

THE WHITE HOUSE

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PRESS BRIEFING
BY MIKE MCCURRY

The Briefing Room

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MR. MCCURRY: '95, right. You got that?

Back to your question. This came up yesterday a little bit -- the whole question of -- maybe related a little bit to the question about computer use yesterday. One of the things the President was stressing yesterday is the importance of computers in classrooms. And April asked a good question yesterday: What about poor school districts where people can't afford it? That obviously is a problem. There are some things that we're doing related to that.

First of all, in the Telecommunications Act, remember we fought for something called the e-rate which allows discounted access to the Internet. That's especially important to school districts that have fewer resources available because they can get -- according to a sliding scale that is based in part on need and on resources -- discounted access to time on the Internet. And that's important to particularly inner city, urban school districts.

We've also been working with private sector partners in all 15 of the empowerment zones to figure out ways that we can provide computer technology to classrooms in communities that are distressed. They've been doing a lot of interesting stuff in Oakland and Harlem -- particularly with bringing America Online into classrooms that are located within the empowerment zones.

And we've also got some grant funding that's available under our technology literacy challenge fund. You remember that? That's the -- that's where we go out and sort of figure out ways through state governments to make literacy funding available. And some of that funding is specifically earmarked for poor school districts so that they can bring computer technology into the classrooms.

So that's, obviously, important as we reach towards that goal of wiring every classroom to the Internet -- that we think about ways that we help school districts where there are fewer resources

Need 2 copies -

1) low - income
access to
Internet in
schools

2) V-chip
for Internet

available in poor communities. And we're doing some things with respect to that.

Q So will the President be pushing out -- making a directive or something so that these school districts will be aided by the federal government and searching out these e-rate situations?

MR. MCCURRY: Yes, well, we'll be using all of these programs that we have available to continue to try to help those school districts that need that access. All this that we're doing now we'll continue to press forward on.

Q Mike, I'm still trying to figure out, was yesterday the first time the President endorsed a V-chip for the Internet?

MR. MCCURRY: Did you do any yesterday on the V-chip question? Barry may have handled this up in West Virginia yesterday.

MR. TOIV: Well, I'm not sure I have more than you got yesterday from Ann Lewis. The President has not specifically mentioned the V-chip, but this is work that we've been doing because he's been concerned, obviously, about ways that parents can help -- can protect their kids with regard to stuff that comes through on the Internet.

Apparently, it's our understanding that technology does exist within the industry. It's being developed by the industry. And so I think the President was referring to that yesterday.

Q Is there any procedure that -- I mean, is it something that -- is there any kind of official "endorsement" you expect?

MR. TOIV: Well, right now -- not right at this moment, but it's something we're looking at.