

PRESIDENT CLINTON CHALLENGES SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN STANDARDS AND DEMAND EXCELLENCE

October 29, 1996

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- **Replacing Failing Schools with new Charter Schools:** The President will challenge states and local communities to step in and fix schools that are persistently failing with respect to academic performance. As one approach to doing this, he will specifically challenge them to close down failing schools, and let teachers and principals reopen them as charter schools -- innovative schools that are free of bureaucracy, accountable to the public for results, and which remain open only if they produce results. Because funding for the President's Charter Schools Initiative has almost tripled, from \$18 million to \$51 million, the federal government will be able to assist states that accept this challenge. And as a result of President Clinton's leadership, 26 states now have charter schools laws.
- **A Message to Students that Performance Counts:** President Clinton will challenge colleges and universities to look at their own admission requirements and make sure they are demanding excellence. He will also challenge employers to examine students' high school transcripts, so they can tell if students are taking and succeeding in challenging courses, have good attendance, and come to school on time. These steps will send a clear message to all students that how hard they work in school, and how much they learn, will matter.

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E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E O F T H E P R E S I D E N T

29-Oct-1996 12:43pm

TO: Cathy R. Mays
FROM: Julie E. Mason
 Office of the Press Secretary

SUBJECT: Bruce

have you seen this transcript? the press were in a sour mood
today...poor Bruce.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDE

N T
N T

29-Oct-1996 10:44am

TO: (See Below)
FROM: Margaret M. Suntum
Office of the Press Secretary
SUBJECT: Briefing by McCurry, et al

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Columbus, Ohio)

For Immediate Release
29, 1996

October

PRESS BRIEFING BY
MIKE MCCURRY, BRUCE REED,
DOUG SOSNIK, AND ANN LEWIS

St. John's Arena
Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio

9:20 A.M. EST

MR. MCCURRY: Good morning, everybody. The President gives the third of his summing up speeches today, having addressed the issues of welfare reform, the importance of a strong economy and balancing the budget, the President turns his attention today to education. This is an area that he has addressed in the past and noted the sharp differences that exist between his record and his vision and that of Senator Dole on this subject. But as the President brings the campaign to a close, today he will be focusing on things we can do to make sure Americans have the quality of schools and the quality of education they need to carry over on that bridge to the 21st

century -- a strong global economy the President foresees in the future.

Bruce Reed, the President's Senior Domestic Advisor -- what is it?

MR. REED: Make something up.

MR. MCCURRY: Assistant to the President for --

MR. REED: Policy Planning.

MR. MCCURRY: Serious ideas -- is here to tell you more about the President's speech today. And then Doug has got some political stuff we'll run through.

Bruce, thank you.

MR. REED: Well, as Mike said, today the President is going to give his closing argument on education, for two reasons. First, because he sees this as one of the four big challenges of the next four years, along with making welfare reform a success, to continuing to finish balancing the budget and strengthening families.

We believe that no issue better illustrates the choice in this election than education. Senator Dole wants to eliminate the Department of Education. He voted against it, its creation. President Clinton has fought to protect education funding and got a record education budget this year.

On student loans, the President fought to make student loans more affordable and has reduced the cost of student loans for 10 million young people, including 1 million here in Ohio. Senator Dole opposed that. And on the issue of tax cuts, Senator Dole has proposed a 15 percent across-the-board tax cut

that would blow a hole in the deficit and lead to 40 percent across-the-board cuts in education and other key concerns, and we've proposed a \$1,500 tax cut targeted to education to help pay for college, because we believe that no tax cut will do more to help raise American incomes than one that's targeted to college.

Today, in particular, he's going to talk about education reform and high standards at the elementary and secondary school level and expanding access to college. He's, over the course of the past year, laid out an ambitious agenda on education reform. He gave a major speech to the NGA in March on the importance of high standards, and he's repeated his call throughout the year. Our elementary and secondary education agenda is first high standards for everybody, no more social promotions, no more free passes, states should require every student to pass a test before moving from one level of school to the next. This is something that President Clinton pioneered as governor in Arkansas back in 1984.

Second, challenge every state to set a new goal for the country that every third-grader ought to be able to read independently and unleash an army of 30,000 tutors and volunteers at schools across the country to promote literacy. Third, expand public school choice and charter schools, and he's going to talk a little bit about that today.

There are -- the President and Senator Dole have a basic philosophical difference on the issue of school choice. The President strongly supports public school choice, and Arkansas was the first state in the country to have public school choice. Senator Dole has pushed a private school choice plan that we oppose, and at the same time, to make public school choice work, the President has worked hard to expand the number of charter schools. Charter schools are new schools that parents and teachers can start with a public charter that requires them to be held accountable for results, but freeze them up from all the central bureaucratic rules and red tape.

There are now 300 charter schools in the country that are being started with help from the Clinton administration. The President's balanced budget plan calls for 3,000 charter schools over the next five years, and in the budget appropriation that the President signed into law earlier this month, charter school funding was tripled from \$18 million to \$51 million. And when the President took office, only a handful of states had charter school laws; now 26 states have charter school laws. He's going to again challenge everybody -- all states to pass charter school laws.

Two other elements in the elementary and secondary agenda -- wiring every school, connecting every school to the Information Superhighway and making access to the Internet free for schools and libraries, and finally, promoting safety and discipline by pushing for school uniforms and curfews and truancy enforcement.

He is going to talk about one new idea today that's related to standards and choice. He's going to challenge every state and school district to develop a report card on every school: plan to post that information on the Internet as well as

in newspapers. This is an idea that will enable parents to have more information which is critical as they make the choices about the schools that they send their children to. If we're going to have competition and choice within the public school system, parents need to have access to accurate and immediate information.

This is similar to efforts that we've tried in other areas, including putting environmental information on the Internet to make it more available to parents. And it embodies the President's philosophy that if you give parents the right tools they can make their own choices for their children.

And then, finally, his college agenda I think is familiar to all of you. He's proposed a \$1,500 HOPE Scholarship tax cut that would make the 13th and 14th years of education as
MORE

universal as high school; a \$10,000 tax deduction for all tuition

and enabling people to save money in IRAs for college because he believes that middle class families should never be taxed on the money that they save for college.

I think that's it.

Q There's a listing on this piece of paper that the President is going to challenge colleges and universities to look at their admission requirements and examine students' high school transcripts. Does the President have some idea the colleges don't do that?

MR. REED: No, the point that that's trying to make is that if we're going to have high standards at the local level, then government needs to push for that, but so do colleges and universities and businesses. Everybody has to demand excellence.

Q Isn't that like saying they should put up an umbrella when it rains? Why does the President have to get involved in telling them that? Does he not think the people who run colleges are smart enough to know that they ought to look at transcripts before they admit kids?

MR. REED: No, it's not a question of looking at transcripts. It's a question of --

Q It says that. They ought to examine students' high school transcripts. What's it doing on the list?

MR. REED: The point is that colleges and universities should insist that students pass high performance graduation exams. Here's -- not every state does graduation exams. Not every state does what we've called for.

Q We want to know -- on this piece of paper -- it doesn't say anything about exams.

MR. REED: Fine, Rita.

Q Bruce, I thought he said he wants everyone to go to college, even if they had a bad record in high school, right? I thought he was going to make it as universal as high school -- college? That includes the goof-offs as well, right?

MR. MCCURRY: Okay, any other questions?

Q Hang on. Answer this one.

Q Not so fast, McCurry. (Laughter.)

Q How about those high school goof-offs --

MR. MCCURRY: I'm just a little nervous about time. You're free to beat up Bruce Reed all you want. If you don't have any other subjects you want to get to, that's fine.

Q The one substantive idea is probably the tax credit. What are the chances of that passing, do you believe?

MR. REED: I think that as part of a balanced budget plan that a tax cut has a very good chance of passing.

Q In a Republican Congress even if that happens?

MR. REED: I think that it's received an extraordinarily positive response on the Hill from both Republicans and Democrats, and I think it has a very good chance of passage.

Q Is this the type of example -- if the President wins the reelection the next four years this is what we're going
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to see out of the administration? Are we going to see more government involvement in pushing education and access to

education, or more the principle and things like that that we're seeing right now this type of initiative?

MR. REED: The President's going to make education a top priority in the next four years, both in promoting education reform at the state and local level and in expanding access to college at the federal level.

Q But a high priority in college, encouraging colleges to do what they should be doing now, or more involvement in doing -- getting government involvement or getting access -- you know, paying for college and things like that?

Q You better call the warden. (Laughter.)

Q How is he going to make it a high priority?

MR. REED: Well, he's going to continue to push to protect education funding, make seed money available for charter schools, expand the amount of money that's going to college loans, and at the same time use the bully pulpit to push for higher standards.

MR. MCCURRY: Thank you, Bruce. Excellent.

Okay, I want -- Ann Lewis and Doug Sosnik want to give you a little on schedule on ad traffic and some of the congressional candidates we're working for.

MS. LEWIS: I have talked to some of you individually about ads, and so I'm trying to give you an overview. First, it occurs to us that for some reason with the hours we keep, you may not have seen some of our ads that are on the air. We've asked that a reel be put together of some of our current ads, and we hope to be able to show it to you today. Popcorn is optional, but we do expect to have a little ad film festival that will give you a sense of what we've got on.

Second, as you know with the last, now seven days to go, more and more we've been focusing more state-specific -- for example, there is an ad you may get to see in your brief moments in Ohio that shows the President traveling through Ohio on the train and then talks about achievements in Ohio. We do have a number of ads that are part of a multistate strategy, and I can walk through and give you right now what some of them are. And again, it gives you a sense of the elements from which we draw in putting together the ad campaign for any particular state.

First, as you remember, we have done a series of ads about the President's character, moral leadership, taking on tough issues; this began with Jim Brady, it was followed by Marc Klaas and I believe today or tomorrow we'll go on the air with the widow of Victor Crawford. Victor Crawford was a Maryland state senator and then a tobacco lobbyist who died, and she talks about the President standing up to tobacco industry, trying to

keep tobacco from being marketed to children, so that's the third in the series. It will either go up today or tomorrow.

Second, we've had an ad about the President's record of achievement on fighting drugs and crime. This is starts with some of the attacks that have been made on him by his opponent, but then goes on to his very strong record.

Third, we have an ad we call "About," which has been Senator Bob Dole talking about what this election is about in his own words. So it is, again, Bob Dole's own words talking about campaign issues. Fourth, we have the ad, "Counting," which has been on in daytime. It's a principal daytime buy. This is the ad that says she's counting on you, opens with a shot of a baby, talks about the importance of this election in terms of your children's future and the decisions you're going to make; talks

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specifically about election day being November 5th.

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Five, an ad that will be released -- I will have the script today -- goes on tomorrow, and I'm told it will be showed on Melrose Place, which will give you some sense of the targeting here -- called "Drummers." Again, talking about very different choices this election will make.

And, six, interestingly, in terms of multistate, but targeted an ad called "Jobs," which is being done in Spanish, going on Univision, Telemundo, syndicated.

So that's a sense of what our multi -- the ads that are running multistate.

Q. What was the name of it?

MS. LEWIS: It's called "Jobs." It's a Spanish-language ad. I do have the script for that.

We will have scripts for all of these, as I say, later today. And we're also going to have a reel.

Thank you.

MR. SOSNIK: I will briefly go through this. First, on travel. We've laid out basically the travel between now and the -- on the travel we've basically closed out the campaign in our planning. We'll release the final details for you later today or tomorrow, but as you know, we're going to be in Florida Saturday night and we'll start the day on Sunday in Florida -- in Tampa. We'll make another stop in Florida, make our way to New Jersey.

Then we have roughly 24 hours from then until we'll go down in Little Rock, theoretically, around midnight, if the President allows us to go in at that time.

There will be a midday rally on Monday in Cleveland. And we intend to end the campaign Monday night in Los Angeles. And then we will take the flight home rather late back to Little Rock.

Just briefly, on the two states were in today, Ohio -- the last Cincinnati Enquirer poll has us up 14 points here. We are outspending the Dole campaign in media in Ohio now, as they have shifted some of their resources out of Ohio into California. They've pulled out of Toledo and Youngstown markets in particular.

The three congressional races that we think we can take back as we move into the last eight days -- the Cremeans seat with Ted Strickland -- you probably saw some ads here in Columbus today on that race. The Hoke race where he's being challenged by Dennis Kucinich, Hoke seat in Cleveland; and the Chabot seat down in the southern part of the state.

We're moving on to Pennsylvania later this afternoon. The Dole campaign pulled out of there about a month ago. They pulled their media down about two weeks ago. We figured out, by the way, they spent a little over \$9 million so far in media in states that they've pulled out of, Pennsylvania being one of them.

The three races in particular there that we are optimistic about taking seats from Republicans -- one is the Fox seat in Montgomery County; Hoeffel is our candidate and we're going to do a brief meeting with Hoeffel and his supporters in Philadelphia after the speech at the University of Pennsylvania.

Q Not in the open?

MR. SOSNIK: No.
MORE

Q Why not?

MR. SOSNIK: He's doing an open event at the University --

Q Is Hoeffel on the stage?

MR. SOSNIK: I think he is. Barry can check.

Q -- the President asking people to vote for him?

MR. SOSNIK: Stay tuned.

The Clinger open seat, and we've picked up -- Ruth Reedy (phonetic) is our candidate there against Peterson who has had some problems. And also the English seat with Ron DeNicole (phonetic) as our candidate there. So that's today.

Q What's the ratio of the outspending in Ohio between the Dole and the Clinton campaign?

MR. SOSNIK: They were actually down until this week. They had gone back and pulled half their markets off. We're going to have a financial advantage the last week of the campaign based on the amount of money that they'd spent earlier. They're spending roughly \$430,000 in Ohio in the last week. We're going to spend over half a million here. And as Ann said a few minutes ago, we have been tailoring throughout the country in key states a state-specific media, to be more relevant to the folks at home. And Ohio is an example of that.

Q Doug, what is the White House position on the Democratic National Committee's decision not to release its list of contributors, since the President has been helping the DNC raise a lot of that money?

MR. MCCURRY: Let me give you an update on that. That's -- the information in the question is incorrect. The DNC today is going to release contributors and a summary of expenditures as if they had filed the regular scheduled filed report at the Federal Election Commission. That's our understanding from the Democratic National Committee.

They believe that, for technical reasons related to expenditures under 4401.AD of the Federal Election law, they did not have a requirement to file a pre-election report and would have been required only to file their quarterly report. But, obviously, in the interest of full disclosure, the White House believes they should release the names of contributors and provide information on expenditures.

They don't have time today to prepare that report in the formal format of an FEC report, although I believe they'll probably do that expeditiously. But all the same information that would be contained in the report, our understanding is they intend to make public today.

Q All the --

MR. MCCURRY: Our understand is they're going to take the information related to contributions and expenditures that you would normally be able to peruse in a report like that and make it available, and then as quickly as they can, conform that information to the formal reporting format of the Federal Election Commission.

Q Will it be as detailed in terms of the contributors, their amounts, their identities, and the nature of the expenditures?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, you'll be able to see it later today and then you can judge for yourself.

MORE

Q Is that the intent?

Q The summary of expenditures -- I thought the reason they didn't submit a report was they were asserting that they had not expenditures.

MR. MCCURRY: They have no -- our understanding is, no expenditures that trigger a pre-election report. But they had expenditures that they made in connection with coordinated campaigns and others. They would not be required to file that in a pre-election report; they would do that in a quarterly report. But our belief is that in the interest of disclosure, they ought to provide that information voluntarily, which they will do.

Q Mike, did the White House have any role in reversing this, or as this all just a DNC voluntarily doing it?

MR. MCCURRY: When we learned about it yesterday, I think it's safe to say we made our feelings known.

Q -- going to get the same level of detail today that would have gone to the FEC?

MR. MCCURRY: You will not get the same report that would normally be filed because they will not be able to get that in that format in time. My understanding is the information they are going to make available will make it possible for you to see the identity of contributors and get good understanding of what the expenditures are. But you should really follow up with the DNC if you're interested.

Q -- contributions as well?

Q Mike, do you hold to the idea that the DNC did absolutely nothing in support of the presidential campaign during these last weeks; that's why they don't --

MR. MCCURRY: I don't hold anything. The DNC and their legal counsels indicated they didn't believe they needed to file a 441-AD# report for the period October 1 to October 16.

Q Last week when we were asking you questions about Mr. Huang and some of the questionable contributions that have come up as being raised by them, you referred us back to the DNC. Mr. Foley has kind of refused to take any questions about this and others say this is his area. Since he's the person that the President basically chose for the job, does the President have any feelings about this refusal to deal with the questions?

MR. MCCURRY: Mr. Foley works for Clinton-Gore '96. He's been available, as far as I know.

Q I'm sorry -- Doug Fowler -- excuse me.

MR. MCCURRY: I believe both Chairman Fowler and, if I'm not mistaken, Chairman Dodd have spoken to this issue.

publicly. Chairman Dodd was just on the airwaves this past weekend to address these issues.

Q Last week he said Mr. Huang would be available, and then nothing happened.

MR. MCCURRY: Oh, the DNC has addressed that several times already. I don't have anything new to add.

Q The President said the real solution is campaign finance reform, but as he's laid out his ideas that he wants to talk about in the next term I don't believe he's talked about campaign finance publicly. Is he going to --

MR. MCCURRY: I would not rule out the possibility. He might actually address that issue in the coming days.

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Q -- last week that he might spare a half hour to

take some questions from reporters?

MR. MCCURRY: Sure, there's a chance.

Q There's a chance? (Laughter.) How big?

MR. MCCURRY: We'll check his schedule. I don't --you know the President's schedule; you know how hard he's working; you know the number of cities he's going to. I think right now the President feels it's most important to take his case to the American people. You and the Press Office serve legitimately as surrogates for the American people, but we're in a period right now in the coming days where the American people get to make their own decisions and the President thinks it's very important to take his case directly to them.

Q -- on Chicago this morning, Mike, that if the President is reelected, or even if not, right after the election he plans to pardon Dan Rostenkowski. Has there been any discussion of that whatsoever?

MR. MCCURRY: I have not heard anything to that effect myself. That's news to me.

Q What's the question?

MR. MCCURRY: Speculation about pardons related to Dan Rostenkowski. The President, you know by now fully well the President's position on pardons, which is no comment. But I'll check and see if there's -- I don't know what the basis of that report is.

Q Is there even an application for a pardon, do you know?

MR. MCCURRY: I'd have to check. I do not know whether the Department of Justice has an application.

Q Mike, there are reports today that Mr. Huang participated in Commerce Department meetings involving Indonesia. Does the administration think that's appropriate, and are you going to be looking at any of his government activities?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, he was a Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce at the time. Whatever his role was in discussions related to trade policy, I'd have to check further with Commerce Department officials to see if they conform with what we would expect of anyone in the administration. I've seen those accounts; I haven't had time to look into some of the specific matters discussed there. I have addressed on prior occasions the issue of Indonesia, our trade and foreign policies related to Indonesia. A number of news organizations have looked into that question and concluded that our policies have been fairly clear and have been more robust than prior administrations with respect to issues that we've raised on the bilateral agenda.

we have with Indonesia.

Q Well, wouldn't it be a reasonable assumption that given Huang's connection to the Riadys that this guy was a pipeline back to the Indonesians in terms of what the U.S. government may or may not have been planning, and isn't that inappropriate?

MR. MCCURRY: We communicate our views in the direct bilateral exchanges we have and I don't think the government of

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Indonesia would mistake any information that they receive for the direct exchanges we have with them, which have been candid, fruitful, and in most cases, very productive.

Q Can you tell me that when you sit down with the Indonesians you tell them about all your internal negotiations leading up to that decision-making process?

MR. MCCURRY: No, we make clear our positions on trade and human rights issues, security issues, regional issues. We do so very directly and consistent with the warm relations we have with the government of Indonesia on matters related to security, regional security, trade and other bilateral concerns.

Q Is the White House looking into any of these reports that Mr. Wood solicited contributions from Taiwanese officials?

MR. MCCURRY: Mr. Ward?

Q Mr. Wood.

MR. MCCURRY: Mr. Wood. No, the State Department addressed that yesterday and indicated that in June they referred that matter to the Justice Department.

Q That is nothing that you have taken a look at yourselves?

MR. MCCURRY: Well, our understanding from the information provided by the State Department yesterday is that they referred the matter to the Justice Department.

Q Is the President -- you mentioned campaign finance reform a minute ago -- is he considering new proposals or just simply speaking out, using the bully pulpit to promote what has already been out there?

MR. MCCURRY: I think I earlier did not rule out the possibility he might want to address the issue in coming days.

Q Will he have any new proposals, Mike?

MR. MCCURRY: The President has made a number of proposals related to campaign finance reform. He's given his support to the McCain-Feingold legislation, worked to get that passed, and against his opponent, who filibustered that same legislation in the Senate. And those who follow campaign finance reform agree that the model of the McCain-Feingold legislation provides a good forward movement on the issue.

Q Would that, Mike, prohibit contributions like those from the Riadys?

MR. MCCURRY: It would restrict, if not bar,

so-called non-federal contributions, which are similar to the category we've been talking about in connection with some of these contributions.

Q -- restrict if not bar?

MR. MCCURRY: I think it bars, if I'm not mistaken -- bars non-federal contributions. Ann -- that's right.

Q -- Senator Glenn --

MR. MCCURRY: Yes, Senator Glenn is going, and I think that I'll give you back our regularly scheduled program.

THE PRESS: Thank you.