases in funding in funds to care for people with AIDS, dramatic increases in efforts to prevent AIDS from occurring: We are doing far more than has ever been done before.

I will be happy --

Q Why haven't --

THE PRESIDENT: Listen to me. I've listened to you. I let you interrupt this meeting and I let you talk. And you have taken up all the time of all the people that are in here.

Q I let you speak --

THE PRESIDENT: No, you haven't. You're trying to interrupt me. They let me speak. They invited me here, not you. (Applause.) I have told you -- I will be glad to discuss this -- no, leave him alone. Don't hurt him. Don't hurt him. He's got a right to be here.

Q -- is in Congress -- why aren't you supporting this?

Q Welcome to Brooklyn. (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: What did he say? I didn't hear.

Q Welcome to Brooklyn. (Laughter and applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Let me ask you this: Wouldn't you rather have him in here asking me to do something than standing outside convinced I wouldn't do anything, no matter what? (Applause.) It's a miracle.

Go on, Eli. (Laughter.)

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MR. SEGAL: Mr. President, do you have any questions or comments for our guests today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I wanted to say, first of all, how much I appreciate your being here and how much I appreciate hearing from police officers that there's something for the community to do with the police, and specifically, the details that you recommended.

I don't think I can overstate the importance of having a presence on the streets and in the neighborhoods and in the communities, either by having volunteers do what Chief Rodriguez said, and go behind the scenes so more police officers can be out there, or having senior volunteers or others walking the streets. We have a lot of evidence that this helps prevent crime in the first place. We're not talking about just catching criminals, we're talking about recreating a sense of order,

reminding people of what the rules of society are -- just sort of physically being there. There's a lot of evidence that that reduces crime.

And you mentioned that I had the New York City police officer, Kevin Jett, down to the State of the Union address, recognized him. And we brought him back to the White House afterward and had a nice talk with him. And he talked a lot about that, about how he saw a big part of his job as stopping crime in the first place by just being there and know what was going on.

The second thing I want to say is, it's easy to underestimate, I think, how much ordinary citizens can do. In Chicago, I have actually been in some of your housing projects where welfare mothers got their first jobs in the projects, patrolling the stairs, and getting discounts on their rent, among other things, in return for working, patrolling the stairs. But it all worked together to make these housing projects crime-free instead of places of fear.

So I guess I just want to thank you and to -- the one thing that I would like to ask as a practical matter is how you think we can best assure that -- and I'm going to lead you, but I know you want this -- one of the things that always bothers me is when we -- Mr. Schumer knows this -- we pass a bill through Congress; the temptation is to say exactly how the money ought to be spent that we're appropriating. And it appears to me, just from the two different cases that the two of you cited, drastically different, that we ought to make community policing money available with as much flexibility as possible, because New York's idea about how to handle this may be different from San Diego's or Chicago's.

And so maybe you should comment on that. I think it's important that we send a clear signal. We don't want to tie the hands of the local officers too much.

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THE PRESIDENT: I just want to reemphasize what these two guys have said. Now, here are people who are spending their lives in law enforcement. And as Governor -- I know I've had this conversation with Governor Cuomo before, that all the bills I have signed -- I was a Governor for 12 years before I became President -- I have signed bill after bill after bill building more prison space, having longer sentences for serious crimes. I watched the average amount of time served by an inmate go up rather dramatically during my term as Governor. I saw the reintroduction of capital punishment after years in which we didn't have it. I understand all about this punishment business, but if you look at it, the crime rate still keeps getting worse.

What lowers the crime rate is the involvement of the community, and the intelligent and adequate allocation of police resources.

And I think it is very important that you understand this is not just idle rhetoric. I mean, these people have put their lives on the line for years and years and years. They know what they are talking about. We have to reclaim our streets and lower the crime rate through people like you supporting the kinds of ideas that they put out. This is not soft, this is hard. This is save yourself by rebuilding your community.

I thank you both very much for that. (Applause.)

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THE PRESIDENT: Would you introduce yourself and say where you're from if you ask a question in the audience?

Q Certainly. My name is Ray Owens. I'm a native of Austin, Texas, here -- live now in the New York area. And I'm with Teach For America, Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: Good for you. Great program.

Q -- a national teaching corps -- yes. (Applause.) And as you well know, we're the national teaching corps that's sending talented teachers who are accepting the responsibility to teach and serve in communities and neighborhoods that some educators have refused to work in, in great part because of the crime there. So in this regard, indeed, there are a number of people who still say that community policing is really more about community relations than it is about reducing crime.

I'm wondering how we can be sure that there's real substance in our community policing efforts.

THE PRESIDENT: I think the best way to be sure of it is, first, to give as much -- to go back to what -- and keep in mind, this is a very appropriate question because Mr. Schumer's congressional subcommittee, I'll say again, is going to deal with this issue tomorrow. They are marking this bill up tomorrow. So this is a timely question.

My own judgment is the best way is to say, here are the results we want to achieve. That is, we want the community involved; we want volunteers to be able to participate; we want each city or community to be able to define that however they want, except we're going to measure the results.

I think the main way to do it is not to tell everybody on the front end how they have to do it with a whole

bunch of rules and regulations, but to cite some examples that have worked and then say we're going to measure results.

There are more than one way to do this. I mean, in the city of Houston, they had a 22-percent decline in the murder rate and a 27-percent decline in the crime rate in one year when they went to a community policing situation. I mean, 15 months -- in a 15-month period. Not surprisingly, the Mayor was reelected with 91 percent of the vote, because they went to a community policing strategy that worked.

So my own judgment is give the people who are on the ground and who have the biggest stake in the success of this the power to design the program; and then reward those programs that work and don't continue those programs that don't. I think you have to measure the results, because everyplace is going to be different.

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THE PRESIDENT: Let me just ask all of you a little bit -- you could see how moved this audience was by the sort of personal testimony that each of you gave. One of the problems that I see with our National Service Program, because no program can do everything, is that we can provide volunteers to a community to support a program like yours if it's already going on. But not every community has somebody who would give up a career in corporate America where you could make more money and decide to do this.

And one of the things that I'd like to just explore with you is what you think the National Service organization can do -- because we are a national organization, and we have high visibility, and I do events like this all the time -- what can we do to make sure that there are more programs like this out in the community so that we can steer the volunteers to them. I mean, if you don't exist, then the volunteers won't go there.

Now, there's a Boys and Girls Club nearly everywhere, and so they just need to organize themselves everywhere to take the volunteers. But there isn't necessarily a program to keep the schools safe, or to keep the corridors safe going to and from school. That is huge deal. In a lot of places where even the schools themselves are safe, the kids are very much a risk going to and from school. And I've had people talk to me about that all over the country.

So do you have any advise for me about how we can help to sort of replicate these programs so we can direct the volunteers to them?

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THE PRESIDENT: I think if you've got a place, then the people will come and the programs will spring up, and they will do it. One of the things I wanted to say in support of that, because Mr. Schumer and I talked about it on the way up here -- you may remember that a few weeks ago, maybe it's been a couple of months ago now, Reverend Jesse Jackson had a national meeting in Washington of the Rainbow Coalition group to talk about violence. And he called me -- we've had now two conversations -- we had a brief talk about it yesterday. He started kind of doing an inventory in Washington, and then asked some people about it in New York, about how many schools there were that didn't have real recreational opportunities for kids, especially if they weren't on athletic teams anymore.

And he went through an inventory with me just in Washington about, for example, within the city limits how many baseball fields there were that were really functioning; and how there was no equipment for kids; and how many kids there were that never had a baseball bat in their hands until they were 14 or 15 years old now; and how many -- no swimming pools, no organized basketball programs, no bowling alleys, no skating rinks; these kinds of things.

I think we have maybe underestimated that in the last 15 years that our schools and our cities have been under such enormous financial pressures to cut back, cut back, cut back, maybe without even thinking about it, since these recreational programs for kids at large -- not the stars on the athletic teams, but the kids at large -- have been maybe the easiest things to cut. And one of the things that we talked about is whether we could have some of this National Service money directed back to support these school-based programs so that you'll have something to do with the kids -- (applause) -- and have these activities. I think it's really important.

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MR. SEGAL: Mr. President, do you have any questions or concerns? I saw you scribbling down there some thoughts.

THE PRESIDENT: No, actually, I was just scribbling what I was learning from them, not what questions I wanted to ask. (Applause.)

I do want to say that each of you, in very different ways is an incredibly powerful example -- and I'm just, I can't say enough about it. I was very moved by both of you for very different reasons, but you were very powerful. (Applause.)

I want you to know that my -- but before I became

President, when I was still living at home in Arkansas, my wife and I spent a lot of time, a huge -- a lot of time for what we had available with a friend of ours who ran a shelter like the one in which you work. And we saw large numbers, especially around holiday times, of women and children horribly brutalized. And I just would like to say that one of the things you said, that I think we may miss in this -- and another thing you said in terms of sympathy for the people who commit these crimes and then go to jail -- is we've got to do something that changes the attitudes of people who think that the only way they can deal with their frustration and anger is to wreak violence on someone.

Now, if they do something really terrible, we have to punish them and send them to prison, and do all that. But there are a lot of these people who can be reached before they do something really terrible. A lot of these children who knifed and shoot other children are people who cannot -- never learned to deal with their anger or their anxiety in any other way. To them, the future is what happens five or 10 or 20 minutes from now, instead of what happens five or 10 or 20 years from now.

And so, I don't know what thoughts you have on that, but that's one thing I am continuously plagued by. I see people like you who come in and bravely give your lives to try to help people who are so savaged by this. And then I know that a lot of the people we're dealing with now, who perpetrate these kinds of crimes, themselves were the victims of domestic violence when they were young; themselves grew up in kind of chaotic and violent situations, and they have no other conditioned way to respond to these terrible things that happen to them. And I hope we can devote some time and attention to that.

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THE PRESIDENT: We don't want to let anybody off the hook here today. You know, no one has mentioned this, but one of the things that -- one of the gentlemen did mention the images that come across to kids. But if you look at the cumulative, instantaneous, reactive, macho violence you see in media entertainment programs -- it's not that one or two programs will change a kids attitude, but the amount of it overall, I think has a big impact.

And I also think when people turn on television and they see their national government, what do you inevitably see? People with words, using extreme words to characterize conduct or activity or positions. The other politicians do it, the media do it; always trying to twist it like taffy to the nth degree. I don't know how many people -- I've had older members of the Congress tell me just in the last week how much meaner and partisan and negative the national arena is. Mr. Schumer was commenting, sadly, on the way in here today.

So I think all of us in positions on public responsibility need to think about that. Need to think about what kind of message are we sending to young people when they see that kind of conduct. Look, if he, this fine young man here, can bury his anger and desire for revenge, he ought to be an example to all the rest of us who have so much less to be angry about. (Applause.)

Next time I want to get real mad, I'm going to think about you. (Laughter.) And I hope everybody else in this country will. I thank you. You have no idea what a powerful example you are. (Applause.)

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THE PRESIDENT: I'll say this. One big problem is, you know, that you can go into a federal court and get an order to build a new prison and make it nice -- prisons not only have better schools than a lot of schools; they have, almost unfailingly, any prison built in the last 10 years has better recreational facilities than a public school or than a local park.

The New York Times Sunday Magazine had a stunning pictorial -- I don't know how many of you saw it -- pictorial exhibit a couple of weeks ago showing the prisons and how beautiful they were, and the schools and how rundown they were. So we have to try to change that.

All I can tell you is if you look at what we're trying to do with the crime bill, we're trying to give some resources to the states and to the communities to begin to turn that around.

I also think -- look, let's go back to the police officers that started this. None of us want to be naive about this. Some people deserve to be punished and should be behind bars. But we do know that a very large percentage of the truly violent crimes are committed by a fairly small percentage of the criminals. So what we have to do is to try to identify the people that should be incarcerated and incarcerate them; have more community-based punishment for people that do less serious things; and try to do all the stuff you all have been here talking about today.

And there ought to be some way of allocating the resources that recognizes the importance of doing all three things, instead of just that one thing. But there is no -- the practical problem is that in the last 10 to 15 years, there's not only been an upsurge of violent crime, which has led us to build more prisons cells, there's also been a huge spate of lawsuits, which have gotten us to build prisons nicer than our schools. And it's crazy, our priorities, therefore, have been turned

upside-down. Our schools should be nicer than our prisons so people want to get into the schools. And I really think that's a problem. (Applause.)

Now, that's not to say I don't think there shouldn't be educational facilities in the prisons, or recreational facilities; I do. I think it's crazy to turn people back out of prison when they're illiterate, when they won't have a chance to do well. I'm not campaigning against prison reform, I'm just pointing out just what you did -- we haven't done enough to help the kids stay out in the first place. (Applause.)

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Q My question to you, and perhaps to you, is how should we deal with gang members -- like, okay, how should we deal with gang members and gang violence in our society today?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, my short answer is -- I mean it's something we could talk about all day long, but I've spent a good deal of time talking with former gang members, with some present gang members. I've spent more time than Presidents usually do in inner-city areas, and I've thought about this a lot and talked to a lot of people who work on it. I mean, I think we heard a lot about it today. I think, first of all, you have to try to create the conditions for kids when they're young so they don't do that. There has to be alternative things.

Keep in mind, a lot of gangs grow up in a vacuum. Everybody that was introduced up here is a member of a gang. All these people who started organizations -- that's what those organizations are; they're good gangs. Isn't that right? (Applause.) Isn't that right? I mean, every one of them, right? (Applause.)

That is we all want to be part of something that's bigger than ourselves, where we're really important because we're part of it -- right? We do. This Public Allies -- that's a good gang. That's what it is. It's something good that's wholesome and -- (applause.) So if you live in a neighborhood where families have broken down, where there are no jobs and opportunities, where the school system is dysfunctional, where there's not a strong sense of community -- somebody is going to organize something so people can be part of something, where they are important and they matter.

And I think we have to recognize that and we have to adopt some of these strategies to deal with it. Unfortunately -- I mean, there are lots of things a President can do. You know, we can pass these programs and make these opportunities available. But in the end, people get saved the same way they get lost -- one by one. And that's why all of you are so important to this.

And that's why the power of his example -- one picture -- if somebody puts his picture in some newspaper in America tomorrow, talking about your story, it will be worth more words than I can spew out in two weeks, or two years. (Applause.) And that's why I think the genius of this National Service Program is having more folks like you show up in good gangs to help to decide, community by community, how to create another way of life for all these folks.

And you decide how it is. It will be different for different people in different places and different circumstances. And you will make the decision. And all the government will do is to empower more of you to be out there. That's what the whole national service thing is about. (Applause.)

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THE PRESIDENT: Let me say first, I want to thank all the New York officials who came, including one I did not introduce, Alan Hevesi, the City Controller. (Applause.) I want to thank all the people from volunteer groups who came. And especially, I want to thank my good friend, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who's father's speech I quoted tonight, who has devoted her life to community service. Thank you for being here. (Applause.)

And, Eli, since you're giving your life to community service, and you grew up in this community, I want to introduce your mother, who raised you in this neighborhood. Thank you for coming. (Applause.)

The one last message I want to leave all of you with is I want to thank all of you who are part of these efforts. You are conducting a quiet and sometimes not so quiet revolution in this country. The purpose of national service is to swell your numbers and increase your impact, and give this country back to the people who want -- who want America to go on to the next century as the greatest country in the world, and want to give every child a chance to live up to his or her God-given potential. That is what this is about. (Applause.)

So my last word is this: We need more of you. And anybody within the sound of my voice, we want you to call, find out about national service, find out about the community groups in your community, sign up and do something. We can change America.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END

2:22 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
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For Immediate Release

February 28, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN DISCUSSION ON CRIME AND HEALTH CARE
WITH DOCTORS, POLICE AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Wright Junior College
Chicago, Illinois

9:45 A.M. CST

THE PRESIDENT: I'm glad to see all of you. I'm glad to also be back at Wright Community College where I first came in December of 1992, although congressmen and mayors, you will remember, it was in a different facility. This is much nicer and newer. It's good to be back here.

We're here to talk about two things that relate to one another -- crime and health care. It's appropriate that we're having this discussion today, because today the Brady Bill becomes law. It requires background checks on anyone who buys a handgun or gun and will help to keep guns out of the hands of criminal and people who are mentally unfit. It will prevent now, we know, based on research, thousands of handgun murders all across our country.

Here in Illinois, where you already have a tough law similar to the Brady Law, it will prevent people who should not have guns from buying guns in other states, using them here to commit crimes.

Before we begin, I'd like to talk with Jim Brady who made history with his heroic efforts, along with his wonderful wife Sarah, to pass this bill. They worked for seven long years to pass it. I want to say Congressman Rostenkowski has supported the bill all along the way, but there was surprisingly continuing opposition in Congress. It all melted away last year. I hope that our campaign and election had something to do with it. But for whatever reason we had a good, good, strong bipartisan measure of support for the Brady Bill. It's now the law as of today.

And I just wanted -- I've got Jim Brady on the phone, I think. And I wanted to congratulate him and thank him for his efforts. Jim, are you on the phone?

MR. BRADY: Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Is Sarah there?

MRS. BRADY: I'm right here, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's nice to hear you both.

MRS. BRADY: Well, it's good to hear from you.

THE PRESIDENT: As you know, I'm here in Chicago with a lot of people who understand the importance of what you've done. I'm here with doctors and other health care professionals who treat gunshot victims and people who are recovering from wounds. So I'm sure they're all very grateful to you just as I am today.

MRS. BRADY: Well, we thank you for your leadership and for their support. It took a real team effort to get this passed, and we thank you very much for it.

THE PRESIDENT: I know that you believe this is just the beginning in our fight; and I know that you've got a lot of other objectives you want to try to achieve. I want you to know that we're going to be in there pulling for you and working with you.

MRS. BRADY: Well, thank you. We appreciate it.

MR. BRADY: We can't lose then.

THE PRESIDENT: Today, Secretary Bentsen is announcing that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is taking an assault weapon called the Street Sweeper off the free market.

MR. BRADY: Yeah.

MRS. BRADY: That's a wonderful move, and we applaud that highly. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: The weapon was originally developed for crowd control in South Africa. Several years ago, the U.S. government banned it from being imported, but it's still made and sold here. So today, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms is reclassifying the Street Sweeper, and another assault weapon, the USAS-12, as a destructive devices, increasing the taxes on manufacturers and dealers and requiring the buyers to take extraordinary measures. Starting tomorrow, if you want to buy one, you have to appear in person, provide a photo id with fingerprints and have a local law enforcement officer verify that the buyer can own it in his home state. And that, I think, will make a big difference.

So, we're going to keep working on these things; we're going to try to pass this crime bill including the assault weapons ban in it. I know you're going to help us. And I just want to say on behalf of Chairman Rostenkowski and Mayor Daley and myself and all these fine health professionals that are here, we appreciate you and we're grateful to you, and I hope you have a great celebration today.

MR. BRADY: Thank you, Mr. President.

MRS. BRADY: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks Sarah. Bye Jim.

MR. BRADY: Bye now.

THE PRESIDENT: Take care.

Well, glad we could take a little time to talk to them. You know, Jim Brady has paid a terrific price for the fact that we didn't have the Brady Bill when he was wounded. I think it's

remarkable that he and his wife are continuing to work on these matters and are continuing to get out there.

Chairman Rostenkowski, I'm glad to see you here today. Glad to have a chance to talk about this crime issue which you've been interested in for a long time and how it relates to the health care bill that we're working on in Congress now. Mayor Daley, I'm glad you're here. I know that you were the State's Attorney before you were Mayor, and I know you've worked very hard on the community policing. And every time I've ever talked with you, we've started our conversation with a discussion of crime. So I'm glad that you joined us here today.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the crime bill that's before the Congress and then introduce the people here around the table, and then invite the rest of you who are here, if we have time, to make some comments, because I think it's very important that we see that this crime problem is being manifested as a public health problem, too; and that many of you who deal with the -- the cost and the human tragedy of this can speak very dramatically to why we need to change our laws and our policies.

Our crime bill does a number of things. It contains a three strikes and you're out provision written properly to really cover people who commit three consecutive violent crimes. It gives us 100,000 more police officers so that we can do more community policing. We know that that lowers the crime rate --if you have properly trained police officers on the streets, in the communities who know the neighbors and know the kids. It bans assault weapons and it provides funds for things like drug treatment and alternative treatment for first-time young offenders, like community boot camps.

Today, I'm hoping that your presence here will help not only people in Chicago and Illinois, but people all across America learn more about how the crisis in crime and violence is linked to the health care crisis in America.

Last week physicians from Chicago area trauma centers had a news conference with the Cook County Medical Examiner, Dr. Edmund Donahue (phonetic). They reported that largely because of the proliferation of rapid-fire automatic and semi-automatic and assault weapons, gun violence has become one of the leading health problems in the Chicago area. More than 2500 people every year are treated for gunshot wounds in Chicago area emergency rooms; and caring for them in the emergency rooms costs \$37 million in this one community. In 1987, at Cook County Hospital, gunshot wounds accounted for 15 percent of the total funds used for the care of trauma patients. By 1992, this number had increased from 15 percent to 35 percent.

At the Cook County Hospital Trauma Unit from 1987 to 1992, the number of admissions for gunshot wounds increased from 449 to 1220, and accounted for 70 percent of the overall increase in admissions. That is a stunning fact. And all across Illinois, 1992 was the first year in this state where more people were killed by guns than by auto accidents.

According to an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association, gunshot wounds have become the nation's leading cause of traumatic death this year. From 1987 through 1992, 858,000 armed attacks took place every year, and in 1991

and 1992 16,000 people were murdered with firearms each year. This adds about \$4 billion a year to hospital costs, and too often, of course, when one of us is stuck with a bullet, the rest of us are stuck with the bill. About 80 percent of the patients who suffer firearm injuries aren't adequately insured or eligible for government medical programs like Medicaid. So public hospitals cover the costs of the uninsured. Private hospitals charge higher rates for those who can pay, so the rest of us pay higher hospital bills, higher insurance premiums and higher taxes.

This morning I want to talk with you and let you basically talk to me and tell me whatever's on your mind about what we need to do and what you have experienced. The mayor and Chairman Rostenkowski and I have decided we'd like to hear from you first and then we may want to ask you some questions. And I know there are some other very distinguished people here, too, in the audience who may want to say some things. But let's start with the Chicago Police Superintendent, Matt Rodriguez, a strong advocate of community policing; and I want to thank you, sir for working with our National Service Program to implement our summer of safety. We're going to have several thousand young people working with police forces all across America to try to reduce the crime rate and relate better to the neighborhoods of this country this year. I thank you for that, and I want to give you the microphone for whatever you might like to say.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you very much, Mr. President. First of all, I would like to say that I would hate to think about what our homicide rate would be were it not for the excellent medical professionals that we have represented here in this room. The other thing, Mr. President, during your State of the Union message you talked about getting tough and getting smart; and we like to think that our Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy -- CAPS is the acronym -- we like to think that that's what our strategy is and that's what our policy is. We intend to continue to fill the courtrooms and fill the jails, arrest the benders, but at the same time to look to prevention as really the long-range but the proper route for us to be taking. And we're talking about the area of narcotic use to look to treatment and those kinds of programs that were announced by Lee Brown. And we think that perhaps the strangest thing that's going on now -- and this is true across the country -- we just had a meeting of the major city chiefs, and there was a decrease in many of the major cities such as Chicago here, our homicide rate went down 9 percent last year, but yet this fear of crime was up; and this phenomenon is occurring across the country.

You might be interested to know, Mr. President, that the major city chiefs endorsed and sent a letter -- you'll be getting a copy -- endorsed the U.S. Conference of Mayors and their proposals to you, which goes back to the crime bill. But I think that we need to address it on a -- at the same time we address it on a long-range basis for prevention, we need to look at the fear of crime and see what we can do in that area.

THE PRESIDENT: I think one of the reasons that's happening is the numbers I just read off. While the overall crime rate is going down -- even the murder rate is dropping in many of our cities, especially where community policing strategies have been implemented; the violence among young people seems to be on the rise. And among young people who are shot

with these semi-automatic weapons, a gunshot wound is more likely to end in death than it was just five or 10 years ago because you're likely to have more bullets in your body. I mean, there's a lot of evidence now to that effect.

So I think that we -- the law enforcement folks in this country are not getting the credit they deserve in many cities, being able to bring the crime rate down through community strategies. But a lot of it is the sheer violence of certain particular things. And I think the widespread use of these assault weapons in gang settings.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: The fastest growing segment of our criminal population are the young people. They're increasingly becoming the offenders. We find it again here in Chicago and across the country. That is the same indication I'm getting from other chiefs throughout the country.

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Statter -- Dr. Mindy Statter is the Director of Pediatric Trauma at the University of Chicago Medical Center. Her unit is Level I, which means she gets the most intense and vulnerable trauma cases. Would you like to make a few comments?

DR. STATTER: Since I've been at Wyler, since 1992, I was aware of the increase in adolescent violence, but I wasn't aware that 10 percent of my patients were going to be victims of this violence.

Since I've been a pediatric trauma surgeon there, I've treated a child as young as one month of age -- single gunshot wound to the abdomen and died in the operating room. Most of our patients are -- 80 percent of our patients that are gunshot victims are young black males less than the age of 15 years of age.

I'd like to make one comment with regard to the monetary aspect of this. You pointed out that the money -- tax dollars go to to take care of these victims. I think it's very, very important to keep the consideration -- what happens to these children once we pay for their -- (inaudible). A lot of these children become paraplegics, and they're lost from the work force; and not to mention the child that may just sustain a graze injury -- the psychologic trauma may significantly affect his performance in school.

So the end point and the subsequent effects of these injuries is also very important to take into consideration.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you have any -- how long have you been doing this work?

DR. STATTER: I've been at Wyler for two years.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me just say this: One of the most controversial parts of the crime bill, as you know, Mr. Chairman, in the House will be whether we can get the assault weapons ban that passed in the Senate passed in the House. I just sort of wanted to ask your opinion as a medical professional. We have a lot of police officers tell us that this is very important, not only because it winds -- without doing something on assault weapons you wind up often with the police in effect outgunned by

people who have these weapons; but that it actually has increased the level of mortality from gunshot wounds because of the transfer from handguns -- regular handguns to assault weapons.

Have you seen that?

DR. STATTER: Not specifically. In the past few years, in 1992 we had 55 children that were gunshot victims, most of them males, young men; and there were five deaths. In '93 we had a similar number -- 55 gunshot victims and eight deaths.

I think the important point is with children, since they don't have the same body mass as an adult; and we're seeing children being struck at close range in classrooms. A simple gunshot wound can do significant damage and damage multiple organ systems in the body. It doesn't take a multiple gunshot to kill a child. It can be a single injury from a single bullet.

Simply, in answer to your question, I don't have demographics regarding -- children dying from assault weapons versus --.

THE PRESIDENT: Barbara Schwaegerman is a trauma nurse at Cook County Hospital, who works in an emergency room and cares for hundreds of victims of violence every year. Would you like to make a few comments about your experience and what you --

MS. SCHWAEGERMAN: Well, Mr. President, I'd like to say that the accessibility and the availability of these semi-automatic and automatic weapons has caused a great deal of problem in our unit. In the last 10 years we have seen a 350 percent increase in deaths from multiple gunshot wounds. I've been there for 14 years. When I started we would see single gunshot wounds. Now it's very common to see multiple gunshot wounds with the semi-automatic weapons. And yes, our mortality has increased; the patients' stay has increased; and everybody loses here. Even if you haven't suffered personal loss, we all pay for this. Whether it's a personal loss or whether it's paying for their hospital stay, their rehabilitation, their disability.

Just for instance, I'm also concerned about that we have a generation here that's coping mechanisms are just not there. And I just want to give you a for instance. Last week, I took care of a 24-year-old gentleman who came in with a gunshot wound to his head. The story was that he was watching TV at his parents' house, and he had an argument with his brother over the channel that they were watching on television. And rather than communicate and work out a settlement together, the younger brother went in and got a gun and shot him fatally in the head.

It was very difficult to tell the wife that her husband was dead over a television channel. They have three children. What she did was grab me by the arms and say, "How am I going to tell my three children he's dead?"

We have to do something about the accessibility of these guns. Because people find it easier to grab a handgun and solve their problems that way, then to sit down and communicate and solve their problems that way.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Perhaps the most important person sitting around this table today on this subject is Carol Ridley, who is an anti-crime activist because her 22-year-old son was killed by gunfire in 1992. She is an active member of the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence and the Coalition to Stop Handgun Violence.

Carol.

MRS. RIDLEY: Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to agree with Barbara. We have to do something to channel the energy of the young people. My son was murdered by a friend of his, also. These two boys had grown up together since age of 12. They've had many arguments, but due now to the easy accessibility of guns and this young gentleman wanting an instant answer, or something instant to resolve the situation or the argument, he killed my son. And to make matters worse, at the time of sentencing, Mr. President, the young man told the judge, "You know, I dream constantly about Pool." That's what we called my son. "Because he was my best friend and I miss him totally. I didn't mean to do it, but because guns is an instant answer and you want to resolve a situation, you do this."

What we need to do to help our children is to channel their energies elsewhere. Start preventive measures like playgrounds and social activities to have something to do after school that's structured and supervised. We don't need to leave our kids open on the streets like it has been because that's what happens. They walk on the street and they get shot because there are guns on the street.

I'd like to comment also on the fear that's going through our children's minds. They hear constantly about gunshot victims. They also know people that's in their family that are victims. They've seen their friends murdered. So they have a constant fear that they live in. They can't concentrate on education because it takes all of their energies for survival. We have got to do something about this gun problem; because we are arming ourselves in America more and more, but the crime isn't going down. So guns is not that answer.

THE PRESIDENT: One of the things that -- first of all let me thank you for being here, and thank you for having the courage to keep fighting this.

One of the things that I have seen some success with around the country that unfortunately is just being done kind of on a case by case basis with no consistency, is an effort in our schools to literally teach young people who may not learn it at home or in other community settings, how to resolve their differences; to really try to work through and force kids to come to grips with their aggressions, their angers, and how they deal with this.

I don't know how many encounters I've had in the last three years with people talking about shooting occurring in schools that mostly are just impulse things. And it's something I think maybe we ought to give some thought to and make sure in the crime bill that comes out that some of this money for alternatives includes the ability -- these things aren't very expensive to have these courses in the schools where these kids are actually taught how people, sensible people, resolve their

differences, because I think it's a real problem.

?: Mr. President, we have such a statute here in the State of Illinois. It's not funded, however. And so I think you're correct that conflict resolution is a very important thing to be addressing to our young people.

More importantly I think there is this pall, or this despair over most of the community. And I think it's an excellent opportunity for you, as the leader of this country, and I think you've taken the bull by the horns so far; and I think it's very, very important that people have some hope. And I think it's perhaps the worst thing we can do is just to have a feeling of despair -- that we have no control at all. I think that whatever effort we make, when you put these things together in a comprehensive fashion, they will make a difference; and I think we can turn this thing around -- and if I didn't, I wouldn't be in this job that I'm in. And I think that's important -- to convey hope to people.

THE PRESIDENT: Congressman.

CONGRESSMAN ROSTENKOWSKI: Mr. President, I think the city of Chicago has probably one of the most restrictive handgun ordinances in the country. There's no question about the fact it is a national problem. If you can go across the state border and buy weapons and bring them into the city of Chicago or into the county of Cook or into the state of Illinois, the problem is there. And what Matt said is absolutely right -- we need presidential leadership in this, and if you had not at your practical swearing-in ceremony said, I will sign the Brady Bill, I don't think that the initiative would have been there.

There are those of us that have been fighting over a long period time, recognizing that the availability of the violent weapon is more the impulse exhibition than anything else. And we've just got to be consistent about where we're going nationally with respect to the availability not of assault weapons, but weapons generally. And I think I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the fact that t.v. violence is what basically the younger element in our society is exposed to. And unless we can get cooperation from the media to do something about the kind of movies or shows that they're playing, I just don't think that we're going to get our handle on it.

And finally, Mr. President, crime is community participation. The police officer, whether there's one or 20, is handcuffed if he hasn't got the interested citizen willing to call him and identify what the problem is and who created the problem. And I think what we've got to do is work on an educational program for the people in our community. The gangs are better organized than the parents are -- they know each other and the minute the young person is exposed to the gangs in the street, they take -- they almost take over the parenthood of the child.

On assault weapons, Mr. President, I've been supporting this before you were President because I honestly believe that we've got to view this on a national scale. But as Superintendent Rodriguez has pointed out, if there's somebody in the White House that wants to do something about this, people out there will react -- 435 members of Congress cannot do what the

President of the United States can do.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think there's any question that, as you said, this has been one of those issues where the people were ahead of those elected officials, or at least elected officials as a whole. They've been out there for a long time wanting us to do something.

Mayor.

MAYOR DALEY: Well, I want to thank you, Mr. President -- regard to many years we've had a lot of talk about being tough on crime or try to understand the crime problem. But you as President, you have provided the leadership, not just --speech, but I really understand the problem. You have talked about prevention, treatment and enforcement. And here this morning you have Superintendent Rodriguez and the five district commanders that deal with community policing. They know it works, as the Congressman pointed out. When you get the community involved -- once you get the community involved, you're going to have the police; you're going to reduce crime; you're going to have awareness programs. And that's what the community's all about.

That's why it's so important, the crime package that you have presented -- you have talked about to the American public that we need this passed immediately. At the same time, we understand the repercussions for the families and for the victims. It's a total problem for the community. And you talk about -- as the doctor pointed out and the nurse pointed out --it is -- the victim -- the death of a victim or the injury of victim. And then what happens to the victim when they're five years old or seven years old, as each year they get older and older.

And so I want to thank you and the Congressman for providing the leadership -- here in Chicago -- Congressman Rostenkowski -- but yourself, not just talking about this; you met with people; you signed the Brady Bill; Sarah and Jim Brady and what they went through; and educating the American public. I think that's what we're doing -- you're doing. You're really educating the American public. And I think we appreciate that.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Anybody else want to say something? Would you stand up and just identify yourself.

DR. FANTUS: -- I'm a trauma surgeon at Illinois Masonic Medical Center on the North Side of Chicago. And I've been the Director of Trauma there for the past seven years. And I've seen the number of gunshot wound victims quadruple. And there's been a shift from single gunshot to multiple gunshot. And now we're up to about 35 percent of the gunshot victims we see have multiple gunshot wounds from either assault weapons or semiautomatic weapons.

And just this past Friday night I was on call. And when I got home Saturday morning, my six-year-old asked me, "Daddy, what did you do last night?" I had to tell him that I was there sewing the holes in a heart -- boy who was shot in the back multiple times in school. And I had to explain this to him. And this is a significant public health -- gunshot wound --fighting a

war. And I hope we can take care of this before I have to send him to school in a flak jacket.

DR. ADAMS: Stephen Adams from Northwestern Memorial Hospital. From a public health point of view, if bullet wounds were caused by an infectious disease, we would find people clamoring for an antibiotic cure for this epidemic. And I think that's what we need to do with this society -- find a cure for the infectious disease caused by bullets.

DR. ZARET: My name is Phil Zaret. I'm the Director of Trauma at Mount Sinai Hospital here in Chicago on the West Side. And I think that the thread that kind of connects all of these bullets and crime together is education, and the lack of education. And I don't mean reading, writing and arithmetic, I mean in moral and ethical values. There's such a lack of it on the West Side of Chicago -- life is so cheap.

I think that the best way we can teach this type of education, this moral and ethical education, is by -- example. And thank you, Mr. President, for the wonderful example which you set. And thank God that you're here today to go the high school later, which you're going to be doing and set the very finest example for our people here in Chicago, for our young people. But we need more -- we need people going out and setting an example, a good example for the young people in Chicago. They just don't have it. It's the drug dealers; it's the pimps and pushers that are on the street that are their good example, and it's just not working out. We've got to set good role models for them.

DR. MELLER: My name is Janet Meller. I'm Director of Pediatric Surgery and Cook County Hospital.

I'd like to say that for the past seven years, the amount of penetrating injuries to children now accounts for one-third of our --. And we've seen that public awareness and legislation can have an impact on -- (inaudible). In fact, since the -- (inaudible) -- falling out of windows, have come into --there has been a great decrease in the amount of falls.

And think that if you can expend some of -- energy to the issue of penetrating trauma we can decrease the -- start to work on the decreasing the penetrating trauma in children, which is really becoming significant this year in the pediatric population.

DR. SHAH: My name is Manoj Shah. I'm a Trauma Director at Lutheran General Hospital. (Inaudible) -- inner city kind of population; I'm in a suburban hospital. And even in a suburban hospital, we have seen an increase in --. Even though we are not seeing the injuries in assault -- gang-related kind of injuries, the kind of injuries we are seeing is self-inflicted or suicide kind of injuries. (Inaudible) -- talking about, we have seen an almost 60 percent increase in the number of victims that come to us for those reasons. And most of those people have an easy access to the weapon and use that to solve their problems.

DR. CHRISTOFFEL: I'm Katherine Christoffel. I represent Children's Memorial Hospital. We've seen a tenfold increase in the number of gunshot victims that -- in the last decade. I also represent the handgun -- (inaudible) -- or health network of

concerned professionals. And we are working among organizations and individuals in the health field and related fields across the country to address this the way we would any epidemic. More children adolescents died from firearm injuries in 1991 than died from the polio epidemic, of all ages, at its peak. More than 10 times as many Americans died from firearms in 1991 as died from Polio at its peak.

The handgun is the main problem. Semi-automatic pistols kill far more people now than assault weapons. You have to prevent the assault weapons from killing more. I agree with banning them. But we've got to focus on the handgun as the main contingent in this horrible epidemic. And I hope that you will focus increasing energy on the handgun -- that one consumer product is killing our kids.

DR. MERLOTTI: Gary Merlotti, trauma surgeon from Christ Hospital. And I'd like to emphasize -- (inaudible) -- general impression throughout our city -- (inaudible) -- most gunshot wounds are drug- and gang-related. Better than 50 percent of our gunshot wounds -- we figure about 850 of them in 1993 -- were domestic violence. They are the solution to the argument -- it's too easy to pull a gun out.

I think what Congressman Rostenkowski pointed out, that part of it is a general desensitization of the population to the gunshot wound, or to the use of the handgun in that it's become an enabler, if you will. That is, it allows people to be more ready to pull a gun out -- (inaudible) --. I think that we really need to put pressure on t.v. to get violence out of the media in order to -- (inaudible) -- and get people back to considering that a gun may be something you want to do about and not use.

DR. LAZAR: Mr. President, I'm Richard Lazar from the Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital, and unlike some of these physicians, we take care of the survivors over the long term. I'm very sensitive to some of the issues that Mr. Rostenkowski brought up about sensitivity in the television. We're very concerned about that, as well. I mean, if we can ban cigarette advertisement from television, why should we allow the media to broadcast people killing one another left and right all the time as a matter of six or eight hours a day of television by our children?

We now have children in our hospital that are patients that are survivors of gunshot wounds, whose parents and grandparents were gunshot wound patients at our hospital. They already know what physical therapy is, they know all about it. They know all about wheelchairs, crutches, the whole shootin' match. So, I think that this is really a testimony to your leadership that you're willing to really examine our social fabric in this way, and try to make some very critical changes; and I applaud you for that.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Is Dr. John May here?

DR. MAY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: You're the senior physician at the Cook County Jail, is that right?

DR. MAY: Correct.

THE PRESIDENT: I understand that you have done some violence prevention workshops with your people in the prison, in the jail. Would you talk a little about that?

DR. MAY: We have almost 10,000 detainees at the Cook County Jail and I'll go in and give presentations as a health issue like we do maybe about HIV or smoking and so on, but we talk about gunshot wounds. And I start by asking, how many in the crowd have ever been shot before? And almost a third will raise their hand. I ask, how many of you have ever seen someone shot? And almost everyone will raise their hand. And I've done this outside of the jail at the high schools, and more than half the kids in high school actually see someone on the street shot. So it's not just the violence on t.v. that we need to be concerned about, but the violence that is witnessed in real life. How does someone process that?

I had an 18-year old patient just last week who --this was in the jail -- had been shot three times before: once when he was 15, once 16 and once 17. I thought to myself, is it any wonder he's here in the jail? And we need to recognize this not just as a criminal justice issue, so I thought we need to see this as a public health issue. If we can work on prevention, we can begin to reduce some of this -- help someone overcome the psychological burden of witnessing violence or experiencing violence. I think we can teach conflict resolution and that might have some success. And yet, despite all those desperate efforts, young people and adults will get into conflicts and will fight and if the handgun is there, unfortunately, that conflict becomes lethal. So we need national attention to get rid of the guns.

THE PRESIDENT: Is Reverend Roosevelt McGee here? Reverend McGee is the Executive Director of the Chicago Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. What are your observations about what you've heard today, and what can we do to prevent some of these things from happening in the first place? What can I do? What can the rest of us do?

REVEREND MCGEE: First, Mr. President, I would like to thank you and the Justice Department for your -- Initiative across the United States. Here in Chicago, -- (inaudible) -- Council Project. And you've allowed SCLC to come in in partnership with you on that. And it's an effort that you're punching and -- (inaudible) -- that you have targeted. And our program -- (inaudible). It enables us to get out in the community and build coalition with a lot of these individuals that are here, to address the issue as to what we can do. And we're going to hold a meeting tomorrow night to talk about these things. The medical community is coming together, community organizations -- and what we want to do is to build at the grass roots level a safety net to enable us to catch these people; to change their minds; change their attitudes; and then offer an alternative to gangs and drugs and to the life of crime; and to teach them about nonviolent conflict resolution.

It's been a great effort. We met January 17th, and communities are coming together -- organizations, social service organizations. Taking resources that we have, putting them together so that we can make a good safety net, sir, to offer

alternatives and then change attitudes.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

DR. GEWERTZ: Bruce Gerwertz, Chairman of Surgery at the University of Chicago. And on behalf of our faculty and the faculty around the city, I just want to thank you again for your leadership.

I don't have to tell you that there are many conflicts and controversies in the organization of health care, but this is one in which every health professional, from physician to nurse, strongly supports this movement. And I just would like to echo what Dr. Shah said, is that there is no escaping this. This goes far beyond any socio and economic boundaries and profound for all of Americans. And your leadership on this is greatly appreciated.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. I guess this would be an appropriate time to make an observation that all the medical professionals here will immediately identify with. You know, one of the big debates we're having in Washington over the health care plan now is that Americans spend about 14.5 percent of our total income on health care. The next most health care expensive country is Canada where they spend ten percent; Germany and Japan are slightly under 9 percent of their income, even though their health outcomes, their indicators, are as good or better than ours in almost every major area. And they cover everybody, unlike the United States, which doesn't cover everybody.

And in the health care debate, we're examining how much that is due to the way we finance health care; how much of that is due to the enormous administrative burden on hospitals and doctors clinics and in insurance offices. But if we're going to be perfectly candid, we have to admit that some of the difference is what you all deal with every day. As long as we have more people who are cut up and shot and victims of violence, we're going to have a more expensive health care system than our competitors. And it has enormous economic consequences for the country. The human consequences are by far the most important, I don't want to minimize them. But I think it's important that we acknowledge here that no matter how successful Chairman Rostenkowski and I might be working on this health care thing when we go back, and even if we can get everybody in the world to agree on it -- which seems somewhat less than likely (laughter) -- we will still have a system that costs more than all our major competitors as long as we are a more violent society than all our major competitors because no matter how you cut it, you will have to be there doing what you do and that's expensive.

I want to call on just a couple of other people. First, one of your officers. Is Officer Charles Ramsey here?

OFFICER RAMSEY: Here, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Could you say a little bit about -- Officer Ramsey heads up -- he's the deputy chief of police and he's the head of the community policing program here.

Could you say a little bit about what you think is the potential of the community policing program to actually reduce the crime rate and help maybe to begin to change patterns of

behavior that we're talking about today?

OFFICER RAMSEY: Well, sir, I think in the long term it will have a definite impact on crime in Chicago -- working together along with the community, trying to identify the causes of crime, trying to take a more holistic approach to law enforcement. What we've learned is that simply locking people up is not the solution -- it doesn't really help us in the long term. We can talk about our statistics going down, but chances are in a year or two, they'll go up. We have to start taking a more holistic approach; we have to get involved with health care professionals. Up until now, our relationship with health care professionals has been basically to drop off gunshot wound victims, make a report, hit the street and wait for the next one to come in. We need to start communicating and talking about prevention now.

I thought that Congressman Rostenkowski's comments about the media were very, very appropriate. We have to look at the real causes of crime. We deal with the aftermath of crime as police and, basically, as health care professionals. But what's causing it? I have a seven-year old son and Saturday morning he's watching cartoons and I felt relatively good about that because I mean, what harm could there be watching cartoons; until I sat and watched the cartoon. They are incredibly violent -- far more violent than some of the things you see during prime time programming. We are not sensitive to violence anymore in this country. People dying -- when you watch a news broadcast, if there's not enough violence in Chicago, they'll show you a murder that occurred in Buffalo, New York. I mean, what has that got to do with what's going on here in Chicago? But it's this thirst for violence that is really fueling, in my opinion, this whole outbreak of violence in our society. And we have to make some very hard choices.

Representatives from the entertainment industry ought to be right here, right now. They've got to be held accountable as well as everybody else, because unless we work together -- police, health care professionals, media, everybody -- then we're not going to solve this problem and we'll be back here in this room talking about the same issue.

THE PRESIDENT: Is Gina Benavides here?

Gina was in her car with a girlfriend when she was the victim of random gunfire. And since that time, she's spoken out publicly against gun violence, and I thought I would give her a chance to say something here today.

MS. BENAVIDES: Well, I agree with Mayor Daley about -- (inaudible) -- is the teachers and police officers in the community. If this police officer can teach -- (inaudible) -- in another area, in another suburb. They're not so involved with their own people because their neighbors are the ones that -- (inaudible) --.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a very interesting thing -- several weeks ago in Washington, D. C., there was a national meeting on violence in which Jesse Jackson and a number of other people were involved. And one of the principle ideas that came out of that, interestingly enough, was that local and state governments should consider giving special tax incentives or low-cost mortgages or

something else to encourage police officers and teachers to actually live in the communities in which they work.

That's very perceptive that you would say that.

Steven Estrada, are you here? Steven was a former mid-level management professional who was shot in the back and robbed for \$9, and I appreciate your coming here and I was wondering if you'd like to say anything?

MR. ESTRADA: It's kind of hard to talk about sometimes, so I don't know what to say. --(inaudible)-- when you're in a situation like that, you don't know what the answer is. All I know is that I've got to move on. I can't sit here and feel sorry for myself. I've got to move on and pick up and go on. And so, I don't know, Mr. President, I'm not an expert in handguns like all these other people here today--(inaudible)--. All I know is one thing -- that I do have a family. I have two younger brothers that I almost lost them, and I'm just grateful to be alive and to be here. So, I'm just going to move on.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Yes sir, Chief.

OFFICER RODRIGUEZ: Steve is walking with a cane. He hasn't been employed -- this is how long the victimization goes on -- he hasn't been employed for well over a year and a half since this occurred; he lost his job. We talked a little earlier about the National Service Corps as an alternative, but we're looking to see if we can help him.

But the victimization is not just at the moment of the gunshot. It is a long, long, healing process for many victims. I might add, Mr. President, you heard so much about the random use of firearms, handguns beginning with Chairman Rostenkowski bringing it up. The Children's Defense Fund, which indicated that 50,000 children were killed by handguns since 1979; also indicated that about half of those -- half that number were killed as a result of suicide or accidental shootings. I think that we emphasize all that was said -- (inaudible).

THE PRESIDENT: Anything else? Anyone else want to be heard?

Tell us your name.

MR. WALLER: -- I'm a gunshot victim. Everyone's always talking about banning assault weapons. But what I think is -- (inaudible) -- assault weapons is that what they're used for is assaulting somebody. So instead of always talking about just banning assault weapons or semi-automatic weapons, why can't we just start -- just ban everything -- (inaudible). -- stiff penalties, go to jail -- (inaudible). -- his friend tells him, my brother just went to jail; well, what did he get caught with? A gun. Well, how long's he going to be in jail? A certain length -- amount of time, a real long time -- it's in a kid's mind that if I get caught with a gun, I'm going to be in jail -- it's going to be a stiff penalty for it; but not just start with assault guns -- all guns. If all -- got shot with a revolver, it's not automatic, but I would have still been in the same situation. You know what I mean?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, sir. Thank you, young man.

MR. WATSON: Commander Ronnie Watson from the --district. Conflict resolution is needed. We've got to have --not only for the children but for the parents. We find out --parents -- (inaudible) -- a lot of our children's problems. I agree with the congressman about media and tv. But we're leaving out video games -- the most violent contact children have is with video games. That's where they learn how to shoot is through video games. They get instant gratification from the points --5,000 points every time I kill somebody. And this thing -- this whole thing, even though my homicides went down in my community, the level of violence is still at the same point because people still have that violent -- that prone for violence.

I agree with the lady here when she said we have to have other programs. We've got to have constructive programs. Until we got our community involved in -- our crime led the city every year. Once the families got involved because these are their children that we're losing, our drive-by shootings went down 70 percent, and we went 66 days without a homicide.

So once we get the community into what we're doing, I think that's --. We've got to have those programs. Either we're going to treat them after or we're going to treat them before --.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Mayor.

MAYOR DALEY: -- a lot of things I found out --crime lab a couple weeks ago -- there's a gun manufactured in Tennessee, it looked like handgun, it was about that big, that fired a shotgun shell, was manufactured in Tennessee. It's basically going to be sold to drug dealers, gang bangers, anybody who wants it. The thing that has surprised me after we talked about this kind of weapon they're seeing on the streets is that how many guns are manufactured overseas. But the people in those countries can't buy it. Only America can buy it. It's like --only America can buy drugs -- we can only buy guns that are manufactured in foreign countries for their sale -- here. They can't sell them in Europe. They can't sell them in Russia to their own citizens, but they can sell them here in this country. We're becoming the dumping ground for drugs and weapons. And when you put the two of them together, you'll see how violence, that it keeps increasing.

What everyone has pointed out, you're the educator, and that's who you're educating the American public about this. You're giving the facts. You're really telling them the truth about it -- not afraid, not ashamed to do it. And you listen to everyone. That's the thing that I think we appreciate in Chicago.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Let's take one more and then I think we better wrap up. Then Congressman, we'll hear from you at the end.

DR. ZUN: I'm Leslie Zun, Chairman of Emergency Medicine at Mount Sinai. Mount Sinai, Mr. President, is one of the -- is the hospital in one of the poorest communities, and most violent communities in Chicago. On a typical Friday or Saturday night, we have dozens of victims from violence. Not only that, but a

number of these patients that come in that are victims of violence, have been victims on multiple occasions. We take care of teenagers and young adults who have been shot once that come again and have been shot again. The cost to our society is tremendous. I applaud your initiative, and Mount Sinai applauds your initiative in health care reform.

We spend thousands of dollars on our trauma patients. They are some of our sickest patients and our most costly patients. We need to protect our communities and our children.

THE PRESIDENT: We also need to remember that every one of these hospitals with a big trauma bill also treats lots of other patients for lots of other things and it imposes an enormous financial burdens on the hospitals, which is another thing that -- one reason this health care reform thing is so important to big city hospitals with large trauma units is that it will help to even out the flow of payments so you will be able to continue to treat these other folks and not risk bankruptcy, which I think is very important. A lot of people have overlooked that connection -- that all these other people that are going to these hospitals.

Mr. Chairman, you want to wrap up?

CONGRESSMAN ROSTENKOWSKI: Yes, Mr. President. I think that this has been most rewarding. And it's really the center of attention because you're sitting there. And I applaud you for that.

But I'd like to make one or two observations. Trauma centers in the city of Chicago have been closing. I don't know if there are more than six now in the city of Chicago when five years ago there must have been 25 or 30. Why is that happening? Because we don't have a health reform policy and that's important. We've got to work on that; on health care reform.

What that young lady said back there -- I lived in a community that was -- (inaudible) --. It went through transition areas. When teachers lived there they were concerned with the school across the street, and they were educating those children in that school. When policemen lived there, they were concerned with somebody drag racing down the street because their children were playing in those streets. What that young lady said is absolutely a fact, and I don't know whether we can get a tax incentive to do it, or whether we should start restricting people. I know that that it's a constitutional infraction if you make the policemen live in the city of Chicago. But when you have the leaders in the community living in the community, their children living there, it's amazing how easily you can organize that community to make it function and be vital.

I agree with both these police officers. The media ought to be here as well, because they have a responsibility with which -- with what they're displayed in my home, with children and your children.

I think that -- I applaud you because you're not afraid to take it -- and this is a tough one. Thank you very much, Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: It is a tough one, but I want to thank

you, Carol, and thank you, Barbara, and thank you, Mindy Statter, and thank you Chief Rodriguez, and that all of you for the work you do everyday. And I particularly want to thank those of you who have been victimized in some way or another for having the courage to come up here and do this and to continue your interest in this.

I think the American people are ready to move on this. I believe they are. And I think maybe the rest -- those of us who can help are getting the message. And your presence here today will certainly help --.

Thank you very much. We're adjourned. (Applause.)

END

10:41 A.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 28, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO STUDENTS OF HILLCREST HIGH SCHOOL

Hillcrest High School
Chicago, Illinois

1:15 P.M. CST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. It's wonderful to be here. I thank you for your warm reception -- and I do mean warm reception. (Laughter.) I'm sorry it's so warm, but they had to put the lights up so that the cameras will put you all on the news tonight. (Laughter.) So, see, it's not so bad now, is it, when you think about that. (Laughter.)

I want to thank my good friend, Congressman Mel Reynolds, for arranging for me to come here and to be with you today, and for the leadership that he is already displaying in his career in Congress. He is a great credit to all of you here, and I think you would be very proud of the work that he does in Washington.

I want to thank your principal, Gwendolyn Lee, for inviting me here and for the comments she made. She told me that her mother made dinner for Martin Luther King when she was 11 years old. And she said her mother sent me a plate that he had dinner off of, so she sent me into a little room out here to have a snack off the same plate. (Laughter.) So, you see, even when you grow up you've got to try to do what your mama wants. (Laughter.) I've spent most of my life doing that myself.

I want to thank Starr Nelson for being here with us. I thought she was very well-spoken. We knew exactly what she had to say and she was brief. That makes you very popular if you're a speaker. (Laughter.)

I also want to say I've heard good things about your music program here, so I hope before I leave I get to hear the band play. You guys have got to play a little for me. (Applause.)

I also want to thank anybody in this whole student body who was responsible for putting together that statement up there, that letter for me. (Applause.) If every one of you believes that and lives by it, then I don't need to be here, I need to be somewhere else today. It's a very impressive statement and a real credit to your school.

I came here today, as I think all of you know, to talk about the problem of crime and violence in our land and especially as it affects our young people. As the Congress comes back to work this

week, it will be considering some very important education bills and some very important crime legislation. We know as a practical matter that we can never really be what we ought to be as a people until we are not only free of the scourge of violent crime, but free of the fear of it. For the very fear of crime keeps 160,000 young people just like you home from school every day. Every day that's how many people we estimate don't go to school because they're afraid that if they do go, either at school or going to school or coming from school, they'll be shot or knifed or beat up or hurt in some way.

I know that you understand that because last November two teens were shot and wounded within a week right outside your school. This kind of thing is happening all across the country, and we have got to do what we can to stop it -- you and I together.

The number of teens murdered by guns has doubled just since 1985. You think of that. We've been a country for over 200 years, and the number of our teenagers murdered by guns has doubled in less than 10 years. One in 20 high school students carries a gun to school each day somewhere in America. I hope not here. But it happens. Some do it for protection. Some do it for the wrong reasons.

More and more of our young people find themselves caught up in a cycle of violence. I just left the Wright Community College here in Chicago where I met a woman whose 22-year-old son was murdered by his best friend in just a fight over nothing -- over nothing they were fighting. And she said when the young man was arraigned in court he said he missed his friend every day.

I had another medical professional tell me that she looked into the face of a woman who had just lost her husband because his younger brother went in another room and got a gun and shot him down because they were fighting over which channel they were going to watch on television. And the guy had two little children. People dying over nothing.

I was in California a few months ago, and I did a town meeting. I'm going to that in a minute here -- get rid of this microphone and just let you ask me questions. And I was in Sacramento, California, but we were hooked into three or four other towns and people all over the state could ask me questions. And this young man stood up and told a story of how he and his brother didn't want to be in a gang, didn't want to have any guns, didn't want to cause any trouble. And their school was unsafe, so they went to another school they thought was safer. And while they were standing in line to register at this safer school, some half-crazy person came into school and shot his brother standing right there in front of him in the line.

These things are happening all over the country. Today, the Brady Bill becomes law. It's a bill that will save some lives. It's a bill that will require that no place in America can anybody buy a gun until they've been checked for criminal background or mental health history. And we know that it will keep thousands and thousands of people from getting guns who would otherwise get them, commit crimes and maybe even kill with them.

We have done our best to deal with the problems, the special problems of assault weapons. We have a lot of evidence now that more and more people are hurt more grievously by guns when semiautomatics or assault weapons are involved because they're likely

to have more bullets in their body.

Today we banned an assault weapon called a "street sweeper" that was developed for crowd control in South Africa, to enforce apartheid in South Africa -- to repress blacks in South Africa. That's what this gun was developed for -- now not used anywhere, but manufactured in America so that people can get it and repress each other with it. No sporting purpose; no hunting purpose in this country.

But we have more to do. Congress is also considering, as I said, the crime bill. Let me tell you a little bit about what it does, and then I'll open the floor and you can tell me what else you think we can do.

The crime bill now before Congress would permit us to train and hire, working with cities, another 100,000 police officers to work not just to catch criminals, but to walk the streets, to know the neighborhoods, to go into the schools, to meet and become friends and neighbors with the young people in the schools. Last month, as Mayor Welch reminded me, Country Club Hills received a grant for three new police officers from our Justice Department to do this kind of thing.

We have seen evidence all across America, even in tough neighborhoods and big cities that if there are enough police that are really walking the streets, knowing the families, knowing the young people, working with them, that a crime rate can go down by just creating an environment in which people don't commit crimes and feel that there is somebody secure and supportive there.

So that's the first thing that this bill does. The second thing the bill does is to ban about 28 kinds of assault weapons. The third thing it does is to have a safe schools provision which provides money to help provide security measures in schools, but also to try to help young people resolve their differences in different ways. We forget at least -- I say, "we" -- not you, but me -- those of us who are older who grew up in a different time and who stayed busy all day doing other things -- we forget that there are a lot of people who see people resolve their differences hours and hours and hours a day on television programs where the differences are always resolved with a fight or a shooting; and where there may not be someone else saying there's another way to do this. And so we're doing our best through this crime bill to give the schools and the communities of our country the means to bring -- get the people in, to work with young people about how to resolve their differences, how to deal with anger, how to deal with frustration.

Let me tell you something: We all feel anger. We all feel frustration. We all feel like we're being thwarted. There are always things that happen to all of us that we wish wouldn't happen and where we want to double up our fist or pick up a stick or something. But we learn not to do that. You have to learn not to do that in a society where you're really going to be civilized and recognize one another's rights. That's what we're struggling for in Bosnia today. That's what we hope for the people of all those countries in Africa which are embroiled in civil wars. And that's what we have to hope for our own people, that we can decide that we can do that. And in the end, that's what the people of the troubled Middle East are going to have to decide -- if they can resolve their differences without killing each other.

So this is a big deal. And this is what is in the crime bill. The crime bill has tougher punishment. It recognizes that most of the really serious crimes are committed by a small number of people, so if you commit three serious violent crimes that hurt people, sequentially, you won't be eligible for parole anymore.

But most people who are in prison are going to get out. And most people can be helped before they commit crimes. So we try to find ways to deal with all these other issues.

I can't help saying one thing about drugs that I think is important, and that is that we see some evidence now that drug use, after going down among young people for several years, may now be on the rise again. And I just have to tell you that one of the things that I learn every day as President is to be a little humble about what I can do. That is, I get up every day and I try to do what I can to make the future better for you. My job really is about guaranteeing the future for America, preparing America for the 21st century, trying to keep the American Dream alive for you. I've lived most of my life, and I hope more than I can say that none of you have lived most of your lives. I hope the vast majority of your life is still out there ahead of you. But I know that there is a limit to what even the President can do.

The President can't keep anybody off drugs. The President can't keep anybody from getting in trouble with the law. The President can't keep anybody from resorting to violence. These are decisions you have to make.

And so I came here to this school today on the first day the Brady Bill is effective -- a bill for which people fought for seven years to give you a better chance to be free of violence -- to tell you that we're going to keep on fighting against violence. We're going to fight for more police. We're going to fight to have them be friends of the community. We're going to fight for tougher penalties. But we're going to fight for better chances, for young people to have things to say yes to.

But in the end, what matters more than all of that is whether you believe what's up there on that wall. And if I do my part and the Congressman does his, and the teachers and the administrators do theirs, and all these parents and others who are here today do theirs, in the end what still counts is whether you believe what's on that wall. But if we, your parents and your grandparents, will assume our responsibility to deal with these tough problems now, and you will believe what's on that wall, then I believe that you will grow up in the most exciting time this country has ever known. And if we don't -- if we don't do our part and you don't do yours -- then what you saw here when those people were shot outside this school a few months ago is the beginning of just how bad it can be.

The choice is yours. The choice is ours. I'm going to make my choice for your future. And that's the choice I want you to make, too. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

Now, where are the microphones out here? One, two, three. Just make sure everybody can see. One, two, three. So if you have a question or a comment, get it to the microphone.

Q I'm a sophomore here at Hillcrest High School. I was just wondering if I were a graduating senior who planned to work

full-time next year, what should I expect to pay in general medical expenses under your health care reform program? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Good question. Good question. You should expect to pay, again, depending on how much you make -- you should expect to pay about two percent of your payroll out of your pocket if you work for someone else. And your employer would pay somewhere between just under four percent and just under eight percent of your payroll, depending on how big your workplace is and what the average payroll of the people working there is.

Now, having said that, let me get in a little plug. I just had some statistics given to me that I'll give back to you that relate not so much to health care but to your decision to go to work after you get out of high school. In 1992, the unemployment rate among high school dropouts nationwide was over 11 percent, and that included people 40 and 50 years old. For younger people it was much, much higher. Okay? The unemployment rate for high school graduates was 7.2 percent. The unemployment rate for people that had had at least two years of a community college or further training was 5.2 percent. And the unemployment rate for college graduates was 3.5 percent.

In 1992, the average high school graduate made \$4,000 a year more than the average high school dropout; and the average person who had a high school diploma and at least two years of further training made another \$4,000 more.

So my answer is, if you go to work when you get out of high school, enroll in a community college at night or something else and get further education and training so you can get your income up. Then you won't mind paying for health care. (Laughter.)

And the good news is that right now, under the system we have now, you might or might not get health care. It just depends on the accident of whether your employer provides it. Under our plan, everybody will get it for the first time in the history of the country, and no one will lose it, even if somebody in their family has been sick.

That's the biggest problem now -- almost everybody in America is at risk of losing their health insurance if something happens to somebody in their family.

Q I'm a junior. And I'd like to know if I was interested in becoming a CIA or FBI or national security agent, what would I have to do as far as education, what are would I still have to do to get there? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: That's a good question. I think one of my Secret Service agents should talk to you when this is over. You come down here when this is over; I'll introduce you to one of the Secret Service agents and they can tell you about it, okay? (Laughter.) What do you think? (Applause.)

But wait, wait, I'm going to answer the question. The answer to your first question is, though, as an absolute minimum you have to go to college and finish a four-year college degree. And a lot of the -- particularly in the FBI, depending on what they're doing, have further education over that. And a lot of people in Secret Service were once in other kinds of law enforcement. But it's not necessary for you to have a particular degree in law enforcement.

A lot of them have done different things. But what I would suggest you do is to literally talk to one of my agents after it's over. But what I suggest you do -- go to college, get the best education you can, do well, and keep up with what the requirements for joining these various federal law enforcement agencies are, so that as you move toward the end of your college career, you can do what it takes to qualify. And if you have to do something else for a year or two before you get in, then that's all right as well.

But it's important that you keep up because, for example, suppose you decide to go do some other kind of law enforcement work first; under our national service proposal, you might be able to start when you're a junior in college working with law enforcement in the summertime, so you get a little leg up on that. (Applause.)

Q I'm a junior here at Hillcrest High School. And I would like to know, Mr. President, why is the government cutting the cost for college education? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute -- why are we -- why aren't we cutting the cost, or why are we?

Q Why are you cutting the funding.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're not. You may be doing it in Illinois, and at the national level -- I don't know that you are. I'm not accusing anybody or anything. (Laughter.) But let me tell you this: For several years student aid levels were frozen at the national level, so that, in effect, they were being cut because inflation meant that the money didn't go as far anymore.

This year I have asked the Congress to put more money into the Pell Grant Program, which is the college scholarship program for low-income kids that comes out of the federal government -- (applause) -- and also -- did you give up on your question? And also, also, we have reorganized the college loan program.

This is very important. I want you all to listen to this. We have reorganized the college loan program so that now you can borrow money at lower interest rates and you can pay it back, no matter how much you borrow, as a percentage of what you earn after you go to work. Now, a lot of people quit, drop out of school because they worry about the cost of it and they worry about the burden of paying the loans back. So now we are giving everybody who wants it an option. You can pay your loan back basically on a regular loan repayment schedule. But suppose you want to do something that doesn't pay a lot of money, at least when you begin? Suppose you want to become a schoolteacher in the beginning, and you know you're not going to be a millionaire. You could pay your loans back, but you can't pay a whole lot at once. Under our new proposal, you can borrow the money at lower interest rates and you can pay it back over a longer period of time, a smaller amount every year based on your income.

So there will never be a reason not to go to college. In addition to that, this year 20,000 young Americans, and three years from now, 100,000 young Americans will be able to earn several thousand dollars in scholarship money by participating in our community service program.

So I am trying to make it easier for people to go to

college, because it makes a huge difference -- as I just quoted to you the numbers -- in your employability and your income.

Go ahead.

Q Hi, I'm a senior here at Hillcrest. My question is, besides giving money to the city of Country Club Hills, in the future do you foresee giving money to the less fortunate communities in the city of Chicago, such as Cabrini Green -- (applause) -- so that they as well can fight against drugs and gang activities?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes --

Q And if so, how do you go about completing --

THE PRESIDENT: Yes --

Q -- so that we as people can work together instead of working against one another.

THE PRESIDENT: Give her a hand. (Applause.) First of all, in this last round of grants for law enforcement, where this small community got \$238,000, Chicago got \$4 million to hire more police officers. (Applause.)

But let me just tell you, there are two or three things that are quite important here. If our crime bill passes, then a lot more money will come to Chicago not only for police officers, but also for drug treatment and for alternative activities for young people. And in addition to that, the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros, which has jurisdiction over the big public housing projects, has a major new initiative to try to work with the homeless, especially homeless young people, to try to deal with that on a more permanent basis and to try to improve security and reduce drugs in public housing projects.

You know, you've had some remarkable success in Chicago, actually, cleaning out public housing projects and making them safe and providing jobs for people who live in the projects to work to help to keep them drug-free and free of violence. And the truth is that we've not provided enough money nationwide to do in every housing project in the country what has been done in some housing projects here in Chicago.

So in this new round of our budget, through those two areas -- through the crime bill and through the Housing and Urban Development Department -- we're going to try to give the people of Chicago and in cities like that all across America the tools they need to do the job.

And that was a good question, great question.

(Applause.)

Q Mr. President, before I begin with the question, I'd like to thank you for sending my brother who was in Somalia home. I'd like to thank you from my family. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I'd like to thank him, and through him, through your family, for the work they did over there. We have -- we can't stay forever and solve all the problems of Somalia. We can't run the country. But what we did do was to save hundreds of thousands of people from starvation, to organize life again and to

give them at least a chance to work out their own problems. If they don't do it, they'll have to take responsibility for it. But at least we've given that country a chance to survive. And your brother can be proud of the service he rendered, and I appreciate that. (Applause.)

Q Welcome, President Clinton. I would like to know -- I'm a senior. I would like to know how do you plan to improve the public educational system so that it's equal throughout Illinois and throughout the states? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: I'm going to tell you what I'm going to do and then I'm going to be honest with you on the front end and tell you it's not enough -- okay? Because let me say -- most public education in America, over 90 percent of it, is funded from state taxes and local taxes, so that the President and the Congress provide a very small percentage of the money that comes to this school district. That's the way it's always been.

I don't know what the numbers are for Illinois, but if I were guessing, I would guess that probably 55 percent of the total cost of public education probably is paid for at the local level. Is that about right? Most of it comes from the state? No, most of it -- well, anyway, take my word for it, over 90 percent comes from the state and the local level in some relationship.

Some states pay a big percentage of it. Hawaii, for example, pays almost all; there's almost no local taxes in Hawaii. Some states pay almost nothing, and it's all local property taxes. New Hampshire is the most extreme. All the other states -- Illinois, New York, everybody else is somewhere in between.

Whenever you use local property taxes to fund schools there will be unequal funding. Why? Because some school districts have more valuable property than others -- right? So at any given tax rate -- I mean, if you've got -- you're going to have that. That is the fundamental problem with inequality in America.

Now, at the national level, we have certain programs designed to help low income districts and low income kids or kids from disadvantaged backgrounds, like special education programs, or Chapter I programs. What we are doing with our money this year is to put some more money into programs directed toward low income children, like the Headstart program; and to change -- I'm asking the Congress to change the way we give the money out to give more money to the poorer school districts so that we can equalize the funding.

But the reason I tell you it's not enough is if you put up 90 cents and I put up a dime, I can redistribute my dime, but it still may not overcome your 90 cents. You see what I mean? So what that means is that, in Illinois, if you think it's a real problem and you think a lot of your schools are not being properly funded and it's unequal, you have to solve a lot of this problem at the state level with the state legislature in Springfield. We'll do as much as we can, and I have asked the Congress to do more, but there's a limit to how much we can do. (Applause.)

Q Hello. I'm a sophomore, and I was wondering, how do you justify millions of dollars being spent on space exploration when there are millions of homeless people in our country? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, for me, it's not a hard justification, but it's a very good question. The way I justify it is this: I think it's important for us to continue our lead in space because I think it helps our national security to be out there first and to always be in a position to shape developments in space; because space has given us a way to cooperate after the Cold War with the Russians, the Japanese, the Europeans, and the Canadians -- we're all working on the space station together -- because it creates new high-tech jobs for scientists and for engineers, and they create a lot of wealth for the rest of us; and because in space technology, a lot of things are found out that may have a lot of benefits for us right here on Earth.

I'll just give you just one example. I was down at the headquarters for the American space program in Houston, Texas, the other day. And I saw a motor that was used to pump water in space where it's gravity-free, so the motor obviously has to be very powerful to pump water and make it move where there's no gravity. And they discovered that the exact same technology could be used as a heart pump here on Earth to keep people alive, and it's lighter and better and cheaper to produce than what had been the case here.

I also saw cancer cultures growing in space in gravity-free environments where the cells will grow differently, in ways that will enable all kinds of medical research to be done that may keep a lot of us alive when they get cancer here on Earth.

So I think a nation like ours has to take some of its money and invest it in the future, even though you know it may not work out, even though you can't justify every penny based on immediate benefit. It's like investing in education in a way. If I invest in your education, I think you're going to come out better. It may be seven or eight years down the road, and yet every dollar I spend on education is a dollar we don't spend on the homeless or feeding the hungry or some other problem.

So I don't believe we're spending enough on the homeless, by the way. And under my budget we're going to spend more. So I can't defend that. But I think that if you were in my position, every one of you, one of the hardest decisions you would have to make is how much money am I going to spend taking care of problems today, and how much money am I going to spend investing in the future so we'll have fewer problems, more jobs, higher incomes, better opportunities. It's one of the hardest decisions I have to make. And like I said, I -- by the way, a lot of people in Congress don't agree with me. A lot of people in Congress every year vote to cut the space program and put more money into problems just like you said. And if you were there, you might make the same decision. But as President, I always have to keep one eye on the future and one eye on the present and try to balance the needs in a proper way.

That was a great question. Give him a hand. It was a good question. (Applause.)

Q Hello. I'm a junior at Hillcrest High School. Mr. President, I would like to know why is it that the U.S. gives and helps other countries while we have our own people starving, no way -- we have crime, no jobs, people on welfare, and gangs? Why don't we start helping our own country and not others? And how is it that you're going to change this around whether we'll become a more industrial country and not where Taiwan and Korea and Japan are beating us in industrial ways? (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Good question. Good question. First of all -- that's a real good question, don't you think? (Laughter.) Good question. First of all, that's exactly what I ran for president to do, to get us to take care of our problems at home first, because my belief is if you're not strong at home you can't be strong abroad. So I believe that, okay? (Applause.)

Now, I believe that. And as a result of that, in the last year, we have changed the economic course of the country; we're bringing our deficit down; we're seeing more investment and more jobs coming into this economy; we're opening up opportunities to sell American products around the world, so we can compete with these other countries.

But you need to know that last year, our economy grew more rapidly than the economy of Europe and the economy of Japan, and that we are starting to come back. We are creating more jobs than they are and we are beginning to really compete again. And that is my first and most important job and the overwhelming priority that we have.

Now, let me say also, though, we spend a smaller percentage of our income on foreign aid than the Europeans or the Japanese do. The Japanese give more money in foreign aid than we do now. The foreign aid is not a big problem; indeed, even though we're the strongest country in the world, we haven't even -- I haven't been able to persuade Congress yet to appropriate the money we owe just to pay our past-due bills to the United Nations.

And we have to spend -- it's like the question this young man asked me about the space program. It's hard to -- there is no easy dividing line here between at home and abroad in the sense that now a big percentage of our income depends on our ability to sell products and services overseas because we live in a global economy.

The next time you go in a store, just pay attention to everything you buy. The next time you buy some clothes, for example, just see where all it's made, and you just see what a global economy we live in.

So if the United States wants to be able to lead the world and preserve the peace and avoid a war, and not have a lot of people like the lady with the microphone's brother going all over the world getting -- to fight major wars, we have to maintain some leadership in the world. And that requires us to invest some money. And I think we should invest some money. But the overwhelming priority should be on the problems here at home, and that's what I'm trying to do. But we can't run away from our responsibilities abroad. We just have to put the folks at home first.

And I totally agree with you that we have not invested enough in education, and jobs, and curing the problems of the homeless, especially in the distressed inner city areas. If we had the same policy on getting foreign investment into inner city America that we have in getting American investment overseas, we could cure a lot of these problems. And that's what I'm trying to do as President. (Applause.)

I'll take -- we've got to quit. They're trying to get me to quit. Two more.

Q I'm a junior here at Hillcrest. I was informed that the money that was granted to us was to use for gun control. Now, if we could use that money for education, to educate the people to give them a choice, not to go into gun control, why can't we do that? Not to go to gangs or to drugs.

THE PRESIDENT: You mean the money that you got -- that the city got to hire the police officers?

Q Yes, the money that was granted to the city --

THE PRESIDENT: You used that to hire police officers. that money was used just to hire police officers. But the money in the crime bill -- you know, I talked about the bill that's now pending in the Congress -- there will be money in that bill that can be used in this community and in this school to do just what you said. In other words, I don't want to mix apples and oranges. I think it's important to hire more law enforcement officers, too, because I know if they're in the community and tied to the folks in the community, they can reduce crime. But I agree that there also has to be money spent to do the things you said.

If this crime bill passes in anything like the form we're talking about, there will be money for that purpose. And I perfectly agree with you.

That was a good question. Give her a hand. (Applause.)

Q I'm a junior here at Hillcrest. I was wondering, as we see, in the United States there's an increasing amount of homelessness. And I was wondering why have there been cuts in welfare. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, to the best of my knowledge, unless you've done something here in Illinois I don't know about, I don't know that there have been cuts in welfare unless there was a state program that got cut. At the national level, there's been no cut in welfare, but the welfare check has not kept up with inflation. However, that's not the primary problem with homelessness. One of the things that we find is, increasingly, you've got families that are out of work that are homeless, as well as people who have some terrible problem in their lives. And what I think we've got to do is not only improve the welfare system, which I want to do -- that is, I want to spend -- people on welfare I believe should be required to work, but only after they've had education and training and until their children are supported with health care. Then I think you can require them to work. (Applause.)

So I think that is very important. But the homeless problem is a different one. One of the things that I'm most proud of about my government now is that the person in charge of this, Henry Cisneros, who used to be the mayor of San Antonio, has really spent an enormous amount of time trying to figure out all the different reasons people are homeless and why getting homeless people off the street involves a lot more than just building shelters where people come in and spend a night or two, and then they're homeless again.

And what we're trying to do this year is take an approach to the homeless problem which will really give us a chance to go in and, family by family, person by person, examine why are these people homeless, what would it take to put them in control of

their own lives again, and what do we have to do to do it. And I believe that within a year or so, you will be able to see some real results from our efforts with the homeless.

I keep telling our Cabinet, if we could just do one thing, just one thing that would make America feel better about itself, it would be to get these folks off the street and into a constructive life. People in our country want that, I think. I think all kinds of Americans want that. I think it breaks America's heart to see all these folks trapped in a life that they can't really seriously want to live forever. And we're going to do our best to do better. I'm glad all of you care so much about that. Thank you. (Applause.)

They say we've got to go. I'm on my way to Pittsburgh. It's an interesting story. You talked about the rest of the world -- I'm supposed to meet with the Prime Minister of Britain tonight, Great Britain. His grandfather worked in a steel mill in Pittsburgh. And his father was a circus performer in the United States. Just shows you what a small world it is.

I really have loved being here. I wish I could stay all day and answer your questions. You asked great questions, those of you who asked questions, and I wish we could have taken some more.

Please remember what I said. If you have other questions like this, you ought to bring these concerns to your Congressman -- that's what he's here for, to bring them to me in Washington. I feel a lot better about the young people of the country just being here with you and listening to you ask these questions and knowing how much you care. And I will say again -- I'll try to do the best I can on the issues we've talked about today. And you do the best you can to stick with what's on the wall. And we're going to do fine.

Thank you. Good luck. God bless you. (Applause.)

END

2:55 P.M. CST

THE WHITE HOUSE

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December 13, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT RECEPTION FOR SENATOR MOYNIHAN

The Waldorf Astoria Hotel
New York, New York

9:00 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. Thank you very much,
Senator Moynihan and Liz.

You know, before I met Pat Moynihan, I actually
thought I knew something about government. (Laughter.) Now I
just feel like I'm getting a grade every time I talk in front of
him. (Laughter.) It's not always a good one. (Laughter and
applause.)

I am honored to be here with Liz and with Pat;
honored by the partnership that they have kept and the faith they
have kept with the American people, as well as with their own
family for 40 years; deeply honored to have the chance to serve
as your President while Senator Moynihan is the chairman of that
committee which makes a quorum if he's there and I, his
messenger, are there -- I'm his messenger out here. (Laughter.)

A few months ago, when the fate of our economic plan
was hanging in the balance and we didn't have a vote to spare,
there were people in Washington who said, and I quote, "The very
survival of this President now rests squarely on the shoulders of
Daniel Patrick Moynihan, chairman of the Senate Finance
Committee." Thank God he didn't shake me off. (Laughter.) We
made it here tonight.

And tonight, if this were a normal time, I would
come and talk about the things that we often talk about -- about
the new GATT Round that Senator Moynihan mentioned; about the
fact that the economic program we passed which was so
controversial has now been largely shorn of its false myths --
the front page of the Wall Street Journal today saying that they
said there were no spending cuts in it, but guess what -- they
cut a lot of spending, they cut a lot of entitlements, they cut
and cut and cut. That's the Wall Street Journal, hardly the
house organ of my administration -- (laughter) -- saying that.
And, of course, the markets have largely spoken with lower
interest rates and inflation and higher rates of investments and
a 19-year low and late home mortgage payments, millions of
Americans refinancing their homes, more jobs in the private
sector in 10 months than in the previous four years. I'd like to
talk all about that. I do believe that by and large our country
is going back in the right direction economically. And with all
of our difficulties -- and Lord knows they're plenty -- we are
now the envy of the other advanced industrial countries. In

In other words, what I'm asking you to do tonight is you don't have to agree that whatever we decide to do on the assault weapons ban is right around the edges, or whatever. But you should leave here tonight far more intolerant than you came here of some of the conditions which obtain in this country. Last winter Senator Moynihan wrote, and I quote, "We have been redefining deviancy so as to exempt much conduct previously stigmatized." We have been, quote, to use his phrase -- "defining deviancy down" below the threshold of acceptability. Then he said in more blunt language, "We're getting used to a lot of behavior that is not good for us." (Applause.)

Now just today, there was a Justice Department study that says 20 percent of the students surveyed in certain schools in high crime areas carried guns to school on a regular basis, and 83 percent of juvenile offenders have used or carried guns prior to their arrest. That is just one example. We tolerate all kinds of things nobody else would put up with. Why, if we are so smart, would we tolerate, for example, having the only advanced country in the world with a health care system that spends 40 percent more than everybody else and covers fewer people? -- and instead of spending it on pharmaceuticals or doctors or nurses, spends more and more of it on paperwork than anybody else? Why would we do that? Why do we put up with that?

Why aren't we free enough to know that we have got to invest in policies that will promote work over welfare and family over solitude, and community over division? We know better than this. And we have just become so callous because basically, this country has worked pretty well for the rest of us. But I'm telling you, it's coming back on the rest of us. Tonight before I came down here, I called and asked if those three men who had the guts to go subdue the man who did the shooting on the Long Island Railroad would come up and see me before I came down to the dinner. I just wanted to see them and talk to them and ask them how they were feeling, and figure out why did these guys do this, take responsibility? Suppose the guy had gotten the clip in the gun quicker. You know, it looks now like they couldn't have been hurt. Do you think they knew that then? In the flash of an eye were they all that certain that they couldn't have been shot? I don't think so.

They did something. They took responsibility. And they came from fine families -- two of them -- one has four children, one has three children -- the other, a younger man, brought his parents and his brother and sister. They had a lot to lose. They acted. They took responsibility. They saved lives. We ought to be proud of them. (Applause.)

So they started talking about how each one of them made the decision almost simultaneously, and not together, to do this. And finally they just knew it was insane not to act. And so they took some chance and they acted. And all three of them said to me, as they looked around at their families, that they now realized how fragile this country was, and how no one was safe from violence, but how they all had to have an interest in what happened to everybody else. And they volunteered -- they said, "You know, Mr. President, if you're going to really try to do something about crime and violence, you think there's something we can do, call us. We'd like to help." In the moment of that encounter they all of a sudden realized that by a simple

overpowered, and the police outmanned, what happens is that gangs take root as a form of social organization and drugs take root not just as a form of self-destruction, but as an economic endeavor. And then, as an enforcement mechanism, violence comes along in even greater amounts. And now, because we have permitted by a flight of -- in my view -- collective insanity, even teenagers to be better armed than police in most of our big cities, you see a dramatic increase just in the last decade in the death rate of young people who are shot. Why is that? Because they're more likely to be shot by assault weapons like the kind that was used on the Long Island Railroad a few days ago.

A study came out right after that horrible incident, chronicling one of our biggest cities in the Middle West, saying that 100 percent of the increase in the death rate from gunshot wounds among teenage boys was due to the use of assault weapons with rapid cartridges so they had more bullets in their bodies. it wasn't very complicated.

So I would argue to you we have, first of all, seen a vacuum develop. It happened over a generation and anybody that tells you it can be turned around with a lot of words or even good actions in a moment is wrong. There are good people out there now standing against the tide doing their best. I call to your attention the article on the cover of the New York Times Sunday Magazine yesterday about that brave policeman. Gosh, I'd like to meet that guy. If you haven't read it, you ought to go read it; talking about how one person still can make a difference in restoring some sanity and safety and reinforcing values in people's lives.

And so we come -- those of us who are in Washington running your business -- Senator Conrad and Senator Lautenberg, Chairman Moynihan and I, we come to work every day knowing that we almost have two tasks. We've got this sort of -- these rational challenges: get the deficit down, get investment up, train the work force better, expand trade, do things that will work. And for most of us it will really work. But knowing that underneath that there is this erosion taking place where a lot of people are just being lost, to themselves and to the rest of us.

Those kids that were singing to us up there tonight, they sang God Bless America, they sang the National Anthem, and they deserve for it to be true. They deserve for it to be true. (Applause.)

I don't want to get into a lot of programs tonight. We got the Brady Bill done. We've got the crime bill coming up. It really does make a difference how many police are on the street if they are well trained. (Applause.) We have to do more on the drug front. We have to deal with health care in part, because this crime and violence is a public health problem. But I don't want to talk so much about programs. It is just to ask you to leave here tonight, if you are really going to give your money to re-elect this man, which you must do because he is a national treasure -- (applause) -- you should leave here tonight determined to do what you can to create a political constituency to make it possible for him to make the ideas that have been popping in his mind for a generation real in the lives of our people. (Applause.)

Europe and Japan they're having far worse troubles than we are at this moment. Not that I wish that on them, if they were doing better we would be, too.

I'd like to talk about how the image I had of Senator Moynihan -- and even after working with him a little bit, but before I became President -- was different than reality, something I'm very sympathetic with. You know, I thought, "Well, Moynihan has got an IQ of 300, he can't be bothered with the dirty details of practical politics. But if I hang around long enough I'll get four or five things that we can move the world with." And then he started wearing me out about Penn Station and New York's Medicaid match rate and Lord knows, there is nobody who works me worse in an old-fashioned way for his constituents than Daniel Patrick Moynihan -- and does a better job of it. (Applause.) So I could give a speech about that, you know.

But tonight we have to talk about what Mr. Chairman mentioned. The Washington Monthly once described Pat Moynihan's career as one long and exhilarating assault on conventional wisdom. He told us more than a decade ago what would happen if we kept increasing spending and cutting revenues at the same time. And sure enough, we quadrupled our debt in 12 years.

A decade before its collapse, Senator Moynihan said the Soviet Union was doomed. He also wrote a very powerful prediction and later turned it into a book called "Pandemonium," about what would happen when you strip the veneer of communism off those troubled lands.

But long before I ever ran for President on my platform of opportunity and personal responsibility and renewing the bonds of community in this country, he had been warning us -- as you heard tonight -- reading from that stirring article now 28 years old, which could have been written last week. He has been for a generation the champion of the American family. Not one of those politicians who use slogans like "family values" to divide us, but who really tried to live out those values, and to find ways to vote for programs and push ideas and change actions that would help ordinary people in this state and this nation to keep their own families together and to raise their children, and to be rewarded if they worked hard and played by the rules.

I have read over, and over and over again, that wonderful passage which Senator Moynihan quoted to you tonight. I can tell you what most of you already know -- one of the things that impresses me about it, coming as I do from the kind of family I come from, is that that passage was written 28 years ago not by a trust-fund baby telling people on food stamps how to live, but by a son of Hell's Kitchen, a one-time longshoreman, a person who knows what it means to see chaos and difficulty and adversity firsthand.

Here's what I think we're up against today. I believe that in every traditional way I could do a good job as your President and the Congress could continue to support me, and notwithstanding the press reports to the contrary. It has now apparently been established that they have supported me more faithfully than they have any President in his first year in 40 years, since they've been keeping these statistics. I'm very grateful for that.

We can work on increasing the growth rate.
(Applause.) We can work on bringing the deficit down. We can work on rebuilding the training systems of our country. We can pass a new health care program, and Lord knows we need to. We can do these things. But unless, unless we face the fact that year in and year out we are losing an enormous percentage of our people to our common future -- and that they, in turn, are making the rest of us much more miserable and less free and less hopeful in our own lives -- this country will not become what it ought to be.

I look into these places that break our collective heart and I see the collapse of economic opportunity, the collapse of families and the loss of supporting community institutions that used to bind up the wounds of so many individual kids in trouble in every community that had them when I was a boy. I wonder which came first. I don't think its relevant anymore to know what was the chicken and what was the egg. I do know that back in April Senator Moynihan said that -- in talking about the differences here, between 1993 and 50 years before -- he said, and I quote, "In 1943 the illegitimacy rate in New York City was three percent." Last year it was 45 percent -- a lot of poor people here in 1943.

When Pat Moynihan wrote the article that he just quoted from a few moments ago, the illegitimacy rate among white Americans was one in 20, among African-Americans was one in five. Since that time, in 28 years, the rate among black Americans has tripled, the rate among white Americans has quadrupled -- most all of it concentrated among people who are very poor, not very well educated, and in what I have come to call an increasingly outer class -- estranged from the rest of us. If we keep going at this rate, within a decade more than half the children born in this country will not be born into a family where there is, or has been, a marriage.

Now, he's been talking about this for 28 years. What else has happened in 28 years? Well, for 20 years -- because of the pressures of the global economy and because of our inadequate response to them -- the wages of middle-class Americans have more or less been stagnant. But every year there are more and more people who are poor, people who are not working and people who are working and still poor. And that's what I meant when I said, you take the most troubled neighborhoods in this country, most people who live in them work hard for a living, don't break the law, doing the best they can and, in some ways, are the real heros in this country because most of them are working hard and still just barely getting by. And they deserve our honor and our respect.

But the economic opportunities that once beckoned people to our cities have long gone for many middle-class people who didn't have a lot of education. When you lose both family and work -- the two things that most of us organize our lives around -- you create a vacuum in any society. And, as with any other vacuum, nature abhors it; it will be filled. People cannot live in total chaos. Some alternative organizations will take root. And what has happened in our country is that in places which we have permitted to be without family and work, where the community organizations have folded up tent and left behind them, where very often only the churches are there standing alone against the deluge, and the people in the social services

act of heroism, they had also come to an understanding which now imposed responsibilities on them they didn't feel before they did it.

And that's what I ask of you. Do you really like Senator Moynihan? Do you really admire him? If you really agree with all of the things that he's written, if you think the time has come to stop worrying about what you feel is politically correct and just say what you believe and try to get this country back together again and start saving these children again, then you must become more intolerant of things that we take for granted. We cannot permit this country to continue to waste the lives of a whole generation of children. (Applause.)

I just want to make one more point. I ran for President because I thought the country was going in the wrong direction economically, and because I thought we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together. I think we've done a good job of beginning to change economically. And I can't make us come back together all by myself. This has got to be a deal we do together. I am not giving you a bunch of negative talk. I am a congenital optimist. But I don't believe public officials serve the public interest by giving happy talk when hard news is called for; or by using tough facts to divide people instead of unite them.

So in the intolerance I ask for, I ask for your intolerance of conditions, not of people. Remember those kids you heard singing tonight when you go home. There's just millions of them out there, and they're bright and good. They can do anything that they have to do to take this country into the 21st century if we can simply do what we have to do to stop some of the crazy things that we have permitted. Don't expect it to happen overnight. This family degeneration has happened over 30 years. The wages have been stagnant for 20 years. The deficit has been exploding and investment and productive things have been declining for 12 years. We do not have to do it overnight. But we must become intolerant in a consistent way, in a compassionate way, and we must believe that what worked for so many of us will work for tomorrow's children too. If we believe that and we act on it, then our intolerance can give our country a new birth.

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

END

9:24 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Boston, Massachusetts)

Internal Transcript
1994

July 18,

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN MEETING WITH THE MIAMI HERALD
EDITORIAL BOARD

Sheraton Bal Harbour
Miami, Florida

10:05 A.M. EDT

Q Mr. President, this community is very grateful to you and to Secretary Cisneros for recognizing and supporting our homeless initiative. And we're very grateful for that. I want to switch to another subject, though, and to ask you to think about the front-line people who are involved in the drug war in our country. The people in the community antidrug coalitions who are dealing with prevention, who are helping with education in the schools and drug-free workplaces -- that whole range of programs -- those people applauded your appointment of Lee Brown as the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and especially making that position a Cabinet post.

We've been concerned, however, because of a lack of visibility of Mr. Brown in that position and the lack of articulation of a clear policy with respect to prevention and strengthening that whole area of our war against the demand for drugs. Do you have any comments on your administration's position in that regard?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. When we issued the new drug policy I went out to Maryland to a kind of a boot camp-like facility, or an alternative imprisonment facility, and attempted to make it a very large national event, along with Lee Brown. And we have tried to do two things that I think are quite important, and we've been subject to some criticism for both. But let me say what they are and defend them.

The first is that even in this very tough budget that I have sent up to Congress, which, when it passes, will give us three years of deficit reduction in a row for the first time since Truman was President, and which has the first aggregate reduction in domestic

discretionary spending -- that's everything but Medicare and Medicaid, Social Security and veterans' benefits and smaller entitlements -- we reduced everything else, there is a substantial increase in drug treatment and prevention funds.

Secondly, in the crime bill itself, which I hope and believe will pass before the August recess, there is for the first time \$8 billion in prevention funds, which can be used both for drug education and prevention programs and for things that basically engage the energies of our young people in a constructive way -- things like job-training programs, summer job programs, after-school programs, midnight basketball programs, a whole range of other community activities which, by definition, help to keep people away from drugs. And this is the largest federal commitment in history by far to the antidrug effort.

So I think those two things really show that we have changed the priorities of the country and we're going to be working very hard on it.

It is a serious problem. There is a -- the drug statistics are mixed, but cocaine use is back up among the American people, and drug use is back up among some young people --

Q -- by young people is reduced.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. And we've got to turn it up again. And I do think we need to raise Lee Brown's visibility. He's, interestingly enough -- when he was -- I talked to him about this the other day -- when he was a police chief he had visibility by virtue of his job and what he did, so that when he instituted community policing, for example, in New York City and the crime rate went down in all the major boroughs, that spoke for itself. He was given that he could be a low-key person and put these things in, and the power of the action spoke for themselves.

In the drug job I think it's much more of an advocacy job. And one of the things that he's trying to do now -- he just got back from a trip to Asia, working on some of our other strategy, which is to stop more drugs at the source rather than just pick them up in transit. I think he's beginning to get a feel for that, and I think I need to work on that to make sure he gets the visibility he needs because there has been an erosion of the fear factor among our younger people which we need to get back.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Mr. President, I just

might add to that that your making Lee a member of the Cabinet gives that office standing so that when we work together as Cabinet officers, the Department of Labor, and Education, and Housing, and Health and Human Services, and the Justice Department on crime issues, Lee Brown is the sixth person in that team. It wasn't ever the case before where the drug effort was that intricately involved with the other Cabinet efforts. And we're doing that now in communities across the country as a team. It's never been done before, and Lee Brown is part of that effort.

THE PRESIDENT: But I do think, to close the circle here, the public feeling has to be reignited again. It's become more -- there's a very high level of concern today about crime and violence and guns. And that has changed the public debate there. For example, if it hadn't been for the public's shift, I don't think we could have prevailed, for example, in that showdown battle over assault weapons in the House of Representatives.

But I think the centrality of drug use itself to the whole crime issue has kind of gotten in the background, and I agree with you, sir, we need to do more to lift it up.

Q There are some great allies out there for Secretary Brown and for your administration in the form of thousands of communities that have organized coalitions to really do the grass roots work. And they would be very supportive of Mr. Brown and his endeavors.

SECRETARY CISNEROS: Mr. President, I saw an analysis the other day that shows the Coalition For a Drug-Free America was sponsoring television advertisements, newspaper efforts and so forth across the country. And you could chart the volume and amount of what they were doing, and chart in opinion polling young people's perceptions of drugs as it impacted them with that. In other words, the higher the visibility, the lower the use because they had it bombarded on them all the time.

So national coalitions that involve, Alvah, people like yourself, Knight-Ridder, and your colleagues in the news business across the country -- TV networks and so forth -- is a very positive thing; very important and useful thing.

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

February 9, 1994

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN DRUG STRATEGY ANNOUNCEMENT

Prince George's County Correctional Center
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

12:22 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Adele Hays, for this fine program we came here to celebrate today. And thank you, Mr. Saxton, for having us here.

I was a little uncomfortable about how hard you all laughed at the -- (laughter.) It occurred to me that this could be one of the great moments in American history for people who hate politicians. You've got the President, the Vice President, half the Cabinet, and a substantial portion of the Congress all in jail at the same time. (Laughter.)

I want to say a special word of thanks, too, to Joseph Mundo, because I know how hard it was for him to stand up here and give that talk. And I thank you, sir, for doing it. (Applause.)

We have introduced a lot of people here today, and I don't want to lengthen that. But there are two people that I think it's very, very important to recognize as I get into what our administration's approach to the drug issue will be, because it is clear to me and has been for some time from personal experience that we have to have, in order to succeed here, an enormous effort across this country that goes way beyond the federal government and way beyond law enforcement, that involves citizens supporting our common effort and involves some pretty sweeping cultural changes -- and there are two Americans who have done as much to try to fight the drug problem in that way as any people who live in our country. I'd like to ask them to stand and be recognized -- the former Secretary of what was then the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, the Director of the Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University Joe Califano. Thank you, Joe. (Applause.) And one of our country's most distinguished leaders and the Chairman of the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, Mr. Jim Burke is also here. (Applause.)

Ladies and gentlemen, we came here for a real purpose, to announce our antidrug strategy. I do believe it is the most comprehensive one ever, but we wanted to come here to illustrate that this is an issue which must be dealt with person by person, one at a time. It's a very human problem and that it requires those of us who are trying to deal with it to take certain steps, and those who have already suffered from alcohol or drug abuse to take even stronger steps.

I believe very much in what we are doing today from two angles. One is the first job I ever had the courtesy of the voters was the job of attorney general. I started out in a law enforcement job. Second is that I have had the questionable privilege of living in a family that has dealt with both alcoholism and drug abuse. I know treatment works. I also know that it is important to be tough as well as caring.

MORE

And what we are trying to do today is to start our government on course that offers the promise of real results to the American people. When I asked Lee Brown to come and be head of the Office of Drug Policy, I told him that for the first time ever I would make the Director a member of my Cabinet; that I recognized that it was folly to believe that 100 or 125 or, for that matter, 1,000 people working in a federal office in Washington could change the habits and the policies of the American people that we had to enlist the entire government.

And I dare say this is probably the first time that we've ever had seven Cabinet members on a stage at the same time all manifesting their commitment to dealing with this issue. And there are many others -- we'll have a total of 10 just in the next two days who will be announcing their part of this battle to implement this strategy. (Applause.)

We also have here the Director of our AIDS effort, the head of the Internal Revenue Service, the head of the Secret Service. We have an enormous number of federal officials here who are not on this stage who have a big part of this endeavor. I say this to illustrate the fact that we have really tried to be very realistic, very hard-headed to try to take some time to think about what it is we can do and what it is the rest of America has to do to reinvigorate this nation's fight against the surge of drugs.

We know we have to build on the works of parents and community leaders who did so much to bring down casual drug use in the 1980s. We know we have to add to the staffs of law enforcement authorities who have proved there are things you can do that work. We know that where energies have been deployed effectively -- whether it was cracking down on pushers, cracking down on drug networks, or building up people like this man who spoke so eloquently today -- that they can make progress.

We also know some pretty tough facts. We know that hard-core drug abuse in America has continued unabated. We know that its persistence represents the threat to the stability of our society and the economic future of our country. We know that no nation can fight crime and drugs without dealing honestly and forthrightly with the problem of drug addiction.

As I said in my State of the Union address, we need an approach to crime and drugs that is both tough and smart. We very often have one without the other and we pay the price for that, as well.

The crime bill and this strategy we announced today puts more into law enforcement than we've ever put before. It does more to keep drugs off the street. It does more than ever before to help hard-core drug users into treatment programs where they belong. It is a new national attack on drug addiction.

The craving for drugs is an enormous factor in a lot of our problems -- the rise of violence, the spread of AIDS, the spiraling costs of health care. Every time I have one of my town meetings on health care, I tell the American people we have to do some things to provide health care to all Americans and bring down the cost, but we have to be honest. No health care proposal can solve all the problems that lead American health care to be more expensive than any other country. And one big one health care cannot solve is the fact that we pay more for violence because we've got our emergency rooms full of people who have been cut up and shot. We pay more to deal with AIDS. And both those things are the direct result, in large measure, of our very high rate of drug abuse. You know it and I know it. So if we want to deal with this problem, we have to face it. (Applause.)

You also heard Mr. Mundo say in such powerful terms that he lost everything. We know that drug abuse is a big factor in the breakdown of families, in the increase in joblessness, in the increase in homelessness. How many people -- every day when I go out for my run at the White House, I see what seems like an ever-increasing number of people who are living homeless within three or four blocks of the White House. And you know every one of them has a personal life story -- many of them, a story that involves drugs.

We know if you go to any children's hospital in any sizeable city today, and you go to the ward where the little babies are, you'll see baby after baby after baby born with an addiction to drugs. We know that now many of our streets are too dangerous to walk and our schools even dangerous to attend. I met a young man about a year ago from Chicago, who was a big, strapping, handsome young fellow who wanted to really make something of his life. And he said that he knew he had to get an education to do it, but he was scared to walk from home to school to get the ticket out of his neighborhood. I've had that scene replayed many times just in the last year with other people.

If we want to, therefore, reduce crime and cut health care costs and reform our welfare system, if we want to rebuild our families and our communities, all these things require a serious effort to curb the use of drugs. Part of it is enforcement. The crime bill now before the Congress is part of that strategy. It would put another 100,000 police officers on the street. It would provide boot camps for juvenile offenders. It would provide dramatic increases in support for drug courts -- very successful drug courts, like the ones in Florida, New York, California, and the District, where court-ordered rehabilitation programs have cleaned people up and freed prison cells for truly violent criminals. The Miami drug court has treated 4,500 first offenders since 1987, with a rearrest rate of only 11 percent. (Applause.)

We know these kinds of initiatives will support the efforts of community grass-roots efforts, like the one sponsored by Monsignor East and his parishioners in Washington who started an orange-hat brigade, where community leaders patrol streets in bright orange hats, sending a message that drugs and drug trade won't be tolerated.

There are thousands of groups like this all across America who work with police to shut down crack houses and take the neighborhoods back. Last Friday the Vice President and the Cabinet outlined our new plan to help residents of public housing rid themselves of crime and drugs. We can't do that unless people at the grass roots participate and take the lead. But we have to also do our part. The most effective things mobilize all the resources of a community. And that's what our strategy seeks to support.

We also seek to support a new, more drug-free America through prevention. We need to reach people before they get started through prevention and early intervention, especially among our young people before they enter middle school, much less high school or college. The latest statistics show an increase in drug use among the young. Our children need a constant drum beat reminder that drugs are not safe, drugs are not good, drugs are illegal, there will be consequences for using them.

I know a lot of these programs work. I saw them work in the schools where my child attended when she was very, very young. I saw the impact that a law enforcement officer in a uniform, talking to children who had never before had a positive human personal relationship with an authority figure could have in these schools. I know we can do it. And our proposal provides a substantial increase in funds to support those kinds of activities. (Applause.)

We also know we have to do more in the workplace. Drug-free programs that work can be every bit as important and effective as drug-free programs at school. Our strategy supports programs like these and calls on everyone in a position of influence to do their part.

Finally, we have to have some more effort at treatment. This strategy recognizes that drug addiction is a disease, that it can and should be treated, and that treatment can work, as Adele said. We're letting hard-core drug users know that if you're an addict caught in the cycle of drug abuse, we can help you to get the help you need. Our goal is to get 140,000 more hard-core users into treatment in the next year -- 140,000 more. (Applause.) Targeting chronic hard-core users, including adults and juveniles under the supervision of criminal authorities, along with pregnant women and children.

Every dollar we spend on treatment will save seven dollars America is losing today. It will make up for lost productivity. It will save money we are using now to fight the problem instead of to prevent it. This target is a significant start that allows us to expand programs as the effectiveness of service and research findings grow.

One of the most important parts from your perspective of our health care proposal is that it would include drug treatment as part of health care coverage. This is a very important thing. We have to recognize that until we have the appropriate level of treatment on demand without delay we will continue to pay for a problem that we can reduce.

You know treatment works. It's time for the Congress to recognize it in the form of the budgets we have presented, and for America to aggressively embrace it in the way you have at this institution. (Applause.)

We also recognize we need to try to do something to control the supply. Strategy calls for what we strongly believe is an improvement of our international drug control program, shifting away from a policy that was focused largely on interdiction -- that is stopping the drugs when they were on the way to the United States -- to a three-pronged approach: working with countries in which drugs are grown that have the political will to go after the kingpins in those countries; -- (applause) -- destroying the cartels that grow rich from supplying our people with drugs; -- (applause) -- and continuing our interdiction effort, hopefully with better technology and smarter efforts that allow us to interdict even more drugs. That is very important. We should not stop it, but we must supplement those efforts so that we can be more successful. (Applause.)

Dr. Brown has said, yes, we want to continue our presence at the border to interdict drugs, but we don't want to wait for people at the border anymore. He says he's tired of swatting hornets, he'd rather go after the hornet's nest. And that's a pretty good line. (Applause.)

I might say our friends and neighbors beyond our borders should welcome this. We have seen in nation after nation how international drug trafficking is a threat to democratic institutions. It fuels human rights abuses and terrorism against the innocent. It undermines legitimate, broad-based economic development. It contributes to regional instability. Many of the countries that deal with this problem will never become what they want to be until they're able to be rid of it. We ought to help them -- for ourselves and for their own people as well.

This is an important part of our foreign policy, toward major source countries and major transit countries. We have to make it an important part of our commitment to promoting democracy,

economic reform and human rights. None of that's going to happen in countries dominated by people who dictate events because of the profits of the drug trade.

Finally, let me end where I began. From my own personal experience, in my family as well as my work in law enforcement as an attorney general and a governor, I believe still that once it occurs drug addiction has to be overcome one person at a time. In the past year, as President I've spoken about drugs on 85 separate occasions. And I can keep talking about this until I, once again, lose my voice. (Laughter.) But you and I know that we're not going to make a dent in this problem except by having it happen -- one person at a time. If this man had not chosen to take some responsibility for his own life, then this fine program would still be just another expenditure of taxpayer money. (Applause.)

The newly-inaugurated Mayor of Detroit, Dennis Archer, offered a challenge to his city when he was sworn into office. I'd like to quote it for you now because it equals what I think we're facing. He said, and I quote: "To the people of Detroit, stand with me when I tell the dope man to get off our streets, to leave our children alone, to get out of our way. We're taking back our streets, and we're taking back our children."

Well, Mayor Archer can't do it alone, Monsignor East can't do it alone. But this administration and the entire weight of state and local government can't do it alone either. The people of this country have got to take responsibility for themselves, their children and their neighbors. If we work with them -- if we say we know hard-core drug users can't do it alone; the help they need is treatment, the help they need is support -- then I think we can make a real profound difference.

I want every American, every member of Congress, every state official, everybody who works for a mayor or a city government to join me in putting this strategy to work. This is a national strategy, not a federal strategy. I don't want it to become partisan in any way, shape or form. This should unite us in America -- people in the private sector, people in government, people at the local level, people at the national level, Republicans and Democrats, people who are inside this institution and people who are beyond its walls. We have a common interest in saving our country. And all of us have a personal responsibility to pursue. This drug strategy we announce today is our attempt to be your partner and pursue our personal responsibility. And together, together we can do it.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

END

12:42 P.M. EST

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

July 1, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AND LEE BROWN, DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY
DURING SWEARING-IN CEREMONY

The Rose Garden

11:20 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you. Please be seated and welcome to the Rose Garden. I want to acknowledge the presence in our audience of Lee Brown's children; the Attorney General; the Secretary of Transportation; the Secretary of Agriculture; General Powell, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; numerous other distinguished Americans and members of Congress, including: Senator Hatch, Senator Dodd, Senator Cohen, Senator Pressler, and Congressmen Rangel, Conyers, Gilman, and Congresswoman Waters. I may have left someone out, and Senator Kennedy just called to say he was on the way. I think that's all a great tribute to Lee Brown.

We are here today to install a uniquely qualified person to lead our nation's effort in the fight against illegal drugs and what they do to our children, to our streets, and to our communities. And to do it for the first time from a position sitting in the President's Cabinet.

When I named Lee Brown to head the Office of National Drug Control Policy, many called that an inspired choice. I would say that is an accurate characterization because Lee Brown brings three decades of experience in highest law enforcement offices in some of the toughest cities in our country: New York, and Houston, and Atlanta. I know if Mayor Dinkins were here today he would want me to say a special word of thanks for the unique partnership they enjoyed in a safe streets program which clearly lowered the crime rate in many neighborhoods and many categories of crime in New York City.

Lee Brown's leadership in the cause of keeping our communities and citizens safe is unsurpassed, and now he must bring those skills and all that experience to deal with the destructive lure of illegal drugs.

We know that successful drug control does not take place in a vacuum. This is a many-headed monster. Drugs violate our borders when smugglers bring them in as illegal cargo. Our jails are crowded and our court system is overloaded with users and dealers. Crime and violence are brought to communities large and small, and random drive-by shootings, and deliberate killings as well.

Too many young Americans are robbed of their future and many, many of their very lives. For all those reasons, fighting drugs requires a multifaceted offensive and the maximum use of the resources we have as a people. That's what we've been trying to do

in this administration. With all the budget cuts and with a five-year hard freeze on overall domestic spending, there's a 10 percent increase in the funds in our budget for demand reduction, and a dramatic increase in the funds available for community policing, as well as a clear commitment to include drug treatment in the national health care program that our administration will be advancing in the near future.

But, most important, we now will have an effort that is coordinated as one, pulled together and anchored by Lee Brown. No longer will the Office of the Director of Drug Policy operate separately from the rest of the government, consigned just to being a bully pulpit. Now it will work hand-in-hand with the other Cabinet agencies, and in doing so, our effectiveness will be increased. Our aim is to cut off the demand for drugs at the knees through prevention. That means more and better education, more treatment, more rehabilitation.

At the same time, we want to strangle supplies by putting more officers on the streets, by enforcing the law in our communities, at our nation's borders and by helping our friends and allies to do the same thing beyond our borders. We pledge to work with other nations who have shown the courage and the political will to take on their own drug traffickers who destabilize their own societies and their economies.

Our commitment to all these things is personified in Lee Brown. A tough guy might say he's a drug trafficker's nightmare, a cop with a doctorate. (Laughter.) Or, a doctor of criminology with a badge. (Laughter.) But the most important thing to me is, he's got a track record of results. How many law enforcement officers in this country -- (applause) -- would be proud to look on the record he has amassed of actually reducing the rate of crime in the streets where he has worked.

You know, the insecurity most Americans feel, without regard to income or race, is a truly appalling thing. And anything we can do, not only to give lives back to children who might otherwise become involved in drugs, but to give the streets and the safety of the streets back to ordinary American families of all kinds is a service well done; and it might mean more to them than anything else this government could produce during my tenure in office and for the foreseeable future.

The work that Lee Brown did in pioneering community policing in Houston and New York is now legendary, with officers on foot patrol knowing their neighbors, working to prevent crime as well as to catch criminals.

This is a fight that surely can unite us all, across the boundaries of party and race and region and income. We are fighting for our families, our children, our communities and our future. Each and every American -- make no mistake about it -- also bears a personal responsibility to play a role in this battle. Anyone who thinks that Lee Brown or anyone else can solve this problem for the American people instead of with the American people has another thing coming.

There are people in this audience today whom I know have worked for decades to try to help come to grips with this issue. Parents educating their children, teachers working hard to prevent crime, law enforcement officers going into the schools, working in

programs like the DARE program, people who have worked in drug treatment and know, as I do, from our own family's experience, that it works. All these things are an important part of what we have to do. Make no mistake about it -- we've got to try to get the streets back for our kids, too. We ought to have a time in this country when children don't have to be afraid to go down to the neighborhood swimming pool in the summertime. (Applause.)

I am thankful that Lee Brown has taken on this challenge. He's made the decision to do so at a time in his life when he might have reasonably been expected, for personal and professional reasons, to take a different course. He could clearly be making more money doing something else, he could have far fewer headaches doing something else. He would not have all of us investing so much of our hopes in him if he were doing something else. The simple fact that at this point in his life he resolved to do this says a great deal about him and his character.

I would like now to ask Judge James Watson of the U.S. Court of International Trade to join his friend, Dr. Brown, up here to administer the Oath of Office, and I would like to invite -- James Watson, I'm sorry -- and I'd like to invite Dr. Brown's eldest daughter, Torri Clark, up here to hold the Bible for her father.

Judge Watson. I understand he's a relative of yours, General Powell. Is that right? That's good.

Please come up here so you'll be on the microphone.

(The oath is administered.) (Applause.)

DIRECTOR BROWN: Thank you. First, let me introduce my children. My oldest son, my only son, is Patrick from Chicago. (Applause.) And my oldest daughter, Torie you just met, and her husband Tony, and their daughter, my granddaughter, Tyler. (Applause.) And my twin daughters from Houston, Robyn and Jenna. (Applause.)

We're very pleased that my Congressman from Texas, Congressman Washington, was able to join us as well. (Applause.) Let me begin, Mr. President, by expressing my sincere appreciation to you for appointing me to your Cabinet as Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. By elevating the post to Cabinet rank, you have signaled to the nation and the world your resolve to protect and defend the American people at home as unmistakably as your resolve to do so abroad.

And so it should be. For America's addiction to drugs, claiming so many of its victims from among our young, even among our newborns, has shown itself to be an implacable, remorseless enemy. It has vanquished whole neighborhoods and turned streets into free-fire zones. It has robbed America of its vitality and competitiveness and it is plundering our future.

Implacable though the enemy may be, it has a tenacious foe in this administration. And I pledge to you, Mr. President, and the American people to work with every ounce of strength I have and with all the time that God allows me to help defeat the enemy. (Applause.)

I also want to thank the Senate of the United States for its vote of confidence in me. Before and since my confirmation I had

the great privilege of meeting many of the men and women of that august body, including those assembled here today. And I came away convinced that their concern about the drug problem was surpassed only by their love of country, and the two are irrevocably bound together.

I pledge to work with the Congress and the other members of the Cabinet toward the construction of effective, lasting public policy in the areas of prevention, education, treatment, enforcement, and interdiction. The national drug control strategy I would develop for the President and the American people would put resources where the problems are the most severe. It would support those approaches of demonstrated effectiveness, such as community policing. We will underscore the fact that drug addiction is as much a public health problem as it is a criminal justice one by expanding the availability of treatment and enhancing the quality of same. (Applause.)

We will redouble our efforts to instill in America's youth a set of values to, in effect, immunize them against the allure of drug trafficking and the escape of drug addiction. We will convince the American people that their sobriety and that of their children is as much a part of the American Dream as homeownership or college education. And that home and family are easily lost if ever obtained at all when set adrift in the nightmare of drug addiction.

Although the drug problems appears to have lost some of its hold on the public's imagination, we will ask the American people to make the campaign against drugs a personal crusade. And I'm convinced we will succeed. We will examine past interdiction efforts, abandoning those which have not worked, learning from our failures and moving on.

We will work closely with our friends in the world, particularly our Latin American neighbors, to mobilize international opposition to drug trafficking and its criminal gains. We will do this and more. But one thing we will never do is surrender to those who would have us believe that the drug problem is too widespread, too deeply rooted or too expensive to do anything about. We will resist the siren songs of legalization -- (applause) -- and send those who deal in drugs a time-honored message of sending them to jail.

We will always treat drug trafficking as a serious crime against society. And we will treat those who want to escape the clutches of addiction with compassion and real support. Our goal will be to reduce drug use in America, not because it is an easily attainable goal, but because the well-being of the nation requires it and the good conscience of every American demands it.

And, finally, I want to thank my family, friends and colleagues who have joined me here today. You have been, and continue to be, a source of strength; and I'll need it now more than ever.

Mr. President, you've honored me with both your trust and with the enormity of the task at hand. And I have no illusions about the difficulties ahead, but I embrace them eagerly and competently, certain that America will rally with us to defend her future. Thank you, Mr. President. (Applause.)

THE PRESIDENT: Do you have any questions for Dr. Brown?

Q Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: I just had another press conference.

Q Do you think an energy tax and small business incentives --

Q Booo.

Q -- should be non-negotiable items of a budget package, which is equally important to the economy as drug control?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we're going to pass a good economic package. I feel confident about that. And we're now trying to work out the differences in the House and the Senate, and I'll have more to say about that in a few days.

END

11:40 A.M. EDT

Now, if I might, I would like to review the six principles I mentioned earlier and describe how we think we can best fulfill those principles.

First and most important, security. This principle speaks to the human misery, to the costs, to the anxiety we hear about every day, all of us, when people talk about their problems with the present system. Security means that those who do not now have health care coverage will have it, and for those who have it, it will never be taken away. We must achieve that security as soon as possible.

Under our plan, every American would receive a health care security card that will guarantee a comprehensive package of benefits over the course of an entire lifetime, roughly comparable to the benefit package offered by most Fortune 500 companies. This health care security card will offer this package of benefits in a way that can never be taken away. So let us agree on this: Whatever else we disagree on, before this Congress finishes its work next year, you will pass and I will sign legislation to guarantee this security to every citizen of this country.

With this card, if you lose your job or you switch jobs, you're covered. If you leave your job to start a small business, you're covered. If you're an early retiree, you're covered. If someone in your family has unfortunately had an illness that qualifies as a preexisting condition, you're still covered. If you get sick or a member of your family gets sick, even if it's a life-threatening illness, you're covered. And if an insurance company tries to drop you for any reason, you will still be covered, because that will be illegal. This card will give comprehensive coverage. It will cover people for hospital care, doctor visits, emergency and lab services, diagnostic services like Pap smears and mammograms and cholesterol tests, substance abuse, and mental health treatment.

And equally important, for both health care and economic reasons, this program for the first time would provide a broad range of preventive services including regular checkups and well-baby visits. Now, it's just common sense. We know, any family doctor will tell you, that people will stay healthier and long-term costs of the health system will be lower if we have comprehensive preven-

tive services. You know how all of our mothers told us that an ounce of prevention was worth a pound of cure? Our mothers were right. And it's a lesson, like so many lessons from our mothers, that we have waited too long to live by. It is time to start doing it.

Health care security must also apply to older Americans. This is something I imagine all of us in this room feel very deeply about. The first thing I want to say about that is that we must maintain the Medicare program. It works to provide that kind of security. But this time and for the first time, I believe Medicare should provide coverage for the cost of prescription drugs.

Yes, it will cost some more in the beginning. But again, any physician who deals with the elderly will tell you that there are thousands of elderly people in every State who are not poor enough to be on Medicaid but just above that line and on Medicare, who desperately need medicine, who make decisions every week between medicine and food. Any doctor who deals with the elderly will tell you that there are many elderly people who don't get medicine, who get sicker and sicker and eventually go to the doctor and wind up spending more money and draining more money from the health care system than they would if they had regular treatment in the way that only adequate medicine can provide.

I also believe that over time, we should phase in long-term care for the disabled and the elderly on a comprehensive basis. As we proceed with this health care reform, we cannot forget that the most rapidly growing percentage of Americans are those over 80. We cannot break faith with them. We have to do better by them.

The second principle is simplicity. Our health care system must be simpler for the patients and simpler for those who actually deliver health care: our doctors, our nurses, our other medical professionals. Today we have more than 1,500 insurers, with hundreds and hundreds of different forms. No other nation has a system like this. These forms are time consuming for health care providers. They're expensive for health care consumers. They're exasperating for anyone who's ever tried to sit down around a table and wade through them and figure them out.

The medical care industry is literally drowning in paperwork. In recent years, the number of administrators in our hospitals has grown by 4 times the rate that the number of doctors has grown. A hospital ought to be a house of healing, not a monument to paperwork and bureaucracy.

Just a few days ago, the Vice President and I had the honor of visiting the Children's Hospital here in Washington where they do wonderful, often miraculous things for very sick children. A nurse named Debbie Freiberg told us that she was in the cancer and bone marrow unit. The other day a little boy asked her just to stay at his side during his chemotherapy. And she had to walk away from that child because she had been instructed to go to yet another class to learn how to fill out another form for something that didn't have a lick to do with the health care of the children she was helping. That is wrong, and we can stop it, and we ought to do it.

We met a very compelling doctor named Lillian Beard, a pediatrician, who said that she didn't get into her profession to spend hours and hours—some doctors up to 25 hours a week—just filling out forms. She told us she became a doctor to keep children well and to help save those who got sick. We can relieve people like her of this burden. We learned, the Vice President and I did, that in the Washington Children's Hospital alone, the administrators told us they spend \$2 million a year in one hospital filling out forms that have nothing whatever to do with keeping up with the treatment of the patients.

And the doctors there applauded when I was told and I related to them that they spend so much time filling out paperwork, that if they only had to fill out those paperwork requirements necessary to monitor the health of the children, each doctor on that one hospital staff, 200 of them, could see another 500 children a year. That is 10,000 children a year. I think we can save money in this system if we simplify it. And we can make the doctors and the nurses and the people that are giving their lives to help us all be healthier a whole lot happier, too, on their jobs.

Under our proposal there would be one standard insurance form, not hundreds of

them. We will simplify also—and we must—the Government's rules and regulations, because they are a big part of this problem. This is one of those cases where the physician should heal thyself. We have to reinvent the way we relate to the health care system, along with reinventing Government. A doctor should not have to check with a bureaucrat in an office thousands of miles away before ordering a simple blood test. That's not right, and we can change it. And doctors, nurses, and consumers shouldn't have to worry about the fine print. If we have this one simple form, there won't be any fine print. People will know what it means.

The third principle is savings. Reform must produce savings in this health care system. It has to. We're spending over 14 percent of our income on health care. Canada's at 10. Nobody else is over 9. We're competing with all these people for the future. And the other major countries, they cover everybody, and they cover them with services as generous as the best company policies here in this country.

Rampant medical inflation is eating away at our wages, our savings, our investment capital, our ability to create new jobs in the private sector, and this public Treasury. You know the budget we just adopted had steep cuts in defense, a 5-year freeze on the discretionary spending, so critical to reeducating America and investing in jobs and helping us to convert from a defense to a domestic economy. But we passed a budget which has Medicaid increases of between 16 and 11 percent a year over the next 5 years and Medicare increases of between 11 and 9 percent in an environment where we assume inflation will be at 4 percent or less. We cannot continue to do this. Our competitiveness, our whole economy, the integrity of the way the Government works, and ultimately, our living standards depend upon our ability to achieve savings without harming the quality of health care.

Unless we do this, our workers will lose \$655 in income each year by the end of the decade. Small businesses will continue to face skyrocketing premiums. And a full third of small businesses now covering their employees say they will be forced to drop their insurance. Large corporations will bear big-

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ger disadvantages in health care costs will and more of our burden you or the people showing up here at health care and interfering about whether or not we have the courage to achieve what we have there before us. The Government will continue to do something from education to pay more and more.

These rising costs for our small business entrepreneurship in America today. The small businesses are those of large corporations will keep rising at we act.

So how will we Rather than looking away as the price than using the health to try to control what is going to ignore what there is a third way. First, to give group businesses the same power that large groups of public want to let markets compete. We want to compete on the basis not simply to allow money by turning in or old or performing necessary procedures. I should back this system much plans can raise in and year-out, forcing to pay more without regard to inflation needs.

We want to create in this system for a successful nation. The problem has already a combination of private sound public policy competition, but prices can exceed

ger disadvantages in global competition. And health care costs will devour more and more and more of our budget. Pretty soon all of you or the people who succeed you will be showing up here and writing out checks for health care and interest on the debt and worrying about whether we've got enough defense, and that will be it, unless we have the courage to achieve the savings that are plainly there before us. Every State and local government will continue to cut back on everything from education to law enforcement to pay more and more for the same health care.

These rising costs are a special nightmare for our small businesses, the engine of our entrepreneurship and our job creation in America today. Health care premiums for small businesses are 35 percent higher than those of large corporations today. And they will keep rising at double-digit rates unless we act.

So how will we achieve these savings? Rather than looking at price control or looking away as the price spiral continues, rather than using the heavy hand of Government to try to control what's happening or continuing to ignore what's happening, we believe there is a third way to achieve these savings. First, to give groups of consumers and small businesses the same market bargaining power that large corporations and large groups of public employees now have, we want to let market forces enable plans to compete. We want to force these plans to compete on the basis of price and quality, not simply to allow them to continue making money by turning people away who are sick or old or performing mountains of unnecessary procedures. But we also believe we should back this system up with limits on how much plans can raise their premiums year-in and year-out, forcing people, again, to continue to pay more for the same health care, without regard to inflation or the rising population needs.

We want to create what has been missing in this system for too long and what every successful nation who has dealt with this problem has already had to do: to have a combination of private market forces and a sound public policy that will support that competition, but limit the rate at which prices can exceed the rate of inflation and

population growth, if the competition doesn't work, especially in the early going.

The second thing I want to say is that unless everybody is covered—and this is a very important thing—unless everybody is covered, we will never be able to fully put the brakes on health care inflation. Why is that? Because when people don't have any health insurance, they still get health care, but they get it when it's too late, when it's too expensive, often from the most expensive place of all, the emergency room. Usually by the time they show up, their illnesses are more severe, and their mortality rates are much higher in our hospitals than those who have insurance. So they cost us more. And what else happens? Since they get the care but they don't pay, who does pay? All the rest of us. We pay in higher hospital bills and higher insurance premiums. This cost shifting is a major problem.

The third thing we can do to save money is simply by simplifying the system, what we've already discussed. Freeing the health care providers from these costly and unnecessary paperwork and administrative decisions will save tens of billions of dollars. We spend twice as much as any other major country does on paperwork. We spend at least a dime on the dollar more than any other major country. That is a stunning statistic. It is something that every Republican and every Democrat ought to be able to say, we agree that we're going to squeeze this out. We cannot tolerate this. This has nothing to do with keeping people well or helping them when they're sick. We should invest the money in something else.

We also have to crack down on fraud and abuse in the system. That drains billions of dollars a year. It is a very large figure, according to every health care expert I've ever spoken with. So I believe we can achieve large savings. And that large savings can be used to cover the unemployed uninsured and will be used for people who realize those savings in the private sector to increase their ability to invest and grow, to hire new workers or to give their workers pay raises, many of them for the first time in years.

Now, nobody has to take my word for this. You can ask Dr. Koop. He's up here with us tonight, and I thank him for being here.

Since he left his distinguished tenure as our Surgeon General, he has spent an enormous amount of time studying our health care system, how it operates, what's right and wrong with it. He says we could spend \$200 billion every year, more than 20 percent of the total budget, without sacrificing the high quality of American medicine.

Ask the public employees in California, who've held their own premiums down by adopting the same strategy that I want every American to be able to adopt, bargaining within the limits of a strict budget. Ask Xerox, which saved an estimated \$1,000 per worker on their health insurance premium. Ask the staff of the Mayo Clinic, who we all agree provides some of the finest health care in the world. They are holding their cost increases to less than half the national average. Ask the people of Hawaii, the only State that covers virtually all of their citizens and has still been able to keep costs below the national average.

People may disagree over the best way to fix this system. We may all disagree about how quickly we can do the thing that we have to do. But we cannot disagree that we can find tens of billions of dollars in savings in what is clearly the most costly and the most bureaucratic system in the entire world. And we have to do something about that, and we have to do it now.

The fourth principle is choice. Americans believe they ought to be able to choose their own health care plan and keep their own doctors. And I think all of us agree. Under any plan we pass, they ought to have that right. But today, under our broken health care system, in spite of the rhetoric of choice, the fact is that that power is slipping away for more and more Americans.

Of course, it is usually the employer, not the employee, who makes the initial choice of what health care plan the employee will be in. And if your employer offers only one plan, as nearly three-quarters of small or medium-sized firms do today, you're stuck with that plan and the doctors that it covers.

We propose to give every American a choice among high quality plans. You can stay with your current doctor, join a network of doctors and hospitals, or join a health maintenance organization. If you don't like your

plan, every year you'll have the chance to choose a new one. The choice will be left to the American citizen, the worker, not the boss and certainly not some Government bureaucrat.

We also believe that doctors should have a choice as to what plans they practice in. Otherwise, citizens may have their own choices limited. We want to end the discrimination that is now growing against doctors and to permit them to practice in several different plans. Choice is important for doctors, and it is absolutely critical for our consumers. We've got to have it in whatever plan we pass.

The fifth principle is quality. If we reformed everything else in health care but failed to preserve and enhance the high quality of our medical care, we will have taken a step backward, not forward. Quality is something that we simply can't leave to chance. When you board an airplane, you feel better knowing that the plane had to meet standards designed to protect your safety. And we can't ask any less of our health care system.

Our proposal will create report cards on health plans, so that consumers can choose the highest quality health care providers and reward them with their business. At the same time, our plan will track quality indicators, so that doctors can make better and smarter choices of the kind of care they provide. We have evidence that more efficient delivery of health care doesn't decrease quality. In fact, it may enhance it.

Let me just give you one example of one commonly performed procedure, the coronary bypass operation. Pennsylvania discovered that patients who were charged \$21,000 for this surgery received as good or better care as patients who were charged \$84,000 for the same procedure in the same State. High prices simply don't always equal good quality. Our plan will guarantee that high quality information is available in even the most remote areas of this country so that we can have high quality service, linking rural doctors, for example, with hospitals with high-tech urban medical centers. And our plan will ensure the quality of continuing progress on a whole range of issues by speeding research on effective prevention and

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treatment measures Alzheimer's, for heart chronic diseases. We finest medical research entire world. And a plan. Indeed, we w

The sixth and finality. We need to reall in this together responsibility to be sponsibility has to st from the current means insurance cor be allowed to cast get sick. It should a submit fraudulent bi malpractice claims, t necessary procedure nies should no long per prescription di here in the United for the same drugs o

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treatment measures for cancer, for AIDS, for Alzheimer's, for heart disease, and for other chronic diseases. We have to safeguard the finest medical research establishment in the entire world. And we will do that with this plan. Indeed, we will even make it better.

The sixth and final principle is responsibility. We need to restore a sense that we're all in this together and that we all have a responsibility to be a part of the solution. Responsibility has to start with those who profit from the current system. Responsibility means insurance companies should no longer be allowed to cast people aside when they get sick. It should apply to laboratories that submit fraudulent bills, to lawyers who abuse malpractice claims, to doctors who order unnecessary procedures. It means drug companies should no longer charge 3 times more per prescription drugs, made in America here in the United States, than they charge for the same drugs overseas.

In short, responsibility should apply to anybody who abuses this system and drives up the cost for honest, hard-working citizens and undermines confidence in the honest, gifted health care providers we have. Responsibility also means changing some behaviors in this country that drive up our costs like crazy. And without changing it we'll never have the system we ought to have, we will never.

Let me just mention a few and start with the most important: The outrageous costs of violence in this country stem in large measure from the fact that this is the only country in the world where teenagers can rout the streets at random with semiautomatic weapons and be better armed than the police.

But let's not kid ourselves; it's not that simple. We also have higher rates of AIDS, of smoking and excessive drinking, of teen pregnancy, of low birth weight babies. And we have the third worst immunization rate of any nation in the Western Hemisphere. We have to change our ways if we ever really want to be healthy as a people and have an affordable health care system. And no one can deny that.

But let me say this—and I hope every American will listen, because this is not an easy thing to hear—responsibility in our health care system isn't just about them. It's

about you. It's about me. It's about each of us. Too many of us have not taken responsibility for our own health care and for our own relations to the health care system. Many of us who have had fully paid health care plans have used the system whether we needed it or not without thinking what the costs were. Many people who use this system don't pay a penny for their care even though they can afford to. I think those who don't have any health insurance should be responsible for paying a portion of their new coverage. There can't be any something for nothing, and we have to demonstrate that to people. This is not a free system. Even small contributions, as small as the \$10 copayment when you visit a doctor, illustrates that this is something of value. There is a cost to it. It is not free.

And I want to tell you that I believe that all of us should have insurance. Why should the rest of us pick up the tab when a guy who doesn't think he needs insurance or says he can't afford it gets in an accident, winds up in an emergency room, gets good care, and everybody else pays? Why should the small business people who are struggling to keep afloat and take care of their employees have to pay to maintain this wonderful health care infrastructure for those who refuse to do anything? If we're going to produce a better health care system for every one of us, every one of us is going to have to do our part. There cannot be any such thing as a free ride. We have to pay for it. We have to pay for it.

Tonight I want to say plainly how I think we should do that. Most of the money will come, under my way of thinking, as it does today, from premiums paid by employers and individuals. That's the way it happens today. But under this health care security plan, every employer and every individual will be asked to contribute something to health care.

This concept was first conveyed to the Congress about 20 years ago by President Nixon. And today, a lot of people agree with the concept of shared responsibility between employers and employees and that the best thing to do is to ask every employer and every employee to share that. The Chamber of Commerce has said that, and they're not in

the business of hurting small business. The American Medical Association has said that.

Some call it an employer mandate, but I think it's the fairest way to achieve responsibility in the health care system. And it's the easiest for ordinary Americans to understand because it builds on what we already have and what already works for so many Americans. It is the reform that is not only easiest to understand but easiest to implement in a way that is fair to small business, because we can give a discount to help struggling small businesses meet the cost of covering their employees. We should require the least bureaucracy or disruption and create the cooperation we need to make the system cost-conscious, even as we expand coverage. And we should do it in a way that does not cripple small businesses and low-wage workers.

Every employer should provide coverage, just as three-quarters do now. Those that pay are picking up the tab for those who don't today. I don't think that's right. To finance the rest of reform, we can achieve new savings, as I have outlined, in both the Federal Government and the private sector through better decisionmaking and increased competition. And we will impose new taxes on tobacco. I don't think that should be the only source of revenues. I believe we should also ask for a modest contribution from big employers who opt out of the system to make up for what those who are in the system pay for medical research, for health education centers, for all the subsidies to small business, for all the things that everyone else is contributing to. But between those two things, we believe we can pay for this package of benefits and universal coverage and a subsidy program that will help small business.

These sources can cover the cost of the proposal that I have described tonight. We subjected the numbers in our proposal to the scrutiny of not only all the major agencies in Government—I know a lot of people don't trust them, but it would be interesting for the American people to know that this was the first time that the financial experts on health care in all of the different Government agencies have ever been required to sit in the room together and agree on numbers. It had never happened before. But ob-

viously, that's not enough. So then we gave these numbers to actuaries from major accounting firms and major Fortune 500 companies who have no stake in this other than to see that our efforts succeed. So I believe our numbers are good and achievable.

Now, what does this mean to an individual American citizen? Some will be asked to pay more. If you're an employer and you aren't insuring your workers at all, you'll have to pay more. But if you're a small business with fewer than 50 employees, you'll get a subsidy. If you're a firm that provides only very limited coverage, you may have to pay more. But some firms will pay the same or less for more coverage.

If you're a young, single person in your twenties and you're already insured, your rates may go up somewhat because you're going to go into a big pool with middle-aged people and older people, and we want to enable people to keep their insurance even when someone in their family gets sick. But I think that's fair because when the young get older they will benefit from it, first, and secondly, even those who pay a little more today will benefit 4, 5, 6, 7 years from now by our bringing health care costs closer to inflation.

Over the long run, we can all win. But some will have to pay more in the short run. Nevertheless, the vast majority of the Americans watching this tonight will pay the same or less for health care coverage that will be the same or better than the coverage they have tonight. That is the central reality.

If you currently get your health insurance through your job, under our plan you still will. And for the first time, everybody will get to choose from among at least three plans to belong to. If you're a small business owner who wants to provide health insurance to your family and your employees, but you can't afford it because the system is stacked against you, this plan will give you a discount that will finally make insurance affordable. If you're already providing insurance, your rates may well drop because we'll help you as a small business person join thousands of others to get the same benefits big corporations get at the same price they get those benefits. If you're self-employed, you'll pay less, and you will get to deduct from your

taxes 100 percent of premiums. If you're a health care costs worker you will have more wages and new jobs of being competitive economy.

Now, these, my friends, are the principles on which our efforts: security, choice, quality, and the guiding stars throughout our journey toward

Over the coming years, we will be bombarded with information from all sources. There will be disagreement with what we do with all other plans in the matter. And some of the genuinely sincere people may simply be scared or motivated by the waste of the system that waste is providing money for some people. I think of this when I think of the arguments: Ask yourself, are you living on this same cost of change. And hear the argument that are in your interest is something we have together.

I want also to say that in Congress, you have to go beyond these arguments to look into the needs of care, to think of who's been told that it is malignant but it is a chance, to look at the necessities driven to the costs, to look at the homes of families that are suffering because of this.

I ask you to remember I met over the last couple in New Hampshire and cried because of an empty refrigerator, a woman who lost her job to support her youngest child who

taxes 100 percent of your health care premiums. If you're a large employer, your health care costs won't go up as fast, so that you will have more money to put into higher wages and new jobs and to put into the work of being competitive in this tough global economy.

Now, these, my fellow Americans, are the principles on which I think we should base our efforts: security, simplicity, savings, choice, quality, and responsibility. These are the guiding stars that we should follow on our journey toward health care reform.

Over the coming months, you'll be bombarded with information from all kinds of sources. There will be some who will stoutly disagree with what I have proposed and with all other plans in the Congress, for that matter. And some of the arguments will be genuinely sincere and enlightening. Others may simply be scare tactics by those who are motivated by the self-interest they have in the waste the system now generates, because that waste is providing jobs, incomes, and money for some people. I ask you only to think of this when you hear all of these arguments: Ask yourself whether the cost of staying on this same course isn't greater than the cost of change. And ask yourself, when you hear the arguments, whether the arguments are in your interest or someone else's. This is something we have got to try to do together.

I want also to say to the Representatives in Congress, you have a special duty to look beyond these arguments. I ask you instead to look into the eyes of the sick child who needs care, to think of the face of the woman who's been told not only that her condition is malignant but not covered by her insurance, to look at the bottom lines of the businesses driven to bankruptcy by health care costs, to look at the "for sale" signs in front of the homes of families who have lost everything because of their health care costs.

I ask you to remember the kind of people I met over the last year and a half: the elderly couple in New Hampshire that broke down and cried because of their shame at having an empty refrigerator to pay for their drugs; a woman who lost a \$50,000 job that she used to support her six children because her youngest child was so ill that she couldn't

keep health insurance, and the only way to get care for the child was to get public assistance; a young couple that had a sick child and could only get insurance from one of the parents' employers that was a nonprofit corporation with 20 employees, and so they had to face the question of whether to let this poor person with a sick child go or raise the premiums of every employee in the firm by \$200; and on and on and on.

I know we have differences of opinion, but we are here tonight in a spirit that is animated by the problems of those people and by the sheer knowledge that if we can look into our heart, we will not be able to say that the greatest nation in the history of the world is powerless to confront this crisis.

Our history and our heritage tell us that we can meet this challenge. Everything about America's past tells us we will do it. So I say to you, let us write that new chapter in the American story. Let us guarantee every American comprehensive health benefits that can never be taken away.

You know, in spite of all the work we've done together and all the progress we've made, there's still a lot of people who say it would be an outright miracle if we passed health care reform. But my fellow Americans, in a time of change you have to have miracles. And miracles do happen. I mean, just a few days ago we saw a simple handshake shatter decades of deadlock in the Middle East. We've seen the walls crumble in Berlin and South Africa. We see the ongoing brave struggle of the people of Russia to seize freedom and democracy.

And now it is our turn to strike a blow for freedom in this country, the freedom of Americans to live without fear that their own Nation's health care system won't be there for them when they need it. It's hard to believe that there was once a time in this century when that kind of fear gripped old age, when retirement was nearly synonymous with poverty and older Americans died in the street. That's unthinkable today, because over a half a century ago Americans had the courage to change, to create a Social Security System that ensures that no Americans will be forgotten in their later years.

Forty years from now, our grandchildren will also find it unthinkable that there was

a time in this country when hardworking families lost their homes, their savings, their businesses, lost everything simply because their children got sick or because they had to change jobs. Our grandchildren will find such things unthinkable tomorrow if we have the courage to change today.

This is our chance. This is our journey. And when our work is done, we will know that we have answered the call of history and met the challenge of our time.

Thank you very much, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the House Chamber at the Capitol.

Proclamation 6596—National Rehabilitation Week, 1993 and 1994
September 22, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Millions of Americans with disabilities are able to achieve independence and lead active, productive lives with the assistance of rehabilitation therapy. Estimates indicate that half of the Nation's population will at some point in their lives need assistance in overcoming some form of physical, mental, emotional, or social disability. "National Rehabilitation Week" seeks to recognize not only the individuals who have learned to cope with their disabilities but also the dedicated health care professionals who have provided assistance through research, education, and therapy.

In tribute to these individuals and their many contributions to our society, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 50, has designated the periods beginning September 19 and ending September 25, 1993, and beginning September 18 and ending September 24, 1994, as National Rehabilitation Week, and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of these weeks.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America,

do hereby proclaim the periods beginning September 19, 1993, and ending September 25, 1993, and beginning September 18, 1994, and ending September 24, 1994, as National Rehabilitation Week. I call upon all Americans to observe these weeks with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities as an expression of their support.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and eighteenth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 4:04 p.m., September 23, 1993]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 27.

Proclamation 6597—Energy Awareness Month, 1993
September 22, 1993

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Politically, economically, and environmentally, our world is changing, and so are our energy choices. Our Nation has been blessed with a wide variety of energy resources. America's diverse climate, geography, and natural resources give us a flexibility unmatched in the world. It is our duty to use our energy resources wisely by increasing energy efficiency, commercializing renewable resources, and developing innovative, clean technologies.

The energy choices we make affect every aspect of our lives. The theme of Energy Awareness Month, 1993, New Energy Choices for a Changing World, highlights the importance of these decisions. In our homes, energy efficient appliances and "green" computers, such as those that qualify under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Energy Star Program, save us money and help to preserve the environment. On our Nation's highways, powering our vehicles

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**Statement on
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September 22, 1993

I have been
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failed several times in recent years. Why is this—

The President. Throughout the whole century.

Q. Throughout the whole century. Why is this different?

The President. Well, I think, you know, if you go back and look at the history of health care, I think there are two things that are different. One is, there is almost unanimous consensus that the cost of continuing on the present course is greater than the cost of change. With health care costs rising at more than twice the rate of inflation and rising much faster than that for small businesses, with more people losing their coverage every month so that we're paying more for less health care, with the range of choices available for Americans dropping dramatically and the administrative cost to the system escalating at a breathtaking rate, that the cost of going on is greater than the cost of change. I don't think that there has ever been that much consensus before.

The second thing is, I think you've got all of the people trying to work together now. If you go back through the whole history of the 20th century, you can find times when Republicans wanted to do something about health care and Democrats didn't, some when Presidents wanted to do something and the Congress didn't. There's one example when, early in this century, when the American Medical Association wanted to have a national health care bill and the labor movement didn't.

I mean, these things have been flip-flopped. If you read the history of health care, it's like people, you know, passing each other in the night. And I think now you've finally got everybody in the country focused on it. So I think we have a moment in history when we can seize it and move forward if we can maintain this determination to stay in touch with the real problems of our people and with this sort of spirit that we have now of working together.

Taxes

Q. Can you tell us what the sin taxes are going to be for people to help pay for this?

The President. Tonight.

Q. [Inaudible]—tell us tonight—[inaudible]—an hour and a half.

Q. Are you purposely avoiding that topic today?

The President. No, no. Lord, no.

Q. Are you concerned about the story tomorrow—

The President. No. There will be less than you think, I'll say that.

Russia

Q. Mr. President, do you have anything on the situation in Russia? Are you more reassured now than yesterday?

The President. Well, the situation is calm, and I am hopeful. You know what my position is on it, and I still think the United States has to be on the side of reform and democracy in Russia, and President Yeltsin represents that. But I know nothing more today than I knew last night when we talked, except that I've obviously gotten my morning briefing, and the situation is calm, and we're hopeful.

Q. Are you trying to contact world leaders, sir, to encourage them to come out in support of him as well?

The President. I called Mr. Kohl last night, and we communicated in other ways with Prime Minister Major and President Mitterrand, Prime Minister Balladur in France, and others. I noted that Prime Minister Major came out today in support, and I know Chancellor Kohl issued a statement yesterday. So I very much appreciate that.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Address to a Joint Session of the Congress on Health Care Reform September 22, 1993

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President, Members of Congress, distinguished guests, my fellow Americans, before I begin my words tonight I would like to ask that we all bow in a moment of silent prayer for the memory of those who were killed and those who have been injured in the tragic train accident in Alabama today.

[At this point, the Chamber observed a moment of silence.]

Amen.

My fellow Americans, tonight we come together to write a new chapter in the American story. Our forebears enshrined the American dream: life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. Every generation of Americans has worked to strengthen that legacy, to make our country a place of freedom and opportunity, a place where people who work hard can rise to their full potential, a place where their children can have a better future.

From the settling of the frontier to the landing on the Moon, ours has been a continuous story of challenges defined, obstacles overcome, new horizons secured. That is what makes America what it is and Americans what we are. Now we are in a time of profound change and opportunity. The end of the cold war, the information age, the global economy have brought us both opportunity and hope and strife and uncertainty. Our purpose in this dynamic age must be to make change our friend and not our enemy.

To achieve that goal, we must face all our challenges with confidence, with faith, and with discipline, whether we're reducing the deficit, creating tomorrow's jobs and training our people to fill them, converting from a high-tech defense to a high-tech domestic economy, expanding trade, reinventing Government, making our streets safer, or rewarding work over idleness. All these challenges require us to change.

If Americans are to have the courage to change in a difficult time, we must first be secure in our most basic needs. Tonight I want to talk to you about the most critical thing we can do to build that security. This health care system of ours is badly broken, and it is time to fix it. Despite the dedication of literally millions of talented health care professionals, our health care is too uncertain and too expensive, too bureaucratic and too wasteful. It has too much fraud and too much greed.

At long last, after decades of false starts, we must make this our most urgent priority, giving every American health security, health care that can never be taken away, health

care that is always there. That is what we must do tonight.

On this journey, as on all others of true consequence, there will be rough spots in the road and honest disagreements about how we should proceed. After all, this is a complicated issue. But every successful journey is guided by fixed stars. And if we can agree on some basic values and principles, we will reach this destination, and we will reach it together.

So tonight I want to talk to you about the principles that I believe must embody our efforts to reform America's health care system: security, simplicity, savings, choice, quality, and responsibility.

When I launched our Nation on this journey to reform the health care system I knew we needed a talented navigator, someone with a rigorous mind, a steady compass, a caring heart. Luckily for me and for our Nation, I didn't have to look very far.

[At this point, the Chamber applauded Hillary Clinton, and she acknowledged them.]

Over the last 8 months, Hillary and those working with her have talked to literally thousands of Americans to understand the strengths and the frailties of this system of ours. They met with over 1,100 health care organizations. They talked with doctors and nurses, pharmacists and drug company representatives, hospital administrators, insurance company executives, and small and large businesses. They spoke with self-employed people. They talked with people who had insurance and people who didn't. They talked with union members and older Americans and advocates for our children. The First Lady also consulted, as all of you know, extensively with governmental leaders in both parties in the States of our Nation and especially here on Capitol Hill. Hillary and the task force received and read over 700,000 letters from ordinary citizens. What they wrote and the bravery with which they told their stories is really what calls us all here tonight.

Every one of us knows someone who's worked hard and played by the rules and still been hurt by this system that just doesn't work for too many people. But I'd like to tell you about just one. Kerry Kennedy owns

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a small furniture store that employs seven people in Titusville, Florida. Like most small business owners, he's poured his heart and soul, his sweat and blood into that business for years. But over the last several years, again like most small business owners, he's seen his health care premiums skyrocket, even in years when no claims were made. And last year, he painfully discovered he could no longer afford to provide coverage for all his workers because his insurance company told him that two of his workers had become high risks because of their advanced age. The problem was that those two people were his mother and father, the people who founded the business and still work in the store.

This story speaks for millions of others. And from them we have learned a powerful truth. We have to preserve and strengthen what is right with the health care system, but we have got to fix what is wrong with it.

Now, we all know what's right. We're blessed with the best health care professionals on Earth, the finest health care institutions, the best medical research, the most sophisticated technology. My mother is a nurse. I grew up around hospitals. Doctors and nurses were the first professional people I ever knew or learned to look up to. They are what is right with this health care system. But we also know that we can no longer afford to continue to ignore what is wrong.

Millions of Americans are just a pink slip away from losing their health insurance and one serious illness away from losing all their savings. Millions more are locked into the jobs they have now just because they or someone in their family has once been sick and they have what is called the preexisting condition. And on any given day, over 37 million Americans, most of them working people and their little children, have no health insurance at all.

And in spite of all this, our medical bills are growing at over twice the rate of inflation, and the United States spends over a third more of its income on health care than any other nation on Earth. And the gap is growing, causing many of our companies in global competition severe disadvantage. There is no excuse for this kind of system. We know other people have done better. We know

people in our own country are doing better. We have no excuse. My fellow Americans, we must fix this system, and it has to begin with congressional action.

I believe as strongly as I can say that we can reform the costliest and most wasteful system on the face of the Earth without enacting new broad-based taxes. I believe it because of the conversations I have had with thousands of health care professionals around the country, with people who are outside this city but are inside experts on the way this system works and wastes money.

The proposal that I describe tonight borrows many of the principles and ideas that have been embraced in plans introduced by both Republicans and Democrats in this Congress. For the first time in this century, leaders of both political parties have joined together around the principle of providing universal, comprehensive health care. It is a magic moment, and we must seize it.

I want to say to all of you I have been deeply moved by the spirit of this debate, by the openness of all people to new ideas and argument and information. The American people would be proud to know that earlier this week when a health care university was held for Members of Congress just to try to give everybody the same amount of information, over 320 Republicans and Democrats signed up and showed up for 2 days just to learn the basic facts of the complicated problem before us.

Both sides are willing to say, "We have listened to the people. We know the cost of going forward with this system is far greater than the cost of change." Both sides, I think, understand the literal ethical imperative of doing something about the system we have now. Rising above these difficulties and our past differences to solve this problem will go a long way toward defining who we are and who we intend to be as a people in this difficult and challenging era. I believe we all understand that. And so tonight, let me ask all of you, every Member of the House, every Member of the Senate, each Republican and each Democrat, let us keep this spirit and let us keep this commitment until this job is done. We owe it to the American people. *[Applause]*

Thank you. Thank you very much.

Now, if I might, the six principles I describe how we think principles.

First and most principle speaks to costs, to the anxiety all of us, when people with the present that those who do coverage will have it, it will never be achieve that security.

Under our plan, receive a health care guarantee a comprehensive over the course roughly comparable offered by most. This health care package of benefits be taken away. So ever else we disagree finishes its work and I will sign legislation security to every citizen.

With this card, switch jobs, you're job to start a small. If you're an early someone in your had an illness that condition, you're or a member of y if it's a life-threatening. And if an drop you for any reason, because that will give comprehensive cover people for emergency and late like Pap smears cholesterol tests, health treatment.

And equally in care and economic the first time work of preventive checkups and we common sense. I will tell you, that and long-term costs be lower if we have

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 28, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF LEE BROWN
AS DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF DRUG CONTROL POLICY

The Rose Garden

12:30 P.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Please be seated. I want to thank the members of the Cabinet who are here and the members of the Congress who are here, and express my apologies for the Attorney General who is with the Congress. And that's why some of them and why she is not here.

I want to thank the representatives of law enforcement, people who are involved in drug treatment and drug education, and other citizens who are here with us today, as well as those who have been working in the Office of Drug Policy who are here.

It is a great pleasure and honor for me today to announce the appointment of Lee Brown, the first police officer ever to hold the job of Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

A few weeks ago I elevated this office to Cabinet-level status because I believe drug abuse is as serious a problem as we have in America and because I believe that this office cannot work effectively on its own no matter how many people it might have. The real ability of this office to make a difference in the lives of the American people is the ability to work with all the departments of the national government and with others who care about this issue to maximize our resources, to focus our efforts and to make sure we're all working together. Lee Brown shares that view, and I am proud that he has agreed to join us in this administration.

As Americans who care about our future, we can't let drugs and drug-related crimes continue to ruin communities, threaten our children even in schools and fill up our prisons with wrecked and wasted lives. We have to do a better job of preventing drug use and treating those who seek treatment, and we must do more to protect law-abiding citizens from those who victimize them in the pursuit of drugs or profit from drugs.

I'm committed to winning this struggle, as all Americans are, and I'm convinced that there is no better American to lead this effort than Lee Brown. He's been the chief law enforcement officer in Atlanta, in Houston and New York. He's a policeman with a PhD in criminology who brings to this tough job a truly extraordinary record of innovation in crime reduction, and a sensitivity to the problems of real people who want to walk home safe at night and who want to be free of the problems that we're trying to combat.

To reduce drug use and drug-related crimes we have to do many things at the same time. It has to start with community policing, with more police at the local level, working with our neighbors and the children and the friends to prevent crime and to quickly punish criminals. There must be better education and:

MORE

prevention efforts starting at the earliest ages. These work; I know that. And there must be treatment for those who want to get better.

Dr. Brown knows a little something about community policing. It's nearly his invention. He turned the Houston police force into a model of community policing. And for many serious crimes the crime rate there dropped. In New York he added thousands of officers to foot patrols; men and women whom he empowered to solve problems, not with the federal program but with a commitment to a better life in a particular neighborhood. And reports of serious crime fell where that was done in New York.

He's had the vision to seek conditions clearly and the courage to change what doesn't work. Most importantly, he gets results. And this is exactly what we need in the war against drugs.

I pledge to him and to the American people an exceptionally focused and carefully executed antidrug effort from the national government. At the heart of our efforts will be more funds for local police officers. More for treatment and more for prevention. We will continue to work with other nations who have shown the political will to fight illegal drugs. They will continue to get our full support and our cooperation.

But it's time we turned our attention home and built a strategy to make the neighborhoods of America safer and more drug-free. We want to close the gap between those who want treatment and available treatment. Treating addiction is good urban policy and good anticrime policy and good health policy. We ask for a 10-percent increase in treatment funds for 1994. And we'll make drug treatment an important part of the national health care plan that will be presented to the Congress and the American people. Our goal is to work toward treatment on demand.

I believe the parents of American want and deserve more help in educating their children about drugs. We can prevent drug abuse. School programs work. Public service programs work. But they aren't miracles. They require a commitment and a consistency year in and year out. We've asked for a 16-percent increase in drug prevention funding.

Finally, we're determined to put more police officers on the street and to expand community policing. It's a local program -- old-fashioned law enforcement, but it works. It means less crime. I think it's time to go back to the basics. I asked the Congress to approve \$200 million in the jobs stimulus package for community policing. And I proposed almost \$600 million in policing and other initiatives similar to that in 1994.

The most basic responsibility of the government is to protect the American people. It's our sacred duty to do our best. I believe we have a good program. It can be a great program if it can come alive in America in every community in this country. It's basic -- more officers, more education, more treatment. And with the leadership of Lee Brown it promises to be effective.

I look forward to working with him and with the other members of our Cabinet and administration to meet and to master the challenges ahead.

Lee? (Applause.)

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. President. Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the President for the confidence he has expressed in me by appointing me to the position of the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy. I also want to assure him that, if confirmed by the U.S. Senate, I will

devote all of my effort and energy toward addressing the problem of illegal drugs in this country.

I come here today after spending most of my adult life in local law enforcement. It is from that vantage point that I know firsthand the problems caused by illegal drugs in America. I have seen the despair brought about by drug abuse. I've seen the misery caused by illicit drugs. I've even seen the deaths caused by illegal drugs.

The problem of drugs has destroyed individuals, families, and indeed, entire communities. The problem drains our economy; strains our health care system; impacts our schools; reduces productivity in the workplace; contributes to crime, violence and fear; and diminishes the overall quality of life for our citizens. It is a problem not only for our urban areas, but for our suburban and rural areas as well. It is a problem for the affluent as well as for the poor.

So I come here today with a firm, firm belief that illegal drugs must be controlled in America. I come here today with a strong, strong commitment that illegal drugs can be reduced in America. It is to that end I look forward to joining this administration and developing for the President and the American people an effective national drug control strategy.

I look forward to working with other members of the Cabinet, the Congress, the various federal agencies that are involved in this country's drug control effort. I look forward to working with state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, community organizations, religious leaders, the media and others in designing an effective national drug control strategy.

I look forward to working with our sister countries who share our concern about the shipment of drugs into America. It will be my goal to develop a balanced, comprehensive approach to the drug problem. Our national strategy must include law enforcement, yes, but also education and prevention and, equally important, treatment.

Let me close by saying, Mr. President, that I know the American people have both the spirit and determination to address this problem. I know we can make a difference. I look forward to joining you in providing the leadership to this very important undertaking.

Thank you, Mr. President. (Applause.)

Q Mr. President, you talked about the need to -- resources to education and treatment from some of the law enforcement efforts. Why then did you pick someone with a background in law enforcement?

THE PRESIDENT: Because I don't think it's an either-or thing. I think having the right kind of community-based education and treatment programs, if they work, also requires having the right kind of community law enforcement strategy. One of the things that I have learned in the many years I served as Attorney General and Governor and talking to other people who have been involved in that, is that if you do it right, all these things go hand in hand.

I wish the Attorney General were here today to talk about the drug courts she started in Miami and what the relationship of law enforcement there is to integrating a treatment and education program.

That's why I wanted someone who had a background in law enforcement and credibility on that issue, but who believed in innovation and education and treatment to do this job. I wanted

someone who could put together a policy that makes sense. If you try to pick one or the other, you're never going to get the job done.

Wolf.

Q Mr. President, you met last night with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders on the situation in Bosnia. And by all accounts, they seem to have given you some conflicting advice. Many of them appear to be more moved by the lessons of Vietnam than they are by the Holocaust. Did you emerge from that session more confused about what the United States should do as far as the situation in Bosnia is concerned?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I didn't. I still believe the United States has to strengthen its response. But the meeting was helpful because of the practical issues which were raised and the specific suggestions I got from people, many of whom have different views. But some who were there last night are here today, they can make their own comments. But I think it was a very helpful meeting and there were a lot of very specific things that came out of that and that I think will come out of our consultations over the next couple of days.

Q Do you feel that you can continue, though, to consider military options now that so many members of Congress have strongly expressed their objections? Would you proceed if you felt it was still the right thing to do and if you had allied support?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will decide what I think the right thing to do is and then see if I can persuade the Congress and the allies to go along. Right now, what I want to do is hear what they think the right thing to do is and then the people with whom I consulted last night were good enough to tell me and we agreed that they would set in motion a process to go back to their committees and try to solicit some more views.

Q Mr. President, is it accurate --

Q -- plan to continue with the policy of hot pursuit like in the Machain case, or how are you going to deal with cases like that? Are you going to come to other countries and kidnap or to bring to justice in this country a person suspected of a crime in a drug situation, like in the Machain case? How are you going to deal with that situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm not sure I heard you -- the plane flew over. But you asked about the abduction out of Mexico? Is that what you asked about?

Q That's right -- if you are going to continue with that type of policy.

THE PRESIDENT: I think I've made my position clear on that. I don't think that -- I think the present ruling of law is too broad there. I don't believe that the United States should be involved in that unless there is a clear and deliberate attempt by a government in another country to undermine extradition or undermine the enforcement of its own laws and our laws on that. And I think that -- so that's been my position for months and months; I haven't changed that.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to get bipartisan support from Congress for the money you're going to need? The two predecessors of Mr. Brown accomplished certain things, but not much. How will you make sure that Mr. Brown has the money to accomplish --

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think there will be bipartisan support. Keep in mind this is partly a money problem and partly a

resource problem. We're going to try to do some different things and attract people who have thought about this issue. I don't think this is a Republican or a Democratic issue. There's hardly a family in America that hasn't been touched directly or indirectly by this problem. So I feel very hopeful about it.

Q -- in the budget, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we recommended more funds in the budget, and it's very critical to the whole health reform area. I mean, a big part of our strategy in this is embodied in the proposals we'll make on health care to deal with the whole treatment issue.

Q When do you think you will have a decision -- do you have Yeltsin on board now to do more? And do you think the American people will support a military -- use of military force?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you asked me three questions. I think there will be a decision soon. We are working very hard on it. There are a lot of very practical questions that have to be asked and answered. As you know, it is a very difficult matter.

I believe that when we do make a decision, we will be, as we have been all along, consulting with our allies in the United Nations. And I think there is a fair chance that we'll be able to get the U.N. to go along with what we decide to do if we have some consultations as we go along, as we have.

I think President Yeltsin -- I don't know what he would say. It depends in part, obviously, on what we recommend. But I'll tell you this: I've been very pleased by the positions that he has taken both publicly and privately recently. And even in the midst of his own election, when it might have hurt him politically, Russia did not veto our attempts to get much tougher sanctions. And I think he's been pretty clear since the election that he's not at all happy about the continuation of Serbian aggression and the refusal to negotiate in good faith and try to settle this war and stop the ethnic cleansing. So I feel pretty good about that.

Q Mr. President, how are you going to tell the American people --

Q Mr. President, a former drug czar, Bill Bennett, said today that you have gutted the office by cutting it down, cutting the personnel. How do you answer that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, my answer to that -- maybe I should refer you to Congressman Rangel. I spoke with him when we were trying to figure out what to do about this budget. And what I perceived happened in that office before is that it was a large office that operated basically separate from the rest of the government. It has no legal authority to compel the behavior of any law enforcement officials, and it obviously has no legal authority over all the state and local people and the nonprofit people who are involved in drug education and treatment. So the real issue is whether it has the mechanisms necessary to pull all the levers in the federal government and pull people together.

And I think by putting the office in the Cabinet, by coordinating all of our national policies throughout the federal government, and by having a staff that can support that function it's much more likely that we're going to be effective.

And I also would tell you that I believe in rhetoric in the war against drugs. I know that works. I think the education programs work, the prevention programs work, but it needs to be more than rhetoric. And I think it will also be perceived that I have appointed the most experienced person with the best record and the least political person who ever held this job. And I think that will

count for something, too, with the Republicans and the Democrats.
(Applause.)

* * *

Q Where's Chelsea?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we discussed it this morning and she said, you know, it's easier for me -- you work where you live. I know what it's like. She said, I missed a lot of school last month so I'm going to school.

Q Would she have gone to work with you or Hillary?

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, she thought it was just for mothers to take their daughters. I said, no, no, fathers can, too. She said, well, you both work where you live. I'm going to school. (Laughter.) But she's spent some time with us over here.

Q Have you firmly decided not to delay health care because it might risk your budget proposal, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think what we're talking about is not a risk.

Thank you very much.

END

12:50 P.M. EDT

Beyond that, we ought to talk about what else we do and where we go. But I want to emphasize that this -- even with intense commitment in this city, you have to do the things that are before you. You have to get done what you can do at the moment, and then move on to what's next on the agenda. So I think it is imperative that we move on the crime bill and the 100,000 police officers in the street and the boot camps as soon as we can when the Congress comes back.

I also think we ought to recognize that we don't have all the money in world, and we don't want to spend a lot of money on things that will be of marginal significance. I was glad to see you advocating this paper. I've just been skimming it over -- that we ought to give attention to drug treatment as well as drug enforcement, that we needed to deal with supply and demand in an evenhanded way. We need some more investment to do that.

The last point I want to make is that this is the first step, but only the first step we have to take in restoring the conditions of civilized life to a lot of our cities. The reason a lot of these things are happening is that there has been a simultaneous decline of work, family and community -- the things that really organize life for all the rest of us. And we are going to have to rebuild them all. And it is not going to happen overnight, because these deteriorations have happened over a period of decades. But people can sense whether you are going in the right direction or the wrong direction, and I think we have to work together to change the direction. I am confident that we can.

There are also maybe some things we can do administratively. And you have the people here who want to hear from you about that, and we want to go forward with that.

And finally I want to say that I think we ought to set up an ongoing relationship so that you can continue to work with us, get input and help us to work through some of the difficult decisions that are always required when you move from the level of speaking to doing. And so we would like very much to have some sort of ongoing mechanism that this administration can relate to from the membership of this group.

Lastly, let me say that I'm grateful for the participation here, not just of the mayors but of the several police chiefs. It's good to see all of you here. I think we can do something. I think the American people are tired of hurting, and tired of feeling insecure, and tired of the violence, and it makes such a huge gap between what we say, and what we do, and how we want to live and how we are forced to live. And its affected now so many more people beyond the immediate victims of crime. It's changing everyone's life in ways that are quite destructive. We have to move. And I think we're prepared to move. And I think with this document you've given us a good basis to begin.

I thank you very much.

END

10:46 A.M. EST

ministrative cuts, and I hope they'll agree to the other budget cuts, too. I don't like asking for these contributions, but I have to deliver to you a leaner Government and a more vibrant economy in return.

I do propose to raise income tax rates, but only for the top 1.2 percent of taxpayers, those taxpayers whose taxes went down in the 1980's while their incomes went way up. And our overall tax proposal will cost a family of four with an income of \$40,000 less than \$17 a month.

Finally, I will cut almost \$250 billion from more than 150 domestic programs, many of them with some merit, and from the defense budget.

Now a lot of interests will argue that these cuts are too steep. Still others will say they're not enough or demand that we protect their pet projects while cutting someone else. To all, I say the same thing: Give me real cuts, don't waste the people's time anymore. I'm committed to cutting every bit of spending we can from programs we don't need or can't afford. And I won't raise taxes without cutting spending. But tell us exactly where you want to cut, and I'll gladly listen.

It's time to put politics aside and put America first. It's been years since our Government fought for working families and gave them a system where they could thrive and pass the American dream on to their children. It's time to include all Americans again, to build a new prosperity, not because we want new wealth for the Government but because we want to renew the dreams of our children, all of them.

I'm determined to take us in a new direction, and I ask you to join me in this fight for the future. Support your elected Representatives who are demonstrating the courage to change. If you do, we can write the next great chapter in the history of the greatest country the world has ever known. Thank you, and good morning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office.

Remarks at the Children's Town Meeting

February 20, 1993

Peter Jennings. Mr. President, one of my first impressions here is that this is an awful lot bigger than what you were used to living in Arkansas.

The President. It's bigger than almost anybody in America lives in, but it's a beautiful house. You know it was started in 1792. President Washington authorized it to be built, and then before it was finished, actually, President Adams and his wife moved in here. So it's been here a long time.

Mr. Jennings. Right behind us here, of course, we can't go in this morning, but it's really one of the most beautiful rooms, the Blue Room, looking out onto the Jefferson Memorial.

The President. It's very beautiful. And upstairs, just above it, there's another big oval room which President Franklin Roosevelt used as his office during World War II. And now we use it for formal receiving of foreign dignitaries. And it also looks directly out on the Jefferson Memorial. And there's a porch there that President Harry Truman put on, so I can go out at night now and look at the lights shining down on Thomas Jefferson's head. It's a wonderful sight.

Mr. Jennings. You know the White House staff is very discreet. When I asked them if you sneaked around, sticking your heads in various rooms at night, they said, "Ask him." Do you wander around at night?

The President. I do a little, not so much down here but up on the second and third floor. And I spent a lot of time working in this last month, over around the Oval Office, so I'm in the Cabinet Room a lot and in the Roosevelt Room, which is the President's big staff room. And I'm just trying to learn what all the pictures are and where all the things are and learn the history of the place. I'm very interested in it.

Mr. Jennings. I just have one question before we go and actually meet the children. There's the President's seal up there, the President of the United States, just above the door of the Blue Room. And it reminds me of Teddy White, the political writer, who said there is a moment when the man stops being the man and becomes the President. Was there such a moment for you, do you remember?

The President. I think there was a moment when I realized I was going to be President, and it was different after that. And it was not at the election. It was a couple of weeks after the election when I was planning the Inaugural and they asked me what I wanted to do. And we decided that I would start at Thomas Jefferson's home at Monticello and then go to the Lincoln Memorial, and then the next morning I would go to the graves of President Kennedy and his brother, Senator Robert Kennedy. And I realized, in describing that that's what I would do, that I was becoming a part of our history.

Mr. Jennings. Well, you indeed—and these young boys and girls, between about 8 and 15, from Washington and other parts around the country, are very interested in you and history.

Good morning, everybody. You welcome the President? Nice to have him, isn't it? Well, I think they have a lot of questions. Who wants to ask the first question?

School Integration in Little Rock

Q. I would like to ask you a question that goes back to about 30, 40 years ago, back in Little Rock, Arkansas. If you were in the same position that you are now, and during the time of the occurrence of the Little Rock Nine, how would you take forth the matters about them going into the school? Would you go with the community, or would you go with your heart?

The President. I would have gone with my heart and with the law of the United States, which was that the children had a right to go to the school without regard to their race. I would have done what President Eisenhower did. I would have sent troops there and done whatever it took to give the children the right to go to school.

One of the people who was part of the Little Rock Nine, Earnest Green, is now a business executive here in Washington and a good friend of mine. And I'm glad he had a chance to do that.

Mr. Jennings. Mr. President, excuse me, I don't think everybody knows who the Little Rock Nine were.

The President. Oh, what he's asking about—about 40 years ago, a lot of the schools, public schools, in our country were still segregated by race. Virtually all the schools in the southern part of the United States were segregated by race. Young black and white children went to different schools. Forty years ago, the courts ruled that we could no longer segregate schools by race. In my hometown of Little Rock, in the capital city, the Governor and the local school board tried to keep them separate. President Eisenhower then ordered troops there to open the schools so that the schools could be integrated. He was asking me if I would do the same thing, and I said I would.

Good for you. Great question.

Mr. Jennings. There's a stool behind you, Mr. President, if you feel like sitting on it. Who else had got a—we kind of broke it down into fun questions and serious questions. Who had a fun question they wanted to start with?

Chelsea Clinton

Q. Do you help Chelsea with her homework?

The President. I do. I do math with her quite often. I took a lot of algebra and advanced mathematics in high school, and then I didn't take any more after I went to college. So when Chelsea got into algebra, she started asking me to help. And so I've used it sort of to learn algebra again. It's been a lot of fun for me. I enjoy it a lot. We do it quite often at night or early in the morning.

Mr. Jennings. Now, Mr. President, people all over the country who I know want to ask you questions, we have an 800 number which we'll put on the screen. It's been up for a while, and people have been trying to call in. So take a look, 1-800-648-8094. And I know we have a call from Kim in Minnesota. Go ahead, Kim.

Mr. Jennings. Which Roosevelt?

Q. Teddy.

Mr. Jennings. Exactly. President Theodore Roosevelt's children used to roller-skate here in the East Room. And of course, maybe you'd like to point out to the kids the famous painting.

The President. Yes. That's a picture of who? Who is that?

The Children. George Washington.

The President. That's right. That's President Washington, painted by Gilbert Stuart. And it is an absolutely invaluable piece of art. Gilbert Stuart was a very famous artist. I think it was offered to the United States first for about \$500. He painted it in 1797. That was a lot of money back then. It's worth millions of dollars today. It's a priceless picture.

Mr. Jennings. And who saved it?

The President. Excuse me?

Mr. Jennings. Who saved it?

The President. Who saved it?

Mr. Jennings. Dolley Madison, right?

The President. Yes. Dolley Madison saved it.

Mr. Jennings. When there was—

The President. —from the fire.

Mr. Jennings. She wouldn't leave the White House until the—

The President. Yes, during the War of 1812 the British marched on Washington and tried to burn the city, and the White House caught fire. There's still some char marks actually out on the front of the White House. And Dolley Madison would not leave the White House until the precious treasures were preserved, including that.

There's also a picture back there of President Theodore Roosevelt, painted when he was a year younger than I am now. Theodore Roosevelt was the youngest person ever to become President. He was elected President at the age—well, he became President when President McKinley died; he was 42. And President Kennedy was elected when he was 43, and I was elected when I had just turned 46. So I'm the third youngest person to be President.

Mr. Jennings. But not—[inaudible]. You probably need a bit of rest for the moment, though, sir, as you're the third youngest, so

we'll go away for a commercial and be right back.

The President. I feel like the oldest some days. [Laughter]

[At this point, the television stations took a commercial break.]

The President's Pastimes

Mr. Jennings. Welcome back to the East Room of the White House. Let's go straight to you, Jared, you have a question.

Q. What do you do for fun around here? [Laughter]

The President. I like to play golf. I've only gotten to do it one time since I've been President, but I like to do that. And I like to play cards and games with Hillary and Chelsea. We play pinochle; we play a game that Chelsea taught me called Hungarian rummy. I like to play Trivial Pursuit. That's pretty much what I do.

Q. Are you a good Trivial Pursuit player?

The President. Sometimes. I'm better on some subjects than others, but I like it a lot.

Somalia

Mr. Jennings. Way over there in the corner.

Q. About Somalia and the United States, are we going to help the United States or Somalia first? Because Somalia has been in trouble for years, but we haven't done anything. We've done something, but not that much. So are you going to start helping Somalia first or getting the United States their jobs back first?

The President. Well, my most important job is to try to help people in the United States get their jobs back, because I was elected first and most importantly to help the people here with jobs and education and health care.

But I think the United States has a responsibility in Somalia. And I supported it when we sent our troops over there to try to stop the fighting and to try to bring some safety and food and medicine and education back to the children there. And I think that what we will be doing in Somalia is trying to work with other countries to always keep enough soldiers there to try to keep the peace, but there won't be so many Americans there. And then we can support others and try to

make sure that we restore peace on a long-term basis and try to make sure that the people always had enough food and medicine and shelter to do well. I think we do have a responsibility there, but as President my first responsibility is to all of you.

The Presidency

Mr. Jennings. Behind you here, Mr. President. Jeannie has a question. Jeannie Lee.

Q. Hi. How do you feel, like, now that you're the President of the United States?

The President. It's an incredible honor. And every day I still get up and I feel a lot of gratitude just for having the chance to serve. I also feel a big sense of responsibility. I don't want to let you down, all of you and all the people all over the country, the people who voted for me and those who didn't. I hope I can do a good job to help solve our problems and move us forward.

Mr. Jennings. Jeannie, what do you think is probably the best thing about being President? If you were him, what would you guess?

Q. I think I would have a lot of responsibility, too, because I've got to take care of the whole United States and I've got to help others. And you've got to help the people of the United States fight their enemies and crime and riots and gangs.

The President's Education

Mr. Jennings. Right behind you, Willie.

Q. When you were in, like, our grade, what was your hardest subject in school?

The President. When I was in your—when I was your age? How old are you?

Q. Nine.

The President. Nine. You're in the fourth grade? I made my lowest grades in conduct—[laughter]—because I talked too much in school and the teachers were always telling me to stop talking. I did best in math. I did well in reading. I had some trouble spelling, interestingly enough, when I was young, because I'd get excited and I would go too fast. And sometimes I wouldn't spell so well.

Q. What are you going to do about the environment?

Violence in Schools

Mr. Jennings. Well, let me hold the President on the environment for just a second, if that's okay with you, because I think touching on education is really interesting.

Mr. President. I'd like you to meet Michael Cruz here. We met Michael out in the country, and we did a little film about him which I'd like you to see, because I know he has a question. And it's something I know that he cares a lot about and he'd like to ask you about. So let's, first of all, look at where Michael goes to school.

[At this point, a short film was shown in which Michael explained how the violence in his school is affecting his education.]

Mr. Jennings. Well, Michael goes to the Roberto Clemente High School in Chicago, Illinois. Have you got a question for the President, Michael?

Q. How are you going to make my school safer to get a better education?

The President. I have an answer to that, but let me ask you first so I won't prejudice your answer: If you were in my position, what would you do to make the school safer?

Q. I would try to get as much teachers and, mainly, security guards in there to keep the violence, because now there's not so many security guards and there's too many students. I would just try to control the school first. And then once they control the school, then I'll throw the education on their lap.

The President. Let me tell you what we're going to try to do. First of all, as part of the economic program I sent to Congress there is a safe schools initiative which, if it passes, would enable us to help schools with more security guards and with more, like metal detectors and things like that, to try to make sure kids don't come to school with weapons.

Secondly, I have offered a program that would permit us to put another 100,000 police officers on the street in America in the next couple of years, including people who could be stationed in around schools. The third thing I think we ought to do is to pass a bill which says that nobody can buy a handgun unless there's a waiting period, during which time you can check their criminal history and see if they've been in any trouble

before, because you don't have to sell them guns if they have been in trouble before. But if you don't check, you don't know. I think that's a good place to start.

But let me also say, you're from Chicago, right? I was in a junior high school in Chicago not very long ago called the Beasley Academic Center. It's a public school in Chicago. Do you know where it is? It's in a neighborhood with a very high crime rate. And they have police outside the school. Now, I know it's not a high school, it's a junior high school. There are police outside the school, but not in the school, because the teacher has to deal with—she's got 75 fathers a week coming to the school, 150 mothers a week coming to the school, and the kids have a whole strict code of conduct. They ask to go there, but there's no academic requirement. You know, if everybody asks to go and if there are too many who ask, then they do it by lottery. But the kids that go there really help to keep the peace in their own school, supporting the principal. And with the parents involved, I think that's real important, too.

I can provide extra help for law enforcement, but we've got to get more grassroots community people involved. I loved seeing you in that class. And I just hope that a year or two from now, all those other desks will be full, too. And don't you give up on your education, because—don't let anybody else, no matter what their problems are, take your future away from you. Only you can do that.

Mr. Jennings. You know, there's something else about Michael, which I'm not sure I'm right about. Michael, did I hear that some of the kids in your school teased you badly about coming to see the President?

Q. Yes.

The President. Why? Why did they do that?

Q. Because people don't believe that. People don't want to believe it.

The President. They don't believe that I care anything about them?

Q. Yes, in a way, you can say like that.

Mr. Jennings. Do you think the President's answer to you is—did it give you some satisfaction?

Q. Yes, it gave me a lot.

The President. Look, you know, when I was your age it was a lot easier to be young

than it is now. We worried about liquor and cigarettes. Nobody worried about drugs and guns. And I know it's hard to be young now. But I also know that if you get a good education, nobody can take that away from you. You can still have a good life. And there are people there who care about your education. And I'm going to do what I can to support them.

Home Schooling

Q. I'm home schooled; I don't go to school. And I was wondering what you thought about home schooling and what you were going to do about it, or if there was anything you were going to do?

Mr. Jennings. Can you explain what home schooling is?

Q. Yes, my parents teach me at home, so I don't go to school. They don't really believe some of the stuff that's being taught and done in the schools.

The President. I can tell you what I have done about it. Let me tell all of you this, just by way of background. The public schools of our country are largely run at the local level by school boards and school administrators. And the money for them and the rules by which they are run are largely set at the State level, by the State governments throughout the country. So you're from Virginia, right?

Q. Yes.

The President. So the State government in Richmond largely makes the rules for the public schools. I was a Governor before I became President. And while I was Governor, I supported and passed a law through our legislature which made home schooling legal and which supported home schooling and parents and children making the decision to be educated at home, as long as the children were willing to take examinations every year and prove that they were learning what they should be learning for people their age. And that's the way I feel. I think that your parents and you, as a family, should have the right to do this as long as you're learning. And if you can demonstrate that you're learning, I think you should have the right to do it.

Mr. Jennings. Can I interrupt, sir, because I don't think people really understand

why many parents want to teach or insist on teaching their children at home. A lot of it has to do with sex education, doesn't it?

The President. It's different for different people. I think there—and Katie, you can interrupt me or say what you think—but I have talked to a lot of parents and children who have been in the home schooling movement, and normally they fall into two groups. There is one group, perhaps the smaller one, who believe that they just give their kids a better education, that their kids learn more and more quickly. Then there's a second set of concerns which revolve around values. A lot of parents are really upset by what Michael just said, that kids go to school, they have to worry about being exposed to violence, to premature sex, to drugs, to things that they may not agree with. So there are what you might call the values objections, to things that children are exposed to, and then the academic objections.

Is that a fair statement?

Q. Yes.

Mr. Jennings. Who has got—somebody's got some questions about the White House. I want to make sure that I don't lose who has got questions about the White House.

White House Meals

Q. Does Hillary ever cook for you?

The President. Does Hillary ever cook for me? Sometimes.

Mr. Jennings. Do you ever cook?

The President. Believe it or not, sometimes we cook for each other. But we've been so busy lately we haven't had a chance to do it since we've been here. But Hillary's actually a pretty good cook. And I like to cook, but what I like to do is to make things like omelets. I love to make omelets. And sometimes on Sunday nights, Hillary and Chelsea and I will go into the kitchen, and I'll make everybody omelets and we'll sit around and talk.

So both of us like to cook, but we've been—you know, I asked Hillary to take charge of the health care problem and try to come up with a solution to it. And I've been working real hard on the economic problems, so neither of us has had much time to cook. And they have wonderful cooks here. As a matter of fact, Chelsea can tell you there

is a whole little kitchen where they don't do anything but make pastry and sweet things and desserts.

Mr. Jennings. They'd all hate that here, sir.

The President. Oh. [Laughter] So I've been mostly relying on those folks. But, yes, she does cook for me sometimes.

Mr. Jennings. What about Ellie, way at the back.

Q. My question is sort of serious.

Mr. Jennings. Well, if it's serious, let's hold it for one second, and we'll go to a commercial and come right back.

The President. Okay.

Mr. Jennings. Okay? My apologies.

[At this point, the television stations took a commercial break.]

Mr. Jennings. But you have to work on Omar here, because he told me he's a Republican. [Laughter]

When we were away for a commercial, some of these kids said you look a lot better in person than you do on television.

The President. Well, that's good news.

Mr. Jennings. You want to deal with that?

The President. Well, sometimes I have these big bags under my eyes when I don't get any sleep the night before if I work late, or when my allergies are bad. So I'm glad you think I look better. I feel better today.

Mr. Jennings. Carlos, what did you want to know? You want to know where Socks was?

Q. Yes.

The President. Socks is just around the corner and downstairs. He's here all the time.

DC School Closings

Q. Well, I also want to know something else. What are you going to do about what the school board is doing about closing 10 schools in every ward?

The President. Here?

Q. In DC.

The President. That's a different question because the Washington, DC, government does get some money directly from the Congress and the President. I can't answer that question today because I don't know whether they're closing down the schools because they don't have enough money to run them or because they have too many schools for

the kids that are there now. That is, a lot of school districts in America are losing school populations.

But I'll tell you what I'll do, I'll look into it. And I've got your address, and I'll write you a letter about it. Okay?

Q. There's a little more I need to tell you. Can you at least talk to them to not close the good ones? Because they might close my school, and my school is the only elementary school that's bilingual in all DC.

The President. You don't want them to do that, do you? Because we have a lot of bilingual kids in DC, don't we, now? Thank you. I'll look into that, and I'll get back in touch with you.

Proposed Handgun Legislation

Mr. Jennings. Okay. We have a phone call, Mr. President, and I think from Texas. Go ahead, Allison.

Q. What is the Brady bill?

Mr. Jennings. What is the Brady bill?

The President. Oh, what is the Brady bill? The Brady bill is the bill I was just actually talking about. It's a bill that would require people who want to buy handguns to wait for a few days while the people who sell the handguns check to see if they have committed a crime or if they have a mental health history or some other problem which would make it dangerous for them to get the handgun. And the Brady bill would require people to wait just a few days until that check is done.

I strongly support the Brady bill. Some people are against it. But I think it's a good idea just to wait a couple of days. I don't think it's much of an inconvenience for people who want to buy guns to ask them to wait so we can check their criminal history.

Gays in the Military

Mr. Jennings. I almost forgot you, Ellie. I'm sorry.

Q. The opposition to your recent attempt to lift the ban on the homosexuals in the military shows that as a society we're still very biased towards homosexuals. What are you going to do to help America as a nation accept them?

The President. Well, I think what's important about that issue to me is not that Americans agree with the lifestyle but that

they accept the fact that there are citizens in the United States who are homosexual, who work hard, who don't break laws, who pay their taxes, don't bother other people, who ought to have a chance to serve. And I just say that at every chance I get. And I have also been involved in giving some people the chance to serve who are homosexual, and I think that's important. I think that there are a lot of people whose religious beliefs dictate that the homosexual lifestyle is wrong. I don't ask them to give up their religious beliefs but simply to accept other people as people and give them a chance to be citizens as long as they're not doing anything wrong. That's my position on it.

Special Education

Mr. Jennings. Anastasia, you've had your hand up a lot. Maybe, Mr. President, you'd like to come and sit down for a second.

The President. Hi, Anastasia.

Mr. Jennings. Excuse me for one second for reaching over you. Come and sit here. Sara, you come and sit here if you would and let the President sit down.

The President. Okay.

Q. I have a twin sister and we go to the same school. But she can't speak. So because she can't speak, they've put her in a special class. But she uses computers to speak. And I would like her to be in a regular class just like me.

The President. Wow. And you think your sister could do just as well as you in a regular class?

Q. Yes.

The President. As long as she can use her computer. And her computer is on a little top just like this, isn't it?

Q. Yes. Well, you can put it on here and you can put it on regular tables also if—because you can carry it around. It's a little computer.

The President. And she talks to you by using it?

Q. Yes.

The President. Why do you think they put her in the special education class?

Q. I think it's because she couldn't talk. And they thought—the principal thinks that she can't do it because she can't use her hands and she can't speak.

The President. But you think that she could learn just as quickly if she were in a regular class?

Q. Yes.

The President. Have your parents asked the principal to put her in a regular class?

Q. Yes.

The President. And they said no?

Q. The principal said no.

The President. Well, you know, as President I can't do anything about that except to speak about it. But I'll tell you this, I have a friend named Hamp Rasco whose mother works for me here. And he's now 18 years old. He has cerebral palsy. And he doesn't speak quite as well as you, but he can probably speak a little more than your sister. And I watched him go all the way through high school and graduate from high school and get his graduation degree. And he lives out on his own now. And I'm going to do what I can to help people let all Americans go as far as they can. And I think young people who are working hard to prove they can do this kind of work ought to be given a chance to do it. And I think your sister should be given a chance to show whether she can work in the class or not.

That's what you think then? You just want her to have a chance to prove whether she can do it or not, right?

Q. Yes.

The President. And if she tried and she couldn't do it, then would you support her being in another class?

Q. Yes.

The President. So you just want your sister to have a chance.

Q. Yes.

The President. Good for you. Maybe she'll get it because we were here talking about this.

Mr. Jennings. I have a feeling. Thanks very much.

Q. You're welcome.

The President. Give her a hand. Wasn't that great? Thanks for sticking up for your sister. That's wonderful.

The Environment

Mr. Jennings. We have a phone call from Ian. Go ahead.

Q. President Clinton, how will you stop pollution in the United States?

Mr. Jennings. Just like that. [Laughter]

The President. Well, it's not quite that simple because you know we make pollution every day, Ian. When we drive our cars, we make pollution; when we run our factories, we make pollution. But there are two or three things we can do. Let me just mention them.

Number one, we have a Clean Air Act in the United States, designed to reduce the amount of pollution that goes into the air in the first place. I want to enforce that. Number two, I want to support clean water. We put a lot of stuff in our water. I want to reduce that. Number three, I want to try to do things that will help preserve the quality of the environment in the first place, like planting more trees and reforesting the land and building up the soil of the United States. I think we want to clean up the things that are being polluted, but we want to stop things from being polluted as much as possible. And then, finally, I'm trying to promote more energy conservation and cleaner energy. Like natural gas, for example, is the cleanest form of energy that we can burn. So I'm trying to promote the use of natural gas. Those are the things that I think we should do in the beginning.

Mr. Jennings. I don't think anybody in the East Room, Mr. President, feels as strongly about that as Pernell does. And I know he has a question to ask you, but before you ask your question, let's show the President a little bit about where you live.

[At this point, a short film was shown in which Pernell explained how environmental pollution has affected the health of his family.]

Mr. Jennings. Pernell comes from Garyville, Louisiana, and it's about a hundred miles' trip between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, right, Pernell?

Q. Yes.

Mr. Jennings. Where there are about a hundred petrochemical plants.

Q. Yes, Garyville, the small town that I live in, is right between the chemical corridor, which is the area between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. And Mr. President,

Many of you who have written are single parents. You're worried about paying your own bills today, but you're also worried about the lives of your children tomorrow. Your support is a symbol of selflessness, of the foresight and determination now catching fire across our Nation.

I received one letter from Rachel Nunamaker of San Jose, California. She's 83 years old, and she wrote, "Stick to your guns, you're on the right track." Well, I think Mrs. Nunamaker is right; we are on the right track. Already mortgage rates have fallen to their lowest level in 20 years, 20 years. With falling interest rates more people can afford loans to build their businesses, buy cars, or purchase houses. This is good news for everyone but especially for the young adults and middle class families who thought they would never be able to afford their own homes. That's an essential part of the American dream we're working hard to restore. And it can be restored.

Our plan will work. It cuts waste and inessential Government spending, and it increases public and private investments to create more jobs and rising incomes and to educate and train people better. It spreads the burden as fairly as possible, and the opportunity it promises will pay us back many times over. If we get America moving again, I don't care who gets the credit. Ultimately the credit will go to you, the American people. As a patriot once said to the citizens of our democracy, You are the beginning and the end. This is an exciting time to be an American, and we must not let this historic moment pass. We are rebuilding the American community and the American economy together.

On March the first we'll mark an anniversary that is especially significant to my generation. Thirty-two years ago President Kennedy inspired Americans to serve in the Peace Corps. On Monday I will discuss my proposal for a new form of voluntary national service. It's a plan to invest in our country's future, a call to action and to responsibility that will involve one of our most precious national resources, our young people. With national service, hundreds of thousands of students will have a chance to pursue higher education. Everyone with the desire to serve

will have the opportunity and will meet social needs that for too long have gone unaddressed. National service will be a great gift for the next generation of Americans.

In closing today, let me share with you another letter I received that arrived with an extraordinary gift. They come from George L. Baker of Sherwood, Arkansas, a retired Air Force major. After serving his country under extreme danger, Major Baker was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism. It is a recognition that George Baker should have kept for the rest of his life. But Major Baker sent that medal to me as a sign of his support for our economic program and to encourage me in this "quest for sanity in our national direction." And he closed his letter, "Godspeed, Mr. President." From the bottom of my heart, Major Baker, thank you for this most inspirational gift. With your help and with the help of Americans just like you all across this country, we will restore the vitality of the American economy and enjoy a nation united by the dreams we all share.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at the Adult Learning Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey March 1, 1993

Judy Kesin. Welcome, Mr. President. We are so thrilled and pleased and honored to have you with us today. And we also would like to welcome Governor Florio, the attorney general Del Tufo, Eli Segal from your office who works with national community service. This is just such a treat. My name is Judy Kesin, and I am the principal of the Adult Learning Center of the New Brunswick Public Schools. We are so thrilled you could visit our program.

[At this point, Ms. Kesin described the center's various educational and community service programs and the involvement of Rutgers University students, and then presented the President with a gift. Several participants

then explained how furthering their education and becoming involved in community service has changed their lives.]

The President. Well, first of all, I want to thank everyone who spoke. And maybe in a minute I could give some of you who haven't spoken a chance to say something, if you want to say something.

Let me tell you why I came here today. First of all, I've been very impressed by a lot of the efforts that the State of New Jersey has already made to serve people who need an education and need a second chance and to give people a chance to serve their communities.

Secondly, this center reflects two very important things that I'm trying to do in my national economic program that I'm asking the Congress to pass. The first is what I came here to talk about, and I'm going over to Rutgers to talk to the students about in a few moments, and that is the idea of giving people a chance to serve their country in their community, and in return, giving them the opportunity to further their education.

I've got the gentleman who was introduced here a minute ago with me to my right. Eli Segal and I have been friends since we were about your age, since we were very young. And I've asked him to head up our national and community service program. What we want to do is to provide young people the opportunity to do the following things.

Number one, if you go to college and you have loans outstanding, we want to give people the opportunity to go out in the community and do community service work, work as teachers or police officers or work with the homeless or work in hospitals or work on immunizing children who need it, and doing that for a lower rate of pay for a couple of years and then pay off their college loans by doing the same. Number two, we want to give people some credit for community service they do while they're in college. And number three, we want to give people like you the opportunity to earn some credits to get college or job training by doing community service before you go. So the idea is to make higher education available to more people, in return for the service they give to the community.

Now, in addition to all that, we're going to change the way young people pay their college loans back. We're going to make it possible for people who get out of college to pay their loans back as a percentage, a limited percentage, of their income. Because what happens now is a lot of young people get out of college, they have big college loans. Because they have to pay the loans back, they might want to get out, let's say, and do community service work which doesn't pay very much, but instead they may take a job paying a higher salary just to make their loan repayment. So we're going to try to restructure the college loan program so that if people want to serve over a long period of time, they won't be discouraged from taking community service type jobs just because they pay less. They'll be able to pay their loans back as a percentage of their income.

Now, the other thing I want to emphasize is there's also an investment in this education program that helps centers like this: more money for adult education for people who come back after dropping out of school, more money to help welfare mothers move from dependence to independence, more money to help young people who drop out of school and come back. When I was Governor of my State over the period of about 1983 to 1992, we increased by about 6 times the amount of investment in remaking education programs like this. It just exploded the number of people in it.

Now, why is that an important economic investment? Because this lady with her three children—it wasn't her fault that her husband, first of all, is out of the service and then gets hurt, right? She can either draw taxpayer dollars by taking public assistance, or get an education and pay taxes to educate other people's children. One of the things we have to realize in this country is that an economic investment is not just building an airport or a road or investing in new technology. It's also investing in people who are prepared to help themselves, to make sure that all of you can contribute in a world that is dominated by knowledge, in a world in which the living you make depends on what you know and what you can learn.

And if every person, if every single mother in the United States could stand up and give

in the first 4 years. If they don't, I would consider going back. But we can't let that become an absolute entitlement.

World Trade Center Bombing

Q. —economic aid, sir, to New York, and are you prepared to do that? Governor Cuomo has asked for it.

The President. This morning I got a report on that, and it's my understanding that we are going through the regular agencies and that the request will be processed promptly. I don't think that there is any problem with the request that he made as far as I understand it. And we're giving that a high priority.

Rutgers University and Community Service

Q. Mr. President, why did you choose Rutgers for this announcement? And what impressed you about their community service program here?

The President. I chose Rutgers because, first of all, the university was involved with this facility and because I want to keep highlighting adult education, education of welfare recipients, education of kids that drop out of school, and because I like this New Jersey Youth Program here. Under Governor Florio's administration, they started, I think, 9, 10, 11 of these, something like that. Again, I do not want this to be a bureaucratic program. I want to encourage kind of an entrepreneurial spirit out there at the State and local level. I want States to be encouraged to set up Youth Corps. I want comprehensive community service centers like this to be able to get people doing national service.

So I wanted to come here to say I really appreciate what these folks are doing, but also to give the rest of America an idea of what we mean by community service, what we mean by national service, and how it can embrace people of different ages and different backgrounds with different needs; because it's very important that to make this work, we're going to have to rely on the creativity of people at the grassroots level. And the last thing I want is another centralized bureaucracy telling people how to serve.

As I said, right now, the only decisions we have made for categories of service that have to be approved in every State are in the area

of police and teaching, because we know as a practical matter we need more community policing in high-crime areas where we can reduce crime and work with kids and not just be there after it happens. And we know we need more teachers in a lot of core areas to reduce the student-teacher ratio and increase learning. So we've done that. But otherwise, this program is not going to have a huge set of national requirements or bureaucracy.

Neighborhood Corps Bill

Q. Mr. President, how closely, if at all, did you work with Senator Bradley's neighborhood corps bill?

The President. We reviewed it very closely. I think he's going to meet us over at Rutgers today. I was very impressed by it. And as a matter of fact, I had a personal conversation with him about it. That's one of the reasons we wanted to come up here, too. And I invited him to come today, and I think he's going to be over there.

Terrorism in the U.S.

Q. Mr. President, do you fear that a fear of terrorism in America might change the way of life that most Americans have, if this bombing proves to be terrorism?

The President. I certainly hope not. We've been very blessed in this country to have been free of the kind of terrorist activity that has gripped other countries. Even a country like Great Britain, that has a much lower general crime rate, has more of that sort of activity because of the political problems that it has been involved in.

I don't want the American people to overreact to this at this time. I can tell you, I have put the—I will reiterate—I have put the full resources of the Federal Government, every conceivable law enforcement information resource we could put to work on this, we have. I'm very concerned about it. But I think it's also important that we not overreact to it. After all, sometimes when an incident like this happens, people try to claim credit for it who didn't do it. Sometimes if folks like that can get you to stop doing what you're doing, they've won half the battle. If they get you ruffled, if they get us to change the way we live and what we do, that's half the battle.

I would discourage the American people from overreacting to this. It's a very serious thing. And I'm heartbroken for the people who were killed and their families and those who were injured. There was some significant business disruptions, too, as you probably know and as I'm afraid we'll find out more about in the next day or two, just by shutting down the World Trade Center and all the activities that go on there. But I would plead with the American people and the good people of New York to right now keep your courage up, go on about your lives. And we're working as hard as we can to get to the bottom of this.

[At this point, a student expressed appreciation and support for community service ideals.]

Handgun Legislation

Q. The National Rifle Association right now, in New Jersey, is actively seeking to overturn the assault weapons ban that Governor Florio put on the books in 1990. They say if they're successful, then no other State will be able to enact rigid gun control and that you'll have a very tough time getting the Brady bill through Congress. Are you concerned about that?

The President. I think Governor Florio is right. And I'm going to sure try to pass the Brady bill. I think Americans who want safer streets and still want people to be able to hunt and fish and pursue their sporting activities should take a lot of heart in the success that Governor Wilder had in Virginia recently. And Virginia, it has become a source, as you know, of weapons for a lot of illegal activity all up and down the Atlantic seaboard. And they've gone to that once-a-month limitation on the purchase of guns.

You know, we can't be so fixated on our desire to preserve the rights of ordinary Americans to legitimately own handguns and rifles—it's something I strongly support—we can't be so fixated on that that we are unable to think about the reality of life that millions of Americans face on streets that are unsafe, under conditions that no other nation—no other nations—has permitted to exist. And at some point, I still hope that the leadership of the National Rifle Association will go back

to doing what it did when I was a boy and which made me want to be a lifetime member because they put out valuable information about hunting and marksmanship and safe use of guns. But just to know of the conditions we face today in a lot of our cities and other places in this country and the enormous threat to public safety is amazing.

I've got young Americans now in Somalia trying to create conditions of peaceful existence there in a country where it is difficult. But there are a lot of young Americans who are living in neighborhoods today that are about as dangerous or worse than what kids are facing in Somalia in terms of shots, not in terms of hunger and access to medicine and shelter, that's different.

But I have to tell you I think that Governor Florio did a gutsy thing here. I think Governor Wilder did a brave thing. I had my own encounters back home in Arkansas, and I just hope to be able to pass the Brady bill and do some other sensible things that do not unduly infringe on the right of the law-abiding citizen to keep and bear arms, but will help make these children's future safer. And I think we ought to do that.

Q. Do you think that the NRA's contribution to that threat that you just talked about because it is opposing these gun control measures?

The President. Well, I don't want to get into character. I think that it is an error for them to oppose every attempt to bring some safety and some rationality into the way we handle some of the most serious criminal problems we have. And these things do not unduly affect the right to keep and bear arms. It's not going to kill anybody to wait a couple of days to get a handgun while we do a background check on somebody that wants to buy a gun.

I have personal experience with this. I live in a State where half the people have a hunting or a fishing license. I know somebody who once sold a weapon to a person who went out and killed a bunch of people because he was an escapee from a mental hospital. And the guy liked to never get over it. And if he had just had a law where he was supposed to wait 2 or 3 days to check, they would have found that out. I know that happens. I don't believe that everybody in

America needs to be able to buy a semiautomatic or an automatic weapon, built only for the purpose of killing people, in order to protect the right of Americans to hunt and to practice marksmanship and to be secure in their own homes and own a weapon to be secure. I just don't believe that.

So I hope that this is a debate that will continue. And I think, as I said, what Governor Florio did and what Governor Wilder did, I think will contribute to Americans facing this and trying to reconcile our absolute obligation under the Constitution to give people the right to handle a firearm responsibly and our obligation to try to preserve peace and keep these kids alive in our cities.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. at the center.

Remarks on National Service at Rutgers University in New Brunswick

March 1, 1993

Thank you, Nakia Tomlinson, for that fine introduction. I wish I could take you with me everywhere. We'd make a great duo there. Let's give her another hand. I thought she was great. [Applause]

I'd like to thank President Frank Lawrence—Francis Lawrence—for his fine speech. Does anybody call him Frank? I should have asked. [Laughter] I want to compliment Professor Benjamin Barber for his leadership and service here. And I want to thank all of you here in the Rutgers community for coming out for what I hope will be a truly historic moment in our Nation's history.

In addition to the people who have been introduced here, there are a host of mayors and members of the assembly and county officials here from your State. We have two former Governors, both of whom I served with, Brendan Byrne and Tom Kean, who are out there. I'm glad to see them, my friends. We have a distinguished array of Members of the House from New Jersey, Herb Klein, Bob Menendez, Frank Pallone, Donald Payne.

But you have some Members of the Congress from all over America here, and I want to introduce them, too, because they have taken a lot of trouble to come to Rutgers and because without them and without the people who represent you, the proposal I make today has no hope of passage. Many Members of the Congress for years have believed we ought to do more in national service, and some of them are here today.

I'd like to begin by introducing your Senator, Bill Bradley, who's behind me. I must say, when I walked into this arena, I turned around and asked Bill Bradley if he'd ever shot any baskets in here. I'd be intimidated to be the opposing team in here. Senator Bradley sponsored legislation to establish neighborhood corps and self-reliance scholarships, things that are forebears of the proposal I came to make.

I'd like to recognize the presence on the platform of Senator Ted Kennedy from Massachusetts who chairs the Senate Committee on Human Resources and Education, which shepherded the pilot national and community service bill through the Congress in the last session, along with his counterpart who is out here in the audience somewhere. I'd like to ask him to stand up, the chairman of the House committee, Congressman Bill Ford, who came all the way from Michigan to be with us. Congressman, would you stand up.

I'd like to recognize in the audience the presence of Senator Chris Dodd from Connecticut, who was one of the first Peace Corps volunteers in the United States.

The Member of Congress who introduced many, many years ago the first piece of national service legislation ever introduced, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Claiborne Pell from Rhode Island is here.

I'd also like to introduce the only person in this audience, at least of our crowd, who doesn't have to look up to Senator Bradley, Senator Jay Rockefeller from West Virginia, an early VISTA volunteer in the United States.

And finally, I would like to recognize two other people, one a Member of the United States Senate and one a distinguished American citizen, the first boss of the Peace Corps,

Sargent Shriver, who's up here with me, and his deputy, Senator Harris Wofford, from Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Wofford, I'm glad to see you.

Now, I was involved before I became President in a group called the Democratic Leadership Council, and we made one of the central parts of our platform to reclaim a new majority of Americans for our party the establishment of a system of national service to help people to finance education. And one of our founding members and guiding lights is here, Representative Dave McCurdy from Oklahoma. I'd like for him to stand up.

Let me make this last point, if I might, by way of beginning. None of these things happen at the national level. We empower them to happen, and then people have to do things here at the grassroots. And I want to say a special word of thanks to your Governor for supporting the New Jersey Youth Corps and several other projects like it around the State, because if nobody's here to believe in this, it can't happen. And I thank Governor Florio for his support for these things.

I came here to ask all of you to join me in a great national adventure, for in the next few weeks I will ask the United States Congress to join me in creating a new system of voluntary national service, something that I believe in the next few years will change America forever and for the better.

My parents' generation won new dignity working their way out of the Great Depression through programs that provided them the opportunity to serve and to survive. Brave men and women in my own generation waged and won peaceful revolutions here at home for civil rights and human rights and began service around the world in the Peace Corps and here at home in VISTA.

Now, Americans of every generation face profound challenges in meeting the needs that have been neglected for too long in this country, from city streets plagued by crime and drugs, to classrooms where girls and boys must learn the skills they need for tomorrow, to hospital wards where patients need more care. All across America we have problems that demand our common attention.

For those who answer the call and meet these challenges, I propose that our country

honor your service with new opportunities for education. National service will be America at its best, building community, offering opportunity, and rewarding responsibility. National service is a challenge for Americans from every background and walk of life, and it values something far more than money. National service is nothing less than the American way to change America.

It is rooted in the concept of community: the simple idea that none of us on our own will ever have as much to cherish about our own lives if we are out here all alone as we will if we work together; that somehow a society really is an organism in which the whole can be greater than the sum of its parts, and every one of us, no matter how many privileges with which we are born, can still be enriched by the contributions of the least of us; and that we will never fulfill our individual capacities until, as Americans, we can all be what God meant for us to be.

If that is so, if that is true, my fellow Americans, and if you believe it, it must therefore follow that each of us has an obligation to serve. For it is perfectly clear that all of us cannot be what we ought to be until those of us who can help others, and that is nearly all of us, are doing something to help others live up to their potential.

The concept of community and the idea of service are as old as our history. They began the moment America was literally invented. Thomas Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence, "With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortune, and our sacred honor."

In the midst of the Civil War, President Lincoln signed into law two visionary programs that helped our people come together again and build America up. The Morrill Act helped States create new land grant colleges. This is a land grant university. The university in my home State was the first land grant college west of the Mississippi River. In these places, young people learn to make American agriculture and industry the best in the world. The legacy of the Morrill Act is not only our great colleges and universities like Rutgers but the American tradition that merit and not money should give people a chance for a higher education.

Remarks on Arrival in Detroit, Michigan

February 10, 1993

Thank you very, very much. Thank you for coming out on this cold day to make me feel warmly welcome to Michigan. I want to say how grateful I am to be back here again. This is my first trip out of the Nation's Capital as your President. The first time I've ever been on Air Force One, I flew here to Michigan.

I want to say a word of thanks to Chairman Dingell and your wonderful Congressman from this district, David Bonior, and all the Members of Congress who are here, and Senator Levin and Senator Riegle. I want to thank my good friend Governor Blanchard, who flew here with me from Washington. I want to thank all of you who are here, and I'd like to say a special word of thanks to the men and women in uniform who are here in this crowd who serve our Nation every day. I know you're grateful to them. I want to thank the people of Michigan, without whom I might well not be here as President today, for your support in November and your support in March, and, more importantly, maybe, for all the things that I learned here in Michigan.

When I was a boy, the first thing I ever knew about Michigan, growing up in Arkansas, was it was sort of the land of opportunity for our people who couldn't make a living on the farm anymore. They came here and became middle class citizens by working in the auto plants or by other industries that were successful. When I came here as a candidate for President, I didn't know whether I could do very well. And after I came home the first time, I called my wife. I said, "Every other person I met was from Arkansas; we're going to do all right up here." [Laughter]

People came here because Michigan was the American dream. When I came back to Michigan in this Presidential campaign I found a different picture, not all bad by any means but much more mixed. I saw in Michigan people who were developing new industries and new technologies and new hope for the future. I saw people working together across racial lines. But I also saw industries dying on the vine and people who had

worked all their lives losing jobs and losing their health care. And I saw people divided by race, too.

I saw everything about America writ large here in this State: all that is best, all that is most troubling. But I saw an awful lot of hope, too. Today when I left the White House to come here, we had a crowd of folks come out on the lawn to say goodbye, and when I knew that we'd bring in some folks just from the public who were there and some people who work in the White House, many of whom had never met the President before. And I had so many people who work in correspondence who were telling me that the letters are coming in at record rates here, massive numbers of letters for me, for my wife, for my daughter, people writing us about their hopes, their dreams, their new ideas.

I'm going to do a town hall meeting tonight, a televised meeting connecting four cities, not just Detroit but three others, too, and all across the country. You know, between June and November I did nine of those. But I started a year ago in New Hampshire doing them, because I believe that people like me shouldn't hide from the people who elected them. I think we ought to be accountable.

There will be many difficult and challenging days ahead. But if you'll stay in touch with me, if you'll let me hear the truth of your feelings and your ideas, when you agree and when you disagree, I think we can change this country. And if you will give courage to your elected officials and tell them that that's what you voted for, for a change, that as difficult as it may be to change, staying where we are is the most expensive course of all, we can do it.

You know, shortly after you elected me to President, I was given my first piece of good news and my first piece of bad news. The good news was that consumer confidence was up and people were feeling better and people thought we could change the economy; that American companies, in a tough global environment, were becoming more productive; that interest rates had come down some and people were financing their home loans. The bad news was that no new jobs were being created in our economy and

that incomes were not going up and that after the election it was announced that the Government deficit was going to be \$50 billion higher next year and just about that high every year thereafter during my term of office. And so I had to go back to the drawing board and figure out how we were going to put the American people first, take on the special interests, invest in jobs and incomes and deal with the health care crisis and still bring the deficit down, as I promised to do, and to do it in a way that is fair to the middle class, people who've worked hard and paid the bills for 12 years. It isn't easy, I'll tell you that. But I'm doing my best.

We have spent literally hours and hours and hours, the administration people and I, and I've met with large numbers of people in Congress, many people many times, since I became President just 3 weeks ago, doing almost nothing but focusing on this economy. And I am telling you I am confident that if we'll make some challenging decisions now and put this country on the right path, we can lift this economy up, we can create jobs, we can deal with the health care crisis and have a bright future.

But remember: Everywhere I went in this election I said, "Do not vote for me if you're going to quit on election day. Do not come to the Inaugural and celebrate the victory unless you're going to help us make the victory good." I need your help. I didn't see a single soul all those thousands of miles I traveled on those buses, stopping on the country roads and going to the big cities, I never did see a person holding up a sign saying, "Everything's just fine. Leave well enough alone." [Laughter] Not the first sign. Even the people who honestly disagreed with me on a whole range of issues never said they believed that we didn't have to have the courage to change.

And so tonight I ask you, watch what we do closely. If you think I'm wrong, call or write and tell me. But continue to support me with your prayers and your voice and your conviction, and give the Members of Congress the courage to change. That is what the election was all about. And we are going to try to make good on it.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:10 p.m. at the Selfridge Air National Guard Base. In his remarks, he referred to John D. Dingell, chairman, House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Remarks at a Town Meeting in Detroit

February 10, 1993

The President. Thank you, thank you very much. Let me, first of all, thank all of you for being here in Michigan, and thank our audiences in Washington and Georgia and Florida for joining us, and all the people across this country who are watching this event.

I started doing these televised town meetings a year ago in New Hampshire. Between June and November I did nine that were televised alone, including one here at this station. And I wanted to come out of the White House 3 weeks to the day after I became President because I can see now, after only 3 weeks, how easy it is for a President to get out of touch, to be caught up in the trappings of Washington, and basically to be told by people that nothing needs to be changed or you can't change things.

Let me just briefly say, I want to take as much time as possible for questions, but I want to say one or two things real quickly. I believe I got elected on a commitment to change America, to create jobs, try to raise incomes, to face the health care crisis, to try to liberate the Government from special interests and turn it back to the people, and to try to reduce the deficit and put America on a path to long-term health and recovery, bringing the American people together.

There's been some good news and bad news since I won the election. The good news is that productivity of American firms is up. People are buying houses because interest rates are down. Consumer confidence is up since the election. I like that. People think things are going to be better.

There's been some bad news. With all these economic improvements, we aren't generating new jobs. And the deficit of this country is about \$50 billion a year bigger than

Tax Increases

Bill Nigut. Mr. President, we're glad that you could join us by satellite from Detroit. We're going to start with Katie Rapkin, who works here for the Atlanta Symphony and who is a bit concerned about at least one of the campaign promises that she believes you made and yet she feels—you're not quite sure he's going to follow through on it.

Q. I'm concerned about your campaign promise to not raise the taxes for the middle class, how you intend to keep that promise.

Mr. Nigut. Did you vote for President Clinton?

Q. Yes, I did.

Mr. Nigut. Was that one reason you did?

Q. Yes, I did.

The President. Well, first of all, I did put out a plan which didn't contain a middle class tax increase, but I also repeatedly said, and I said in the debates in front of 100 million people, I refuse to say "read my lips." That's not responsible.

Now, what's happened since the election. We have been told since the election that the Federal debt every year is going to be \$50 billion bigger than we were told it was before the election. I wish I could promise you that I won't ask you to pay any more. But I can tell you this: Look what I'm doing. I'm doing my best to keep my campaign commitments.

I have, first of all, started by cutting the Government. I cut the White House staff by 25 percent yesterday. I bet that's never happened in the lifetime of anybody in this audience. And it's real cuts. Today I announce \$9 billion in cuts in the central administration of the Federal Government, \$9 billion. I have also said that before I ask the middle class to pay. I'm going to ask the wealthiest Americans and companies who made money in the eighties and had their taxes cut to pay their fair share. And I'm going to cut more Government spending. But I cannot tell you that I won't ask you to make any contribution to the changes we have to make.

We have got to do two things at the same time. We've got to bring the debt down for the reasons that the first questioner so clearly articulated. And secondly, we've got to invest more in creating new jobs, in educating peo-

ple, and providing health care for all Americans and controlling cost.

I'm doing my best to do that in a way that is fairest to middle class America. But I have to be honest with you; the debt is \$50 billion a year bigger than we were told it was before the election. I'm doing my best. I have done nothing almost for 3 weeks but wrestle with this budget, try to cut costs, and find ways to finance what we have to do. But we've got to change what we're doing.

Let me say I do have an alternative. I could play the same kind of games with you that have been played for the last 10 or 12 years. And this is not a partisan comment. This happened out of Washington. I could give you a bunch of smoke and mirrors and pretend the deficit is not there, and then 3 or 4 years from now we'd be spending 20 cents of every tax dollar paying off the debt. And it's not right.

So I'm going to do the best I can. Listen to what I say next week. Decide whether you think it's fair, and tell me and your Senators and Congressmen whether you think I'm right or wrong.

Crime and Gun Control

Mr. Bonds. Mr. President, there are a lot of people who are convinced that the Federal Government doesn't spend enough money battling crime. I don't have to tell you about the mean streets of America. This man is John Marbury. His son was killed in the city of Detroit for a leather jacket. Right, Mr. Marbury?

Q. Yes. I would like to ask Mr. Clinton what advice would he give to the administrations of these large urban areas of how to get rid of these illegal handguns and curbing the violence with an immediate impact?

The President. I wish I knew how to have an immediate impact. And I thank you for having the courage to come here tonight, with all the pain you must feel.

Let me tell you where I think we ought to begin. We ought to begin by passing the crime bill that nearly passed last year, which does two things: It gives the urban areas of this country more police officers for the streets. I have been in areas that were dominated by drugs, by weapons, and by murders, which are now virtually crime-free because

they have enough policemen. They have neighborhood policemen walking the streets on every block, working with their neighbors. That's the first thing.

The second thing that bill has is the Brady bill that would require a waiting period before people could buy handguns.

And the third thing we probably ought to do is do what Governor Wilder in Virginia is trying to do. It takes a lot of guts to do that, but he's trying to pass a law which says that you can't buy a handgun more than once a month. Try to stop all these people that go to legal gun stores and buy guns and then turn around and just give them to kids like they're going out of style.

So those are three places that I think we ought to start. And if you've got any other ideas, I'd like to have them. I think the problem of violence among young people, particularly in our inner cities and not all big cities, is maybe the biggest problem we've got today in terms of their future and the future of our cities.

I'm now preparing a jobs package for the Congress that I want to try to boost the job-creating capacity of the economy for the next year or so while we bring the deficit down, because I don't want unemployment to go up. And one of the things I want to do is give extra incentives for companies to invest in inner cities. But they're not going to do it if they think it's not safe. You can't have a job in a place where people can't walk to work safely.

Mr. Bonds. The most powerful lobby perhaps in the U.S. Congress is the NRA, and they don't want gun control. How are you going to overcome that?

The President. We're going to fight to change. All I can tell you is, that's what I hired on to do. I may not win every battle I fight, but that's one of the changes we ought to make. And let me say, I live in a State where more than half the people have a hunting or fishing license or both. I believe in the right to keep and bear arms. I believe in the right to hunt. I believe in all this. I do not believe that we're well served by having a bunch of 14- or 15-year-old kids out there with handguns shooting each other because of blood battles between gangs or because they're mad or because they're high

on drugs. It's wrong. We've got to do something about it.

Mr. Bonds. We've had some difficulty linking up with our station out in Seattle. We switch there now to Ken Schramm, KOMO.

Aerospace Industry

Ken Schramm. Thanks, Bill. I'd like to introduce Larry Brown, who is a machinist with the Boeing Company. I'm going to go out on a limb here and suggest that perhaps you have a question concerning the economy.

Q. I certainly do. Good evening, Mr. President.

The President. Good evening, Larry.

Q. Yesterday the Boeing Company announced that there would be 16,000 layoffs here in Seattle. Recently, Pratt Whitney announced 10,000 layoffs, and over 200,000 aerospace workers have lost their jobs in southern California. At last report, the governments in Europe involved with the airbus consortium have subsidized their industry to a tune of \$26 billion. My question is, how can America meet the challenge of maintaining our leadership in the very important aerospace industry?

The President. The answer, I think, is twofold: First, a lot of those aerospace workers who lost their jobs, lost their jobs because of cutbacks in defense which had to come at the end of the cold war. That is, we couldn't keep spending so much more than all of our competitors in these high-wage countries on defense without paying an economic price for it. But we shouldn't have cut defense as much as we did in terms of high-tech, high-wage employment without a plan to reinvest in other industries, in other technologies, to put those people to work. So the first thing we have to do is to invest more in converting these high-wage jobs to other technologies.

The second thing we need to do, frankly, is to take a serious look at the aerospace industry itself. The Congress passed a bill last year that was never enacted that we're now trying to get up and going, where I will appoint someone and they will appoint some people to a commission to focus on how to rebuild the aviation industry in our country in two ways: Number one, people who work for Boeing, McDonnell Douglas, and other

Q. Why do you think we're different?

The President. —questions to challenge me, I like it.

Q. Why do you think the press is not with you?

The President. Why what?

Q. You said the press is not in your world.

The President. Why, what do you mean?

Q. We think differently or something?

Q. You said we think differently.

The President. No, no, I said just on—what was I talking about? [Laughter]

Q. Washington.

Q. Press corps.

The President. No, no, no, there was a specific question.

Q. Press conferences among the White House press corps. And you said I answered that question—

The President. —the question was about. You've got to get—before you lay that on me, you've got to put it in proper context now. What was—

Q. Okay, you said we see the world differently.

The President. Well, I think sometimes you do, but that's what you're hired to do. That's your job.

Q. Is it a man for Attorney General, sir?

The President. It's a lawyer. How's that?

NOTE: The exchange began at 1:50 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Exchange With Reporters Following a Meeting With Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe of Japan February 11, 1993

The President. We just had a very serious trade talk here. We decided that when all the people came in and took all the pictures that I was contributing to the Japanese trade surplus because of all the film that was being shot.

Q. Are you relieved, sir, that you have finally settled upon an Attorney General?

The President. I'll discuss that at 4:30 p.m.

Q. Are you asking for greater access for American goods in Japan?

The President. This is just the beginning of our relationship. We had a little talk about trade. And Minister Watanabe said that he thought that we shouldn't become protectionist in our relationship. And I agreed, but I said I thought we had to bring the trade deficit down and that I would be working with him on it very firmly.

Q. Did he agree to that?

The President. Yes, he agreed. As a matter of fact, he discussed some things that he thought would be done. So we had a good talk. But it was very preliminary. You shouldn't attach any burden on him because he came to see me today.

Q. So you're going to be friends?

The President. Well, I think we'll be friends and we'll have a few disagreements and a lot of agreements.

Q. So is this lawyer you mentioned a woman?

The President. At 4:30 p.m.

Q. At each photo op you go a little bit further.

Q. Will we see her on the way out?

The President. I hope not.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room and another group entered.]

Q. Mr. President, will you meet with the Japanese Prime Minister by the end of March? Have any plans?

The President. I don't think a specific date has been set yet, but I want very much to meet with him in the near future. The Japanese-American relationship is very important, not only to Japan and to America but to the rest of the world. And I think it's important that we meet pretty soon, and I'm trying to set it up now.

Q. Was there a big agenda for this meeting, today's meeting?

The President. Was there a big agenda? Well, we talked for a good while, as you probably know, about a wide range of things,—everything from the AIDS crisis, to the situation in Russia, to the GATT round, to the necessity of resolving the trade differences between our two countries.

It was a good first meeting. I thought it was a good first meeting.

Q. —diplomatic?

The President. It's my job.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:35 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House.

The President's News Conference With Attorney-General-Designate Janet Reno

February 11, 1993

Nomination of Janet Reno To Be Attorney General

The President. Good afternoon. One of my central missions as President is to reconnect the Government of the American people with the people who sent us here. Government cannot be an abstract, distant entity. It must be directly linked to the real lives of real people. I pledged when I ran to reach beyond Washington to bring the best from America's statehouses and court-houses to our Government. And I believe that my Cabinet and other appointees have fulfilled that pledge so far.

No agency needs an injection of innovative spirit more than the Department of Justice. Americans demand and deserve freedom from crime in their homes, at their schools, and on the streets. Talking tough is easy. Actually getting results is much more difficult and much more rare.

Thousands of prosecutors and police across America have been developing successful ways to fight crime and, just as important, to restore the sense of security that makes community possible in our Nation. I expect my Justice Department to take those lessons and apply them nationally, to be an innovator for law enforcement.

After years of political controversy and abuse, the Justice Department also needs an Attorney General who will bring a sense of pride, integrity, and new energy to that agency. The Department's dedicated career staff need leadership to help the Department pull together to focus on the urgent interests and issues of justice and law that brought the employees of the Justice Department into public service in the first place. They need an

administrator schooled in the management of tough and complex problems and difficult-to-call legal cases, things that affect matters in the office and on the streets of America.

I am proud to announce today that I intend to nominate Janet Reno, the State attorney from Miami and Dade County, Florida, to be our next Attorney General. She is a front-line crime fighter and a caring public servant. She has devoted her life to making her community safer, keeping children out of trouble, reducing domestic violence, and helping families. She has truly put people first.

She grew up as the daughter of two respected Florida journalists. She worked her way through Cornell University, graduating in 1960. Three years later, in 1963, she was one of a handful of women to graduate from the Harvard Law School, a year behind her distinguished Senator, Bob Graham. After a decade in the private practice of law, she was appointed the State attorney in 1978.

Janet Reno is ready to tackle the Justice Department's problems. Serving successfully as the chief prosecutor in a complex, diverse urban community is a really tough job. And she had done that job and done it well. She supervises an office of 900, including 230 attorneys. Her office handles over 120,000 cases per year, 40,000 of them felonies, and has won 80 capital punishment convictions for first degree murderers since she became prosecutor.

She has pioneered innovative programs to reduce crime, violence, and drug abuse. She launched a drug court program that has become nationally acclaimed that gets young first-time offenders back on track. She's piloted a community policing program, helping to reduce crime in blighted urban areas, something we want to do all across America. She began one of the first and best domestic violence programs combating spousal and child abuse. She runs a tough child support program that is at the leading edge of making deadbeat parents pay up.

She has been a fair-minded and effective prosecutor. Her balanced approach has won wide praise from across the community, from law enforcement, the bar, community leaders, civil rights leaders. People from all walks of life have hailed her achievements and her

fore. And I really believe—I'm not sure you could find anybody around the country that would get any more favorable and broad-based support than I have been given in spontaneous comments. I just left a Member of the House of Representatives who doesn't live within 200 miles of Janet Reno, who heard that I was going to name her and just went out of his way to tell me that it was a great appointment, what a wonderful thing it was that I had done. I feel very comfortable with this appointment on the merits.

Law Enforcement

Q. Mr. President, given the tight budget constraints that you have been focusing on over the past weeks, how do you and this Attorney General plan to go about fulfilling your campaign promise to hire 100,000 police officers for this country?

The President. Well, I think there are three things that I would point you to, and keep in mind we don't have to do it in the first year. We have—when you all talked to me about my campaign commitments, remember I've got a 4-year term—[laughter]—at least that.

I want to do that from three sources:

Number one: I hope we can bring that crime bill back up that almost passed but didn't last time and have some funds for local law enforcement to hire more police officers.

Number two: I want to proceed at a pace with the national service program, which will give priority in every State to people who want to pay their college loans back by working as police officers.

Number three: I want to pursue the idea that Senator Nunn first raised, at least he was the first one I ever heard raise it, of helping people who are going to be mustered out of the military service to qualify to move quickly into careers as police officers or teachers.

And so, we believe from those three sources, with the funding that I have set aside in the budget I will recommend, and the other things that we will do over the next 4 years, we will be able to meet that goal.

Susan [Susan Spencer, CBS News].

Selection Process

Q. Is it safe to assume that Ms. Reno has, a, never hired an illegal alien, legally or ille-

gally; b, paid all her Social Security taxes? And finally, as you look back on the soap opera that has led to this, how do you assess whatever political damage you may or may not have incurred?

The President. Oh, I don't think there is much. I think what happened—I just would remind you, though, I nominated one other person for this, Zoe Baird, and I took responsibility for that fact that our vetting procedure was inadequate. It was my personal responsibility. Since then, all the other things that you have written about are things that you found out about in ways that I don't know, but our procedure worked and worked quite well. And I didn't discuss anybody or anything until I got ready to nominate somebody else. So I think they did a good job.

If there were any mistakes made in the interim, it was people who worked here, worked around here, or were talked to by us who said things to you they shouldn't have. But otherwise, the system worked pretty well as it was supposed to have worked.

Q. First question: we can assume that all of these other matters are not a problem?

The President. Well, why don't you ask her?

Attorney-General-Designate Reno. I've never hired any illegal aliens, and I think I've paid all my Social Security taxes. Certainly in the vetting process in the last week we've covered everything.

The Vice President. She made sure that a lot of others have, too.

Q. Mr. President, to the extent that you wanted to fulfill these commitments, did you feel hamstrung by the pledge or the perception of a pledge that you had set aside this job for a woman?

The President. No.

Q. And part two, if we can ask Ms. Reno, we never got an answer to Ruth's question about how she feels about being appointed to a job in which there is that perception of a pledge.

The President. No. As I said, I interviewed—I even talked to—I don't know how it didn't get into the paper, but it didn't—both men as well as women about this job. And I seriously considered, seriously considered, at least four men for this job. I really concluded in the end that Janet Reno would

be best. I never felt hamstrung by any commitment, even though I did want to name a woman Attorney General. I thought it would be a good thing. There are a lot of women lawyers in the country, a lot of women judges in the country, a lot of women prosecutors in the country. And I thought it would be a good and interesting thing to do. But I never felt hamstrung by the commitment.

Attorney-General-Designate Reno. I think this is one of the greatest challenges that any lawyer could have in America. And I want to try my level-best. I have been so impressed with members of the administration and with the vetting team and with the approach to Government, the approach that Government can work to put people first. And I'm just delighted to be here, and I'm going to try my level-best.

Nominee's Qualifications

Q. Are you a feminist?

The President. You want to answer that?

Q. Are you a feminist?

Attorney-General-Designate Reno. The question is whether I'm a feminist. My mother always told me to do my best, to think my best and to do right and consider myself a person.

The President. I do think I need to make one factual disclosure and then I promise to call on Mr. [inaudible]. There was one factor which affected me about Janet Reno, which is that Senator Gore and I carried—when he was Senator and I was Governor—we carried Dade County in the Presidential election by 4 percentage points. The last time Janet Reno had an opponent she carried it by 40 percentage points. [Laughter] That had a lot more to do than gender with convincing me that she could handle things at the Justice Department. If you know anything about Dade County, you know that is a truly astonishing achievement.

Q. If I could ask Ms. Reno, the President mentioned that he was attracted to your experience as a State prosecutor which gave you a lot of experience on the criminal law side. But you obviously haven't had direct experience with a number of Federal issues that will come up, constitutional issues that will come up. Do you feel that you'll have

a substantial learning curve that you'll have to get over in order to be able to deal with those Federal law issues that you haven't been dealing with in your career, certainly for the last 15 years?

Attorney-General-Designate Reno. I think one of the splendors of the law is that it covers so many areas and that if you're going to be Attorney General, it's going to be very difficult for any one person to be skilled and to be experienced in every area that the Attorney General must cover. I think I can do the job, and I think I can do it by building a team dedicated to excellence, to professionalism, a team where the hallmark is integrity. And using the base of the tremendous career lawyers that exist in the Department of Justice, I think we're going to have a great team.

Q. Mr. President, this has been a frustrating process for you in some ways. If you had it to do all over again, what would you do differently?

The President. Oh, I would have called Janet Reno on November the 5th. [Laughter]

Immigration Law

Q. Ms. Reno lives in an area which is full of immigrants, legal and illegal, and a lot of things about the confusing laws of immigration came out in the past few weeks, as we all know. What will she do to clear up all these problems?

Attorney-General-Designate Reno. Again, what I would like to do is work with members of the administration, members of the Department of Justice, to look at the problem, to consult with the President, and to make recommendations based on a thorough study of the matter.

Abortion

Q. Can you tell us your views on freedom of choice?

Attorney-General-Designate Reno. I am pro-choice.

Florida Corruption Investigation

Q. Ms. Reno, could I ask a question? The county—Dade County—some of the critics have said that you have passed along questions of local corruption, government corruption, to the Federal courts and the Federal

Ministry of Industry and Minerals et al., No. 90-2269 (D.D.C., filed December 29, 1992), arose out of a contract for the sale of furnaces by plaintiff to the Iraqi Ministry of Industry and Minerals ("MIM"), an Iraqi governmental entity. In connection with the contract, the Iraqi defendants opened an irrevocable letter of credit with an Iraqi bank in favor of Consarc, which was advised by Pittsburgh National Bank ("PNB"), with the Bank of New York ("BoNY") entering into a confirmed reimbursement agreement with the advising bank. Funds were set aside at BoNY, in an account of the Iraqi bank, for reimbursement of BoNY if PNB made a payment to Consarc on the letter of credit and sought reimbursement from BoNY. Consarc received a down payment from the Iraqi MIM and manufactured the furnaces. No goods were shipped prior to imposition of sanctions on August 2, 1990, and the United States claimed that the funds on deposit in the Iraqi bank account at BoNY were blocked, as well as the furnaces manufactured for the Iraqi Government or the proceeds of the sale of the furnaces to third parties. The district court ruled that the furnaces or their sales proceeds were properly blocked pursuant to the declaration of the national emergency and blocking of Iraqi Government property interests, but that, due to fraud on MIM's part in concluding the sales contract, the funds on deposit in an Iraqi bank account at BoNY were not the property of the Government of Iraq, and ordered FAC to unblock these funds. FAC has noted its appeal of this ruling.

7. FAC has issued a total of 337 specific licenses regarding transactions pertaining to Iraq or Iraqi assets since August 1990. Since the last report, 49 specific licenses have been issued. Licenses were issued for transactions such as the filing of legal actions involving Iraqi interests, for legal representation of Iraq, and the exportation to Iraq of donated medicine, medical supplies, and food intended for humanitarian relief purposes.

To ensure compliance with the terms of the licenses which have been issued, stringent reporting requirements have been imposed that are closely monitored. Licensed accounts are regularly audited by FAC compliance personnel and deputized auditors

from other regulatory agencies. FAC compliance personnel continue to work closely with both State and Federal bank regulatory and law enforcement agencies in conducting special audits of Iraqi accounts subject to the ISR.

8. The expenses incurred by the Federal Government in the 6-month period from August 2, 1992, through February 1, 1993, that are directly attributable to the exercise of powers and authorities conferred by the declaration of a national emergency with respect to Iraq are estimated at about \$2 million, most of which represents wage and salary costs for Federal personnel. Personnel costs were largely centered in the Department of the Treasury (particularly in FAC, the U.S. Customs Service, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Enforcement, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs, and the Office of the General Counsel), the Department of State (particularly the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, the Bureau of Near East and South Asian Affairs, the Bureau of International Organizations, and the Office of the Legal Adviser), the Department of Transportation (particularly the U.S. Coast Guard), and the Department of Commerce (particularly in the Bureau of Export Administration and the Office of the General Counsel).

9. The United States imposed economic sanctions on Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion and illegal occupation of Kuwait, a clear act of brutal aggression. The United States, together with the international community, is maintaining economic sanctions against Iraq because the Iraqi regime has failed to comply fully with United Nations Security Council resolutions, including those calling for the elimination of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, the inviolability of the Iraq-Kuwait boundary, the release of Kuwaiti and other third country nationals, compensation for victims of Iraqi aggression, long-term monitoring of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) capabilities, and the return of Kuwaiti assets stolen during its illegal occupation of Kuwait. The U.N. sanctions remain in place; the United States will continue to enforce those sanctions.

The Saddam Hussein regime continued to violate basic human rights by repressing the



Iraqi civilian population and depriving it of humanitarian assistance. The United Nations Security Council passed resolutions that permit Iraq to sell \$1.6 billion of oil under U.N. auspices to fund the provision of food, medicine, and other humanitarian supplies to the people of Iraq. Under the U.N. resolutions, the equitable distribution within Iraq of this assistance would be supervised and monitored by the United Nations. The Iraqi regime continued to refuse to accept these resolutions and has thereby chosen to perpetuate the suffering of its civilian population.

The regime of Saddam Hussein continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, as well as to regional peace and security. Because of Iraq's failure to comply fully with United Nations Security Council resolutions, the United States will therefore continue to apply economic sanctions to deter Iraq from threatening peace and stability in the region, and I will continue to report periodically to the Congress on significant developments, pursuant to 50 U.S.C. 1703(c).

William J. Clinton

The White House,
February 16, 1993.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With the Congressional Leadership

February 17, 1993

Economic Program

Q. Mr. President, if you count Social Security as a tax increase, you don't have a one-to-one ratio. Are you going to have enough cuts in this program to be able to sell this thing?

The President. I think so. There are 150 specific ones, and I'll be glad to entertain some more if anybody's got any specific ideas.

The Vice President. At this point—

Q. Can you honestly say, as Senator Dole has asked, that you have made all the cuts you could possibly make in this program?

The President. I can honestly say I've made more specific cuts that affect me personally than I can think that any of my predecessors have made and that I intend to find more as I go along. I've just been here 4 weeks, and I'll continue to work on it. But I've made an awful lot of cuts; I'm going to make some more.

Q. Have you convinced Senator Dole and Michel and all of the other Republican leaders? And did you call Ross Perot?

The President. My duty is to try to convince them that I will.

The Vice President. In the words of the old hymn, "they're almost persuaded."

The President. I thought that was a country and western song. [Laughter]

Q. They don't look it.

Q. How about Ross Perot, Mr. President?

Jogging Track

Q. Why build a jogging track when you're making cuts across the board in Government?

The President. I thought the thing was going to be paid for with contributions; that's what I was told. I think it would be a good thing to have but I think if we can pay for it with contributions, otherwise I don't think we ought to spend any tax money on it.

Q. You don't have an alternative way to pay for it?

The President. I was told that the stuff had been donated already. I told them if it was all going to be donated, it was fine with me if it was built. That's what I was told from the very beginning, so that's all I know about it.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:22 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on Administration Goals February 17, 1993

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the House and the Senate, distinguished Americans here as visitors in this Chamber, as am I. It is nice to have a fresh excuse for giving a long speech. [Laughter]

make history. We will reward the work of millions of working poor Americans by realizing the principle that if you work 40 hours a week and you've got a child in the house, you will no longer be in poverty.

Later this year, we will offer a plan to end welfare as we know it. I have worked on this issue for the better part of a decade. And I know from personal conversations with many people that no one, no one wants to change the welfare system as badly as those who are trapped in it. I want to offer the people on welfare the education, the training, the child care, the health care they need to get back on their feet, but say after 2 years they must get back to work, too, in private business if possible, in public service if necessary. We have to end welfare as a way of life and make it a path to independence and dignity.

Our next great goal should be to strengthen our families. I compliment the Congress for passing the Family and Medical Leave Act as a good first step, but it is time to do more. This plan will give this country the toughest child support enforcement system it has ever had. It is time to demand that people take responsibility for the children they bring in this world.

And I ask you to help to protect our families against the violent crime which terrorizes our people and which tears our communities apart. We must pass a tough crime bill. I support not only the bill which didn't quite make it to the President's desk last year but also an initiative to put 100,000 more police officers on the street, to provide bootcamps for first-time nonviolent offenders for more space for the hardened criminals in jail, and I support an initiative to do what we can to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. Let me say this. I will make you this bargain: If you will pass the Brady bill, I'll sure sign it.

Let me say now, we should move to the harder parts.

I think it is clear to every American, including every Member of Congress of both parties, that the confidence of the people who pay our bills in our institutions in Washington is not high. We must restore it. We must begin again to make Government work for ordinary taxpayers, not simply for organized interest groups. And that beginning

must start with real political reform. I am asking the United States Congress to pass a real campaign finance reform bill this year. I ask you to increase the participation of the American people by passing the motor voter bill promptly. I ask you to deal with the undue influence of special interest by passing a bill to end the tax deduction for lobbying and to act quickly to require all the people who lobby you to register as lobbyists by passing the lobbying registration bill.

Believe me, they were cheering that last section at home. I believe lobby reform and campaign finance reform are a sure path to increased popularity for Republicans and Democrats alike because it says to the voters back home, "This is your House. This is your Senate. We're your hired hands, and every penny we draw is your money."

Next, to revolutionize Government we have to ensure that we live within our means, and that should start at the top and with the White House. In the last few days I have announced a cut in the White House staff of 25 percent, saving approximately \$10 million. I have ordered administrative cuts in budgets of Agencies and Departments. I have cut the Federal bureaucracy, or will over the next 4 years, by approximately 100,000 positions, for a combined savings of \$9 billion. It is time for Government to demonstrate, in the condition we're in, that we can be as frugal as any household in America.

And that's why I also want to congratulate the Congress. I noticed the announcement of the leadership today that Congress is taking similar steps to cut its costs. I think that is important. I think it will send a very clear signal to the American people.

But if we really want to cut spending, we're going to have to do more, and some of it will be difficult. Tonight I call for an across-the-board freeze in Federal Government salaries for one year. And thereafter, during this 4-year period, I recommend that salaries rise at one point lower than the cost of living allowance normally involved in Federal pay increases.

Next, I recommend that we make 150 specific budget cuts, as you know, and that all those who say we should cut more be as specific as I have been.

Finally, let me say to my friends on both sides of the aisle, it is not enough simply to cut Government; we have to rethink the whole way it works. When I became President I was amazed at just the way the White House worked, in ways that added lots of money to what taxpayers had to pay, outmoded ways that didn't take maximum advantage of technology and didn't do things that any business would have done years ago to save taxpayers' money.

So I want to bring a new spirit of innovation into every Government Department. I want to push education reform, as I said, not just to spend more money but to really improve learning. Some things work, and some things don't. We ought to be subsidizing the things that work and discouraging the things that don't. I'd like to use that Superfund to clean up pollution for a change and not just pay lawyers.

In the aftermath of all the difficulties with the savings and loans, we must use Federal bank regulators to protect the security and safety of our financial institutions, but they should not be used to continue the credit crunch and to stop people from making sensible loans.

I'd like for us to not only have welfare reform but to reexamine the whole focus of all of our programs that help people, to shift them from entitlement programs to empowerment programs. In the end we want people not to need us anymore. I think that's important.

But in the end we have to get back to the deficit. For years there's been a lot of talk about it but very few credible efforts to deal with it. And now I understand why, having dealt with the real numbers for 4 weeks. But I believe this plan does; it tackles the budget deficit seriously and over the long term. It puts in place one of the biggest deficit reductions and one of the biggest changes in Federal priorities, from consumption to investment, in the history of this country at the same time over the next 4 years.

Let me say to all the people watching us tonight who will ask me these questions beginning tomorrow as I go around the country and who've asked it in the past: We're not cutting the deficit just because experts say it's the thing to do or because it has some

intrinsic merit. We have to cut the deficit because the more we spend paying off the debt, the less tax dollars we have to invest in jobs and education and the future of this country. And the more money we take out of the pool of available savings, the harder it is for people in the private sector to borrow money at affordable interest rates for a college loan for their children, for a home mortgage, or to start a new business.

That's why we've got to reduce the debt, because it is crowding out other activities that we ought to be engaged in and that the American people ought to be engaged in. We cut the deficit so that our children will be able to buy a home, so that our companies can invest in the future and in retraining their workers, so that our Government can make the kinds of investments we need to be a stronger and smarter and safer nation.

If we don't act now, you and I might not even recognize this Government 10 years from now. If we just stay with the same trends of the last 4 years, by the end of the decade the deficit will be \$635 billion a year, almost 80 percent of our gross domestic product. And paying interest on that debt will be the costliest Government program of all. We'll still be the world's largest debtor. And when Members of Congress come here, they'll be devoting over 20 cents on the dollar to interest payments, more than half of the budget to health care and to other entitlements. And you'll come here and deliberate and argue over 6 or 7 cents on the dollar, no matter what America's problems are. We will not be able to have the independence we need to chart the future that we must. And we'll be terribly dependent on foreign funds for a large portion of our investment.

This budget plan, by contrast, will by 1997 cut \$140 billion in that year alone from the deficit, a real spending cut, a real revenue increase, a real deficit reduction, using the independent numbers of the Congressional Budget Office. [Laughter] Well you can laugh, my fellow Republicans, but I'll point out that the Congressional Budget Office was normally more conservative in what was going to happen and closer to right than previous Presidents have been.

I did this so that we could argue about priorities with the same set of numbers. I

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Little Rock, Arkansas)

For Immediate ReleaseJanuary 3, 1995

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AFTER DUCK HUNTING

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, everybody.

Q Was it a fair fight?

THE PRESIDENT: Two for two. We only saw two.

Q You've got two there?

THE PRESIDENT: Yep.

Q Is that the limit?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but it was our limit today because it's all we saw.

Q And are you responsible for their demise, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I shot them both. They let me shoot them, so I shot them.

Q It's cold and it's wet out there. Where's the fun part?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the most fun part is just being out there when the light comes up and seeing the ducks come across. We had a lot of geese, too. You know, the geese fly in these huge V formations; they're really beautiful.

And we all shot them with weapons, I might add, that were not affected by the crime bill, except they were protected.

Q What kind of weapons?

THE PRESIDENT: We all had our different shotguns. But I just want to make that point to all the sportsmen and women who are watching this. Contrary to what some of them were told in the last election, we're all still hunting and nobody has lost their gun. And we did the right thing to ban the assault weapons.

But I had a great time out there today. The best thing, like I said, about it today was just watching -- on a cloudy day like this the ducks can see the hunters, so they're less likely to come down in large numbers, but we saw a huge number of them flying around. It was quite beautiful.

Q Are they fooled by the duck calls?

THE PRESIDENT: On a clear day the duck calls help.

Q Can we hear your technique?

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughter.) The duck call -- no. (Laughter.) I got this -- this duck call is made in Stuttgart, Arkansas, which is close to here, where they have the international duck calling championship every year. And the man that made this call is now the mayor of the city.

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Q Does it work?

THE PRESIDENT: It works fine.

Q -- six dollars at the Walmart -- (blows duck call). (Laughter.)

THE PRESIDENT: Do it, do it. (Laughter.)

Q (Blows it again.) What do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: A little more down here. (Laughter.)

Q I'm from Brooklyn.

THE PRESIDENT: For Brooklyn it's good. (Laughter.)

Q Do you feel like you're really on vacation now, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- well, I wish I had a little more time to spend. But it was wonderful. We had a great time out there, and I -- I'm here with some old friends.

Q The male bonding kind of thing?

THE PRESIDENT: (Laughter.) Well, the guys I was here with, the ones I was here with today, we bonded a long time ago. (Laughter.) They may be interested in unbonding. (Laughter.)

Q Do you eat the ducks?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. Yes, we're just trying to figure -- I'm sitting here trying to figure out how I can get them back to the White House.

Q Do you clean them?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not lately I haven't. When I was younger I did that. I probably -- maybe I'll do it again.

Q How far off are they when you shoot them?

THE PRESIDENT: How far were these away?

HUNTER: The white one was a long way.

THE PRESIDENT: One of them was -- how far were they, Bob?

BOB: Oh, anywhere from 70 to 80 yards. The President made two great shots.

THE PRESIDENT: I got lucky today.

Q And who retrieves them?

THE PRESIDENT: Actually, Bob went out and -- no, you didn't go. They went out -- we had a boat and got them today. Sometimes you have dogs get them, but today we -- people retrieved them in a flat-bottom boat. But it was a wonderful morning.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

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THE PRESIDENT: We didn't see many today, but we got two shots -- there were a couple more that came in close, but they came in so fast that we weren't ready. But these were

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really the only two we could shoot at. And I had the charity -- this crew over there, they all sat there and let me shoot at it. (Laughter.)

Q Are you glad to be home?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I really started feeling like a person when I was about five minutes out on the water today.

END

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

January 2, 1995

Statement of the President

In America, the heart of constitutional government is the rule of law. Today, our commitment to the rule of law is being tested by those who believe that their opposition to abortion gives them the right to commit acts of violence, even murder, against their fellow citizens who seek only to exercise their constitutional right to choose, or to assist others in exercising that right.

I recognize and respect the range of deeply-felt beliefs Americans hold on abortion. A continued vigorous debate over abortion is proper. Violence against those who hold differing opinions is not.

Last year Congress passed, and I signed, a law prohibiting violent interference with Americans who exercise their rights in this area. Because of continued violations of this law and the Constitution, I have today instructed the Department of Justice to: (1) direct each United States Attorney immediately to head a task force including federal, state, and local law enforcement officials to formulate plans to address clinic security for all clinics in their jurisdiction; and (2) direct each U.S. Marshal to consult with all clinics in their jurisdiction to ensure that the clinics have all the information they need to communicate with appropriate federal, state, and local law enforcement officials on a timely basis about potential threats. I have also asked the Attorney General to consult with law enforcement officials on any further steps that might be taken to address this serious problem.

I applaud Americans of conscience who differ in their convictions on abortion but who stand united in their opposition to violence. As we begin a new year, let us all reaffirm our devotion to the rule of law and our respect for the diversity of opinion that rule protects.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 30, 1994

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

I strongly condemn the meaningless violence which abruptly ended the lives of two women and wounded five others in Massachusetts today.

Violence has no place in America. No matter where we stand on the issue of abortion, all Americans must stand together in condemning this tragic and brutal act. Nine years ago, President Reagan, a staunch foe of abortion, called for "a complete rejection of violence as a means of settling this issue." We would do well to heed those words today.

We must protect the safety and freedom of all our citizens. I am strongly committed to ending this form of domestic terrorism. I have called for a thorough investigation into this attack, and Attorney General Reno and FBI Director Freeh have already begun that task. I urge local officials to work closely with the Federal law enforcement community.

Hillary and I extend our deepest sympathy to the friends and families of those who were murdered. I speak for all Americans in expressing my hope for a full and complete recovery for those who were wounded.

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