

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

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TO: (See Below)

FROM: Jeffrey L. Eller
 Office of Media Affairs

SUBJECT: 2/17 Speech Text

"A NEW DIRECTION"
ADDRESS TO JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS
BY PRESIDENT WILLIAM CLINTON
February 17, 1993

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker

When Presidents speak to the Congress and the nation from this podium, they typically comment on the full range of challenges and opportunities that face us. But these are not ordinary times. For all the many tasks that require our attention, one calls on us to focus, unite, and act. Together, we must make our economy thrive once again.

It has been too long -- at least three decades -- since a President has challenged Americans to join him on our great national journey, not merely to consume the bounty of today but to invest for a much greater one tomorrow.

Nations, like individuals, must ultimately decide how they wish to conduct themselves -- how they wish to be thought of by those with whom they live, and, later, how they wish to be judged by history. Like every man and woman, they must decide whether they are prepared to rise to the occasions history presents them.

We have always been a people of youthful energy and daring spirit. And at this historic moment, as communism has fallen, as freedom is spreading around the world, as a global economy is taking shape before our eyes, Americans have called for change -- and now it is up to those of us in this room to deliver.

Our nation needs a new direction. Tonight, I present to you our comprehensive plan to set our nation on that new course.

I believe we will find our new direction in the basic values that brought us here: opportunity, individual responsibility, community, work, family, and faith. We need to break the old habits of both political parties in Washington. We must say that there can be no more something for nothing, and we are all in this together.

The conditions which brought us to this point are well known. Two decades of low productivity and stagnant wages; persistent unemployment and underemployment; years of huge government deficits and declining investment in our future; exploding health care costs, and lack of coverage; legions of poor children; educational and job training opportunities inadequate to the demands of a high wage, high growth economy. For too long we drifted without a strong sense of purpose, responsibility or community, and our political system too often was paralyzed by special interest

groups, partisan bickering and the sheer complexity of our problems.

I know we can do better, because ours remains the greatest nation on earth, the world's strongest economy, and the world's only military superpower. If we have the vision, the will and the heart to make the changes we must, we will enter the 21st century with possibilities our parents could not even have imagined, having secured the American dream for ourselves and future generations.

I well remember, twelve years ago Ronald Reagan stood at this podium and told the American people that if our debt were stacked in dollar bills, the stack would reach sixty-seven miles into space. Today, that stack would reach two hundred and sixty-seven miles.

I tell you this not to assign blame for this problem. There is plenty of blame to go around -- in both branches of the government and both parties. The time for blame has come to an end. I came here to accept responsibility; I want you to accept responsibility for the future of this country, and if we do it right, I don't care who gets the credit for it.

Our plan has four fundamental components:

First, it reverses our economic decline, by jump-starting the economy in the short term and investing in our people, their jobs and their incomes in the long term.

Second, it changes the rhetoric of the past into the actions of the present, by honoring work and families in every part of our lives.

Third, it substantially reduces the federal deficit, honestly and credibly.

Finally, it earns the trust of the American people by paying for these plans first with cuts in government waste and inefficiency -- cuts, not gimmicks, in government spending -- and by fairness, for a change, in the way the burden is borne.

Tonight, I want to talk about what government can do, because I believe our government must do more for the hard-working people who pay its way. But let me say first: government cannot do this alone. The private sector is the engine of economic growth in America. And every one of us can be an engine of change in our own lives. We've got to give people more opportunity, but we must also demand more responsibility in return.

Our immediate priority is to create jobs, now. Some say we're in a recovery. Well, we all hope so. But we're simply not creating jobs. And there is no recovery worth its salt that does not begin with new jobs.

To create jobs and guarantee a strong recovery, I call on Congress to enact an immediate jobs package of over 30 billion dollars. We will put people to work right now and create half a million jobs: jobs that will rebuild our highways and airports, renovate housing, bring new life to our rural towns, and spread hope and opportunity among our nation's youth with almost 700,000 jobs for them this summer alone. And I invite America's business leaders to join us in this effort, so that together we can create a million summer jobs in cities and poor rural areas for our young people.

Second, our plan looks beyond today's business cycle, because our aspirations extend into the next century. The heart of our plan deals with the long term. It has an investment program designed to increase public and private investment in areas critical to our economic future. And it has a deficit reduction program that will increase savings available for private sector investment, lower interest rates, decrease the percentage of the federal budget claimed by interest payments, and decrease the risk of financial market disruptions that could adversely affect the economy.

Over the long run, all this should result in a higher rate of economic growth, improved productivity, higher wages, more high-quality jobs and an improved economic competitive position in the global economy.

In order to accomplish public investment and deficit reduction, government spending is being cut and taxes are being increased. Our spending cuts were carefully thought through to try to minimize any economic impact, to capture the peace dividend for investment purposes, and to switch the balance in the budget from consumption to investment. The tax increases and spending cuts were both designed to assure that the cost of this historic program to face and deal with our problems is borne by those who could most readily afford that cost.

Our plan is designed to improve the health of American business through lower interest rates, improved infrastructure, better trained workers, and a stronger middle class. Because small businesses generate most of our nation's jobs, our plan includes the boldest targeted incentives for small business in history. We propose a permanent investment tax credit for small business, and new rewards for entrepreneurs who take risks. We will give small business access to the brilliant technologies of our time and to the credit they need to prosper and flourish.

With a new network of community development banks, and one billion dollars to make the dream of enterprise zones real, we will begin to bring new hope and new jobs to storefronts and factories from South Boston to South Texas to South-Central Los Angeles.

Our plan invests in our roads, bridges, transit facilities; in high-speed railways and high-tech information systems; and in the most ambitious environmental clean-up of our time.

On the edge of the new century, economic growth depends as never before on opening up new markets overseas. And so we will insist on fair trade rules in international markets.

A part of our national economic strategy must be to expand trade on fair terms, including successful completion of the latest round of world trade talks. A North American Free Trade Agreement with appropriate safeguards for workers and the environment. At the same time, we need an aggressive attempt to create the hi-tech jobs of the future; special attention to troubled industries like aerospace and airlines, and special assistance to displaced workers like those in our defense industry.

I pledge that business, government and labor will work together in a partnership to strengthen America for a change.

But all of our efforts to strengthen the economy will fail unless we take bold steps to reform our health care system. America's businesses will never be strong; America's families will never be secure; and America's government will never be solvent until we tackle our health care crisis.

The rising costs and the lack of care are endangering both our economy and our lives. Reducing health care costs will liberate hundreds of billions of dollars for investment and growth and new jobs. Over the long run, reforming health care is essential to reducing our deficit and expanding investment.

Later this spring, I will deliver to Congress a comprehensive plan for health care reform that will finally get costs under control. We will provide security to all our families, so that no one will be denied the coverage they need. We will root out fraud and outrageous charges, and make sure that paperwork no longer chokes you or your doctor. And we will maintain American standards -- the highest quality medical care in the world and the choices we demand and deserve. The American people expect us to deal with health care. And we must deal with it now.

Perhaps the most fundamental change our new direction offers is its focus on the future and the investments we seek in our children.

Each day we delay carries a dear cost. Half our two-year-olds don't receive immunizations against deadly diseases. Our plan will provide them for every eligible child. And we'll save ten dollars for every one we'll spend by eliminating preventable childhood diseases.

The Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program will be expanded so that every expectant mother who needs our help receives it.

Head Start -- a program that prepares children for school -- is a success story. It saves money, but today it reaches only one-third of all eligible children. Under our plan, we will cover every eligible child. Investing in Head Start and WIC is not only the right thing, it's the smart thing. For every dollar we invest today, we save three tomorrow.

America must ask more of our students, our teachers, and our schools. And we must give them the resources they need to meet high standards.

We will bring together business and schools to establish new apprenticeships, and give young people the skills they need today to find productive jobs tomorrow.

Lifelong learning will benefit workers throughout their careers. We must create a new unified worker training system, so that workers receive training regardless of why they lost their jobs.

Our national service program will make college loans available to all Americans, and challenge them to give something

back

to

their country -- as teachers, police officers, community service workers. This will be an historic change on a scale with the creation of the Land Grant Colleges and the G.I. Bill. A hundred years from now, historians who owe their education to our plan for national service will salute your vision.

We believe in jobs, we believe in learning, and we believe in rewarding work. We believe in restoring the values that make America special.

There is dignity in all work, and there must be dignity for all workers. To those who heal our sick, care for our children, and do our most tiring and difficult jobs, our new direction makes this solemn commitment:

By expanding the Earned Income Tax Credit, we will make history: We will help reward work for millions of working poor Americans. Our new direction aims to realize a principle as powerful as it is simple: If you work full time, you should not be poor.

Later this year, we will offer a plan to end welfare as we know it. No one wants to change the welfare system as much as those who are trapped by the welfare system.

We will offer people on welfare the education, training, child care and health care they need to get back on their feet. Then, after two years, they must get back to work -- in private business if possible; in public service, if necessary. It's time to end welfare as a way of life.

Our next great goal is to strengthen American families.

We'll ask fathers and mothers to take more responsibility for their children. And we'll crack down on deadbeat parents who won't pay their child support.

We want to protect our families against violent crime which terrorizes our people and tears apart our communities. We must pass a tough crime bill. We need to put 100,000 more police on the street, provide boot camps for first-time non-violent offenders, and put hardened criminals behind bars. We have a duty to keep guns out of the hands of criminals. If you pass the Brady Bill, I'll sign it.

To make government work for middle-class taxpayers and not the special interests, we must reform our political system.

I'm asking Congress to enact real campaign finance reform. Let's reduce the power of special interests and increase the participation of the people. We should end the tax deduction for

special interest lobbying and use the money to help clean up the political system. And we should quickly enact legislation to force lobbyists to disclose their activities.

But to revolutionize government we have to insure that it lives within its means. And that starts at the top -- with the White House. In the last few weeks, I have cut the White House staff by twenty-five percent, saving ten million dollars. I ordered administrative cuts in the budgets of agencies and departments, I cut the federal bureaucracy by 100,000 positions, for combined savings of nine billion dollars. It's time for government to be as frugal as any household in America. That's why I congratulate the Congress for taking similar steps to cut its costs today. Together, we can show the American people that we have heard their call for change.

But we can go further. Tonight, I call for an across-the-board freeze in federal government salaries for one year. Thereafter, federal salaries will rise at a rate lower than the rate of inflation.

We must reinvent government to make it work again. We'll push innovative education reform to improve learning, not just spend more money. We'll use the Superfund to clean up pollution, not just increase lawyers' incomes. We'll use federal banking regulators, not just to protect the security and safety of our

financial institutions, but to break the credit crunch. And we'll change the whole focus of our poverty programs from entitlement to empowerment.

For years, there has been a lot of talk about the deficit, but very few credible efforts to deal with it. This plan does. Our plan tackles the budget deficit -- seriously and over the long term. We will put in place one of the biggest deficit reductions and the biggest change of federal priorities in our history at the same time.

We are not cutting the deficit because the experts tell us to do so. We are cutting the deficit so that your family can afford a college education for your children. We are cutting the deficit so that your children will someday be able to buy a home of their own. We are cutting the deficit so that your company can invest in retraining its workers and retooling its factories. We are cutting the deficit so that government can make the investments that help us become stronger and smarter and safer.

If we do not act now, we will not recognize this country ten years from now. Ten years from now, the deficit will have grown to 635 billion dollars a year; the national debt will be almost 80 percent of our gross domestic product. Paying the interest on that debt will be the costliest government program of all, and we

will

continue to be the world's largest debtor, depending on foreign funds for a large part of our nation's investments.

Our budget will, by 1997, cut 140 billion dollars from the deficit -- one of the greatest real spending cuts by an American president. We are making more than 150 difficult, painful reductions which will cut federal spending by 246 billion dollars. We are eliminating programs that are no longer needed, such as nuclear power research and development. We are slashing subsidies and cancelling wasteful projects. Many of these programs were justified in their time. But if we're going to start new plans, we must eliminate old ones. Government has been good at building programs, now we must show that we can limit them.

As we restructure American military forces to meet the new threats of the post-Cold War world, we can responsibly reduce our defense budget. But let no one be in any doubt: The men and women who serve under the American flag will be the best trained, best equipped, best prepared fighting force in the world, so long as I am President.

Backed by a leaner and more effective national defense and a stronger economy, our nation will be prepared to lead a world challenged by ethnic conflict, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the global democratic revolution, and the

health of our environment. THE WHITE HOUSE
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Our economic plan is ambitious, but it is necessary for the continued greatness of our country. And it will be paid for fairly -- by cutting government, by asking the most of those who benefitted most in the past -- by asking more Americans to contribute today so that all Americans can do better tomorrow.

For the wealthiest -- those earning more than 180,000 dollars per year, I ask you to raise the top rate for federal income taxes from 31 percent to 36 percent. Our plan recommends a ten percent surtax on incomes over 250,000 dollars a year. And we will close the loopholes that let some get away without paying any tax at all.

For businesses with taxable incomes over ten million dollars, we will raise the corporate tax rate to 36 percent. And we will cut the deduction for business entertainment.

Our plan attacks tax subsidies that reward companies that ship jobs overseas. And we will ensure that, through effective tax enforcement, foreign corporations who make money in America pay the taxes they owe to America.

Middle-class Americans should know: You're not going alone any more; you're not going first; and you're no longer going to pay more and get less. Ninety-eight point eight percent of

America's

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families will have no increase in their income tax rates. Only the wealthiest one point two percent will see their rates rise.

Let me be clear: There will be no new cuts in benefits from Medicare for beneficiaries. There will be cuts in payments to providers: doctors, hospitals, and labs, as a way of controlling health care costs. These cuts are only a stop-gap until we reform the whole health care system. Let me repeat that, because it matters to me, as I know it matters to you: This plan will not make new cuts in Medicare benefits for any beneficiary.

The only change we are making in Social Security is to ask those older Americans with higher incomes, who do not rely solely on Social Security to get by, to contribute more. This change will not affect eighty percent of Social Security recipients. If you do not pay taxes on Social Security now, you will not pay taxes on Social Security under this plan.

Our plan includes a tax on energy as the best way to provide us with new revenue to lower the deficit and invest in our people. Moreover, unlike other taxes, this one reduces pollution, increases energy efficiency, and eases our dependence on oil from unstable regions of the world.

Taken together, these measures will cost an American family earning 40 thousand dollars a year less than 17 dollars a month.

And because of other ^{THE WHITE HOUSE} programs we ^{WASHINGTON} will propose, families earning less than 30,000 dollars a year will pay virtually no additional tax at all. Because of our publicly stated determination to reduce the deficit, interest rates have fallen since the election. That means that, for the middle class, the increases in energy costs will be more than offset by lower interest costs for mortgages, consumer loans and credit cards. This is a wise investment for you and for your country.

I ask all Americans to consider the cost of not changing, of not choosing a new direction. Unless we have the courage to start building our future and stop borrowing from it, we are condemning ourselves to years of stagnation, interrupted only by recession; to slow growth in jobs, no growth in incomes, and more debt and disappointment.

Worse yet -- unless we change, unless we reduce the deficit, increase investment, and raise productivity so we can generate jobs -- we will condemn our children and our children's children to a lesser life and a diminished destiny.

Tonight, the American people know we must change. But they are also likely to ask whether we have the fortitude to make those changes happen.

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They know that, as soon as we leave this Chamber, the special interests will be out in force, trying to stop the changes we seek. The forces of conventional wisdom will offer a thousand reasons why it can't be done. And our people will be watching and wondering to see if it's going to be business as usual again.

So we must scale the walls of their skepticism, not with our words, but by our deeds. After so many years of gridlock and indecision, after so many hopeful beginnings and so few promising results, Americans will be harsh in their judgments of us if we fail to seize this moment.

This economic plan cannot please everybody. If this package is picked apart, there will be something that will anger each of us. But, if it is taken as a whole, it will help all of us.

Resist the temptation to focus only on a spending cut you don't like or some investment not made. And nobody likes tax increases. But let's face facts: For 20 years incomes have stalled. For years, debt has exploded. We can no longer afford to deny reality. We must play the hand we were dealt.

The test of our program cannot simply be: What's in it for me? The question must be: What's in it for us?

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If we work hard -- and work together -- if we rededicate ourselves to strengthening families, creating jobs, rewarding work, and reinventing government, we can lift America's fortunes once again.

Tonight I ask everyone in this Chamber -- and every American -- to look into their hearts, spark their hopes, and fire their imaginations. There is so much good, so much possibility, so much excitement in our nation. If we act boldly, as leaders should, our legacy will be one of progress and prosperity. This, then, is America's new direction. Let us summon the courage to seize the day.

Thank you very much. Good night. And may God bless America.

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Office of the Press Secretary
(New Orleans, Louisiana)

For Immediate Release

April 30, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN ADDRESS TO THE COMMUNITY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS
ON THE PRESIDENT'S NATIONAL SERVICE INITIATIVE

Health and Physical Education Center
New Orleans, Louisiana

2:10 P.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I ought to quit while I'm ahead. (Laughter.) It is wonderful to be back in New Orleans and in Louisiana and to have the first chance I've had since the election to thank you for your support, your electoral votes and the education you gave me on my many trips here during the campaign last year. I'm glad to be back on this campus. (Applause.)

I want to thank your Student Body President, Robert Styron. And I thought he gave a good speech. I think he's got a future in politics, don't you? (Applause.) And Chancellor O'Brien. I want to thank Senator Breaux for his kind remarks and for his leadership of the Democratic Leadership Council. And I want to acknowledge the presence here of Senator Johnston and many members of the Louisiana House and many other members of the United States Congress, along with many others who are here with the Democratic Leadership Council, including my good friend and former colleague, the Governor of New Mexico, Bruce King, who's here. (Applause.) There are two members of my Cabinet here, the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, and the Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy, also a DLC Vice Chair. (Applause.)

I want to thank all the people who are here representing volunteer organizations. I met with some young people just before I came in here who are scattered around near me from Benjamin Franklin High School just across the way. (Applause.) Absolutely no enthusiasm in that place. (Laughter.) From the Delta Service Corps. (Applause.) From VISTA, from Summerbridge. (Applause.) From Teach for America. (Applause.)

We also have some students here apart from all of you from UNO, we have some students here who have worked in service projects at Xavier University -- (applause) -- and at Tulane. (Applause.) We also have people here who have been involved in service for a long time from ACTION, from the Older Americans Volunteer Program, from the National Association of Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents and the National Association of Retired Senior Volunteers. All these people I am very grateful to.

I'd like to just acknowledge in general who are here from law enforcement organizations and firefighters' organizations and public employees and teachers' groups who have helped us on this national service project. And I want to say a special word of thanks to three other people. First of all, General David Jones, a former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who has worked very hard, helping us put together this program who is here. General Jones, thank you for being here. (Applause.)

Secondly, a remarkable gentleman from New Jersey, an immensely successful businessman who retired early and is devoting his entire life to community service, to rebuild the lives and the neighborhoods of the people in his community in New Jersey, and now helping others around the country. A founding

member of the Points of Light Foundation, Mr. Ray Chambers who is here. (Applause.)

And I'd like to pay a little special attention to two members of Congress who are not here and to one who is for their long work on the whole idea of national service. The two in the Senate who are not here are Senator Harris Wofford from Pennsylvania and Senator Sam Nunn from Georgia. (Applause.) And then Representative Dave McCurdy from Oklahoma, thank you for all of the work you've done on this over the years. (Applause.)

I am glad to be here. You know, when I come down here I always sort of relax. I don't know why that is. (Laughter.) I timed it just in time for the Jazz Festival, but I left my saxophone at the White House. (Applause.)

This is the 100th day of my administration. In Washington, some say it marks a milestone. But in many ways, it's just another day at the office for what we're trying to do in changing America.

In the last 99 days, we have worked relentlessly to address the pressing and long-ignored needs of the American people, and to bring to the government something it has not seen in a long time: an acknowledgement that bold action is needed, and needed now to secure and enlarge America's future, and that in order to do it we not only have to change programs, we have to change the way the government works and engage the energies of the American people in the process.

In the last 100 days, I think we have begun to change the direction in which our country has been going for a long time, and to go toward a new direction, more like the one the American people demanded last November. We've also started an unprecedented debate in our nation's capital about big ideas and better lives across our nation -- ideas that in many cases were shaped and nurtured by some of the people who are here today, as Senator Breaux said earlier, the members of the Democratic Leadership Council, of which I am proud to be a founding member.

The DLC has -- (applause) -- unlike most organizations, the DLC has done more than just talk about the problems in our country, it has made an honest effort to develop real ideas about how to restore the American economy and make the government work and rebuild the confidence and the link that exists between the American people and their government when things are at their best here. And it's been a laboratory for experimentation and solutions.

During my years with the DLC, we really tried to refine our philosophy of what it would mean to take not only the Democratic Party, but the United States of America in a new direction; to make our country work again; and to reward work and family; to encourage education and enterprise; to establish what I have often called a new covenant with the American people, creating opportunity but demanding responsibility from all so that once again we could be a true American community where we know and believe and live as if we're all in this together. (Applause.)

This group has conceived many of the ideas that I've advocated since I've been in Washington, from setting a limit on welfare and putting people to work, to police reform and community policing, to rewarding work of low income working people by having an earned income tax credit that would lift the working poor with children out of poverty. So we could say if you work 40 hours a week in this country, you have a child in the house, you ought not to be poor. (Applause.) These are the kinds of things that this organization has done. (Applause.)

They helped to develop the idea I want to talk to you today about that has so much to do with the future of the young people here and throughout our country -- national service. This is an organization about ideas.

Now, in Washington, as you might imagine, we don't always agree with one another. And that is good; that's why we've got a system where the government's divided up and we have two parties and we have people fighting all the time, as long as it's about ideas. But too often we've seen that the debate over big ideas gets mired in petty politics.

I know one thing: The American people are tired of gridlock and petty politics. If we're going to fight, they want us to fight over ideas and the future of this country. (Applause.)

In the past 99 days, we tried to address the problems the American people told me they wanted to be addressed. We focused more than anything else on the economy -- passing the outline of a budget that will reduce the deficit by more than \$500 billion; increase investment in education and technologies and the things that will create the economy of the 21st century that all of you need, so that you'll have good and decent jobs and a decent future; laying the groundwork for a more prosperous tomorrow.

Just in 100 days we've announced a policy to help to convert the defense cutbacks and the economic opportunities for people who are losing their jobs because of the military cutbacks; to take a new direction in technology to create more opportunities for our people; to be more aggressive in preserving the environment, but do it in a way that creates jobs, not a way that costs jobs; to have a trade policy that will really reflect our common interest with other nations and expanding jobs and opportunities everywhere.

We've begun the long-overdue renovation of the American economic base. The question now, unlike 100 days ago, the question is now not whether we're going to reduce the deficit, but how and how much. The question now is not whether the government will have a new partnership with the private sector to shape the economy, but exactly what the details will be and how much our part will be.

We've also taken on the issue of health care, something millions of Americans cried out for last year. I am so tired of seeing people -- I got a letter today from a young woman I shook hands with whose -- literally, her life is on the line and she cannot get health insurance. It is wrong that in this nation we are the only advanced country in the world with 34 million people without health insurance. It is wrong that millions of Americans cannot change their jobs without losing their health insurance, because they or a child or a spouse has been sick. It is wrong that the price of health care goes up 2.5 times the rate of inflation every year. And it is wrong that we spend 30 percent more of our income than any other country on Earth on health care and have less to show for it.

But it is also wrong to assume that there is some magic, quick answer. That's why we've been working with a task force headed by The First Lady, and over 400 people from all aspects of health care to do something about this. (Applause.)

But now, for the American people the issue is no longer whether we're going to address the health care crisis, whether we're going to provide security to hard-working, middle class Americans, whether we're going to cover the people who aren't covered, whether we're going to control costs, but how are we going to do it and how fast, and when are we going to begin. I hope the answer is soon. And not too soon is soon enough for me. (Applause.)

We used to debate -- there was a lot of discussion last year about how bad the government was, and it didn't work, and it was bloated, it needed a change. Look at the last 100 days. I've tried to set an example by offering a budget to reduce the White House staff by 25 percent, by putting the lid on and reducing the federal bureaucratic expenses, the administrative expenses of the federal government by over \$10 billion. By moving dramatically to reduce the influence of special interest on Executive Branch appointments by having the toughest ethics laws and restrictions on people becoming lobbyists for other interests when they leave the payroll of the President of the United States. (Applause.) By asking the Vice President to share the most sweeping review of the way the federal government works in a generation, with a promise of real reform and reinventing government -- something else this organization has long believed in.

We are moving. And the Congress is moving to join. The Congress has voted to cut the administrative costs of running the Congress, something many of you never thought you would see happen. They did that. The Congress -- the House of Representatives voted yesterday to give the President of the United States a modified line-item veto; and I hope the Senate will follow their lead. (Applause.)

I hope soon they will send to my desk the motor voter bill which will make it easier for young people and other people to vote and participate in their country's political process. (Applause.) And there will be campaign finance reform and lobby reform legislation, and a crime bill that will put more police on the street and give us the capacity we need to take our communities back. These things are going on. The question is no longer whether we're going to reform the way government works, but how fast and how much and how well. And those are the right questions, my fellow Americans -- good questions to ask. (Applause.)

And now, I come to the last, and in many ways the most important issue that we have tried to address -- the economy, yes; health care, yes; reform in the way the government works, yes. But also what about the American people. How can each American make a contribution? How can each American do the work that all Americans must, taking responsibility for himself or herself and growing up into a vibrant community? We have tried to address those issues as well.

The buzz word now people use is empowerment. I used to call it responsibility. I often have said, and I want to reiterate today, the United States government cannot create an opportunity for anyone who will not be responsible enough to seize it. Opportunity is a two-way street and requires responsibility. (Applause.) That is the only way we'll ever rebuild the American community. (Applause.)

In the days and months ahead, you will see the Secretary of Education talk about his remarkable education program to provide tougher national standards in education, but also to give people at the grassroots level more flexibility in making public education work. You will see the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development talk about how we can empower even the poorest Americans to start their own businesses, save their own money and take control of their own future. You will see other people talking about how we can reform the welfare system.

All of these things are at the core of the notion that we ought to make it possible for every American to live up to the fullest of his or her God-given ability. And that is what in the end national service is all about -- helping ourselves and helping each other at the same time. (Applause.)

On this 100th day of my administration, I want to recommit myself and those who work with me to the values that have made our nation without peer in all human history, those of opportunity, responsibility, community and respect for one another.

Today I want to propose applying those values to a revolution of opportunity for our hard-pressed families and for those who have been left out. As a first step we're going to ease the terms of college loans, helping students from middle and lower-middle income families to clear a major path to the American Dream, the path of higher education. In return we'll demand responsibility from young people. We'll make it easier to borrow money and much easier to pay it off, but this time you have to pay it off. You can't just default on the loan. (Applause.) And we will also offer the young people of America the opportunity of paying their loans back by serving their communities in a new program of national service.

In just a few days I will send to the Congress two bills containing our proposals, first to strengthen college opportunity and to establish national service. Together they will revive America's commitment to community and make affordable the cost of a college education for every American. It's no secret that over the last 10 or 12 years the cost of a college education is about the only essential thing that's gone up even more rapidly than health care costs.

And middle class parents, and even upper middle class parents, not to mention lower income people, have borne the burden, paying now about five percent of median income just to put one child through a four year in-state public college. It costs an average of over \$5,200 a year for that education. That means families are depleting savings and many students are faced with cutting back to a part-time course load or having to drop out simply because of the cost of a college education. A college dropout is now more than twice the high school dropout rate. We cannot afford that, and we can do better. (Applause.)

I propose a new way to finance college for millions of students who seek loans every year. We call it an Excel Account. With it, students can repay the loans they take out not with a percentage of the loan they borrowed, but with a percentage of their actual earnings. Now, think about that. For students driven into debt -- driven by debt into careers with high pay and low satisfaction, this can be very liberating. Take a student torn, for example, between pursuing a career in teaching and corporate law. This student now can at least make the career choice based on what he or she wants to do, and not the size of the outstanding student loan; because we propose to let everybody have the option of paying the student loan back based on how much they earn, not just how much they owe. That is an incredible incentive. (Applause.)

However, under the current system, as many of you know, students faced with big bills or just inconvenient responsibilities have too often taken the irresponsible route and defaulted on their loans, or have been found in default because they couldn't find a job. Often times there's no serious effort to collect the loan, because the government guarantees 90 percent of it. So if the bank makes the loan, it costs more than 10 percent to go collect it. What's the result? The taxpayers every year pay about \$3 billion on other people's loans -- money that could be spent on your education, on the schools here, on the future of the children here just for bad loans. It isn't right. (Applause.)

Under our system, the Department of Education would engage the Internal Revenue Service. We would have the payroll records. And you wouldn't be able to beat the bill because you would have to pay the loan back as a percentage of your income, if you choose, but you'd have to pay it because you pay taxes and

because we have your records and because you won't be able to get out of it. And that is the right thing to do. (Applause.)

But these Excel Accounts are just the beginning. We hope they will lead more and more Americans not only to seize the opportunity of a college education, and to exert a stronger sense of responsibility, but also to seek to serve their communities through a program of national service. It was Thomas Jefferson who first told the American people in essence that the more you know, the more you owe. In his words -- and I quote -- "A debt of service is due from every man to his country proportioned to the bounties which nature and fortune have measured to him." This statement reminds us that values never go out of fashion, that civic responsibility is as good for democracy today as it was when Thomas Jefferson said that, and that if you really want to be the best citizen of your country, you have to give something back to your country. (Applause.)

With national service, we can literally open a new world to a new generation of Americans, where higher learning goes hand-in-hand with the higher purpose of addressing our unmet needs -- our educational, our social, our environmental needs, to secure the future that we all will share. National service will mark the start of a new era for America in which every citizen, every one of you, can become an agent of change, armed with the knowledge and experience that a college education brings. And ready to transform the world in which we live, city by city, community by community, block by block. I say to you, we need you.

You know, there's a lot of talk in America today -- and I spend hours every week worrying about the effect that automation and technology is having on employment. Indeed, as we see the productivity of American enterprises rise, their need for workers goes down because they can do more with computers that they used to do with people. So people ask me all the time, where will we find the jobs for this new generation of Americans? How can we drive this unemployment rate down? But if you look around this country at all the human problems, all the homeless people, all the environmental waste dumps in our cities and our rural areas, all the problems that we've got in every community in America; and see you all the kids that are in trouble -- 15 million of them at risk and needing somebody to pay attention to. You know where the work needs to be. (Applause.)

Late last night when I was preparing to come down here, I took a little time off at my desk and I read the letters that my staff had given me. And I got a letter from a woman who grew up with me. I've known her since we were in grade school. And she said -- in this letter, she said, you know, someone asked me a couple of days ago: How are we going to save all these kids in this country that are in trouble? And she said, without even thinking, I blurted out, the same way we lost them, one at a time. (Applause.)

And so today, my fellow Americans, I issue a call to national service, to Americans young and old, Democrats and Republicans, white, black, Hispanic, Asian and you name it, all of us that make up this great nation. I call you to national service because it is only that together we can advance a tradition rooted in our people's history, helping our people to help themselves.

And with national service, we can rejoin the citizens in communities of this country, bonding each to the other with the glue of common purpose and real patriotism.

We have many young people here today, students of this place of higher learning where we're gathered. In you, I know I see the builders of tomorrow. And I say to you, as good as the education is here, and at the other great institutions represented here today, and all across America, the power of

academic learning is incomplete unless every American can share in it. That is the only way we can lift our whole country up. (Applause.)

I say to you further that our country needs you. We need your knowledge and your initiative and your energy. We need you because you are still stripped and free of the cynicism that has paralyzed too many of your parents and your grandparents, and led us to spend too much time talking about what we can't do instead of seizing what we can. You are not afflicted by that, and I pray you never will be. (Applause.)

We need to make sure that we can use your energies and your talents. One way is by making sure that the low wages that public service often offers won't be a route to the poorhouse for someone with college loans. As I said, we're going to make it easier for you to pay off your college loan. But also, if you engage in national service, we'll make it easier for you to pay off a college debt or to earn credits toward it before you got to college or while you're in college.

For each term of service, one or two years, participants in national service programs will receive benefits that can be used toward past, present or future obligations, whether for college or advanced job training. You can get a college education and, in addition, through service perhaps the best experience of your life. That's a pretty good investment.

I've talked a lot about the students here. And they do play a large part in this plan, but they're not alone. Here in New Orleans many of you already know what it means to make a difference in your community because you've just been doing that for a long time. And I'm very proud -- as I said, I'm going to get another cheer about this, but one of the models that I had a little something to do with is the Delta Service Corps, and I appreciate what they're doing. (Applause.)

There are people here working to restore housing. There are people here working in other ways. I just want to mention three. Lawrence Williams, a team leader in the Corps who has helped to restore housing for low-income people with the local Habitat for Humanity Project. Jane Sullivan, a retired public schoolteacher and a former VISTA volunteer -- (applause) -- who helps rural communities gain better access to health care, housing and other assistance. And a young person I met just a few moments ago, Parris Moore-Brown, who works with parents in housing programs for drug awareness outreach and now plans to work with the physically challenged. She says that she has no tolerance for self-pity, and she lives what she preaches. She hasn't been slowed by what her birth dealt her -- a brittle bone disorder that has left her as an adult, and by her own measure, four feet, two and a quarter inches tall. Where are you? (Laughter and applause.) Stand up -- so we can see you. (Applause.) After my meeting with her and the other young people today, I'd say she stands about 10 feet tall in America today. (Applause.)

There are tens of thousands of people like Parris and Jane and Lawrence and those of you who are here with these service programs who are dying to be called to a new season of service, and we want to do that.

Another part of our plan is to build on the National and Community Service Act that was passed in 1990, and the already flourishing programs that are started and up and going in every state in this country.

National service is not going to be a federal bureaucracy; it's going to operate at the grassroots with the real problems of real people, and with the programs that work today. It will be locally driven, because I trust the

communities in this country to make decisions for themselves.
(Applause.)

I also want to say that, while we want very much to have young people in this program who are working toward earning credits for college or paying their college loans off through national service, we need so many other people in service projects. We need our older people who never will go back to college, but have a lifetime of experience and energy to give to the young people of this country. (Applause.) We need young people who may not be old enough to drive a car or to qualify for this program, but can have a dramatic impact on fellow students by helping them learn better study habits or just keeping them out of trouble. (Applause.) I've learned already that as the parent of a teenager, that the peers can have a big impact on the shape and quality of a child's life. Even a child can serve in programs that now begin as early as kindergarten. We have no upper age limit in America, or lower age limit for being a good public servant.

To be successful, this national program will need the broad-based support of all the American people -- parents and children, churches and synagogues, colleges and universities, and the potential providers and the beneficiaries of our services. In this vision of national service, everyone is a partner. And that includes, of course, the business community in this country. We need businesses to contribute to the effort, to match federal money and local programs, and to contribute at the national level, helping to make sure that the programs we choose are good ones indeed.

What will set this legislation apart from other similar efforts in the past that rewarded service to our country is that it will totally eliminate the federal government bureaucracy. And, believe me, no one will miss that.
(Applause.)

We're going to set up a national service corporation that will run like a big venture capital outfit, not like a bureaucracy. And communities, as I said, will have the flexibility to make their own programs work. I think that I've seen enough today and I've heard enough of your applause to know that the American people are hungry for a chance to serve their country and to reap the rewards of civic pride and education in the process. In answering this call, our people are following a proud history. More than a century ago, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, and the frontier of this country was settled by countless families who took up the challenge in exchange for 100 acres to call their own.

In the 1930s, President Roosevelt enlisted millions of young people to restore the environment through the Civilian Conservation Corps. FDR gave others a chance to support themselves through the buildings made possible by the Works Project Administration. I was in the United States Justice Department just yesterday, a building built in 1934 by people who were giving service to their country, and it's still a beautiful monument to the legacy of that kind of service.

The parents of the baby boom had the GI Bill, which was one of the best investments our government ever made. A generation ago, the young people of my generation saw suffering in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, and many rushed to the challenge laid down by President Kennedy when he created the Peace Corps, which became our country's greatest ambassador -- building bridges of understanding to far off cultures. And now, three decades later, a challenge has been presented to all of you. A new challenge and an old one -- as old as America and as new as your future.

A year ago when the Democratic Leadership Council met in New Orleans, I asked -- (gap) -- the following question: I said, I want you to think about what kind of citizens you're going to be -- (gap) -- administration that this was the day the American people were empowered to renew their nation and their communities, to seize a better future for themselves, and to help all of us to be what the -- (gap) -- out of helping our fellow citizens and ourselves to become what we ought to be, this country will be all right. (Applause.)

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

END

2:44 P.M. CDT

Carol H. Rasco
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy

Remarks Prepared for Delivery at the
National Summit on Children and Families
Washington, D.C.
April 2, 1993

It is wonderful to be here at this historic national summit on children and families. And it is inspiring to hear the stories of young people who are succeeding--with determination, personal responsibility, and help from those who care.

I wish that every child in America could tell such a story. But you and I know that they can't. Many children are thriving in our nation--but too many are not.

The statistics for our children and youth are grim. Educational attainment is stagnant--at best. Mental illness and suicide are up. Violent crime and homicide--way up. And today, child poverty stands at levels last seen a generation ago.

For most of that generation, families with children have faced a relentless economic squeeze. The real wages of workers with young children--even educated workers--have fallen dramatically during the past twenty years.

These are the facts, and it's time we stopped ignoring them. We must show that we have not forgotten how to care. We need a new direction for our country. It's time we adults put our children first.

That's one big reason why our country needs the President's bold new economic program of growth and jobs. It's why we need the President's bold plan for investing in children and their families. With the help of the Congress, we're going to get that program--and get it in record time.

But the problems our children face are not just economic. Too many American families are disintegrating, or never forming at all. We have the highest divorce rate in the Western world, and the highest rate of children born outside marriage. Today, 28 percent of our babies are born to unmarried parents. For African-Americans, it's more than 66 percent.

Does this matter? Here are some findings from a report out just this week: Of the children born to young unmarried mothers without high school diplomas, 79 percent are living in poverty. For children born to married high-school graduates, the figure is only 8 percent.

The message is clear: if you stay in school and get married before you have children, your kids are ten times less likely to be poor. A stable family setting is the best anti-poverty program our country has ever devised. That is the message we adults should be sending our young people, in every way we can.

For too long, these issues were mired in partisan gridlock. Some talked only about the economic squeeze on families and cuts in government programs; others talked only about the disintegration of families and the decline of American culture. It is time--high time--to put an end to the politics of false choices. We must move beyond cheerleading for family values, on the one hand, and on the other, the old big-government notion that there's a program for every social problem.

There is another way, a commonsense path that offers more opportunity to every family and demands more responsibility from every individual. As the President has said so eloquently: Family values alone cannot nourish a hungry child, and material security alone cannot provide a moral compass. We must have both.

That is the trail that the National Commission has blazed for our country. You have advanced an ambitious legislative agenda, which helped shape the President's budget proposals. You have crafted a new consensus on children and families that could put futile debates behind us. Most important, you have reminded us of basic principles essential values.

- o First: Every American child should have the opportunity to develop to his or her full potential.

- o Second: Government doesn't raise children, parents do. Government can reinforce the vital work of parents, but it can't substitute for them. The family is--and must remain--society's primary institution for bringing children into the world and for supporting their growth throughout childhood.

- o Third: Children do best when they have the personal involvement and material support of a father and a mother and when both parents fulfill their responsibility to be loving providers.

These are the principles and values that guide us all. Now let me tell you what the President is doing to turn them into reality.

To begin with, he is rewarding work and family. Today, millions of Americans work full-time but don't make enough to lift their families out of poverty. That's wrong. No one who works full-time and has children at home should be poor in America. And that's why the President has proposed a dramatic

increase in the Earned Income Tax Credit.

At the same time, Bill Clinton is moving aggressively to relax the tension between work and family. He's proud that the first piece of legislation he signed was the Family and Medical Leave Act, twice vetoed by George Bush. And the administration is actively exploring other ways of making America's workplaces--including the federal government--much more family friendly.

Second, he is protecting the health of children and families, by fully funding the WIC program, by investing in childhood immunization, and by committing his administration to fundamental reform of our nation's health care system.

As you all know, we're working night and day to ensure that every American has access to quality health care at affordable prices. Next month, we're going to propose a comprehensive new health care plan. And during this Congress we're going to fulfill the dream of every Democratic president since Harry Truman and make health insurance a reality for all.

Third, the President is promoting the development of young children with the biggest expansion of Head Start ever. But the administration is not just going to make Head Start bigger; we're going to make it better. We're going to improve quality, increase flexibility, and better link the program to other child development efforts.

Fourth, the President is proposing fundamental change in public education. As governor, Bill Clinton helped draft the national education goals and bring them to the center of public debate. As president, he'll bring those goals to the center of education reform.

Bill Clinton is going to put an end to business as usual in American education. That means new initiatives with real incentives to states for systemic reform. It means a total reexamination of existing programs--such as Chapter 1--to ensure that every child has a fair chance to acquire high-level skills and make it in the economy of the 21st century. It means unprecedented emphasis on systematic, high-quality school-to-work programs. It means an expanded safe schools initiative because fearful kids can't possibly learn well. And yes, it means more choice for parents and students within our public school system.

Fifth, the President will deliver fundamental reform of our welfare system. He helped draft the Family Support Act of 1988, and he made it work in Arkansas. Now he has asked us to develop a plan to end welfare as we now know it. People don't want permanent dependency, they want the dignity of work, and we should give everyone the chance to have that kind of dignity. It's just common sense: more opportunity in exchange for more

responsibility.

The President's responsibility agenda doesn't end there. He's going to get tough on child support enforcement. That means establishing paternity right at the start, in the hospital; setting up a national registry; and using the IRS to collect seriously delinquent child support payments.

The principle is simple: if you are biologically responsible for a child, then you are morally and financially responsible as well. And that's why we have to get the message to our youth in schools, in the media, in every way we can: it's just plain wrong for children to have children, because you are assuming a responsibility that you aren't ready to fulfill.

The President wants to put government squarely on the side of keeping families together whenever possible. He wants us to do more for families at risk, especially at risk of foster care placement. He knows that constant shifting from one short-term foster home placement to another is an emotional disaster for kids; that in all but the most extreme cases, it's better for kids to be with their parents.

That why, last month he directed us to draft a new child welfare initiative combining family support and family preservation services--building on the work of Senator Rockefeller and Congressman Matsui and Congresswoman Schroeder and others. And believe me, we're going to deliver that initiative--to him, to our kids, and to the country.

I applaud the Commission for recognizing that families don't operate in a vacuum, but in neighborhoods, in communities, and in a climate of culture and values. We must do whatever we can to assist parents in educating their kids and teaching them right from wrong.

As every parent knows, in modern America that effort begins with the media. Three years ago, the Congress passed the Children's Television Act. And for three years, the Act was ignored. The same kinds of folks who informed us that ketchup is a vegetable were happy to certify GI Joe as an educational television program.

Well, the previous administration's FCC wouldn't enforce the bill--but ours will. By law, broadcasters who want to keep on operating must demonstrate their commitment to the educational needs of children. We're going to hold them to that. And while they're at it, it wouldn't hurt if they cut out the gratuitous sex and violence either.

I've talked about what the President has done and what he wants to do. We've begun to shift course. But this is just the beginning. We must have the courage to change--to recognize mistakes, to abandon what doesn't work, to challenge ourselves to do better. In short, we adults have some growing up to do.

I know that many of you in this room are tired after the last twelve years. Without you, many of the programs that serve children and families would have been gutted. They weren't, and you've earned a rest.

But we're asking you to go another round. The President can't pass or fund his initiatives alone. He can't break the gridlock alone. He still needs your help, and so do America's children.

For the first time in a long time, your efforts will be supported--not rebuffed--by the executive branch of this government. The details remain to be worked out. But for sure, there will be an ongoing, high-level focus on children and families, cutting across agency, departmental, and programmatic lines, coordinated by the White House, responsible not to any single constituency but to the national interest and directly to the President of the United States.

Concern for our children must start at the top--but it can't end there. We must empower parents, neighborhoods, communities and voluntary organizations across this great nation to do what our children need. The President can take the lead--but only you can complete the task.

At last, a new day is dawning for America's children and their families. We will work together with you. We won't always succeed, and we won't always be able to do everything that you--and we--would want.

But I can promise you this: we will never relent in our effort to give every child a chance to develop--fully. Because at the end of Bill Clinton's second term, at the dawn of the third millenium, I want to be able to say to Hamp Rasco and Mary Margaret Rasco and to all the children of America, with a clear conscience and a full heart: We did our best. And I want all of you at this summit to join me in being able to look at one another and say: We did our best.

Thank you very much.

The President's Economic Plan and Children

FULL FUNDING OF HEAD START:

Children who participate in Head Start do better in school and become more productive as adults. By giving them the caring, stimulating environment they need, Head Start programs enable at-risk children to become problem-solvers instead of problems. Thousands of parents and selected studies have testified to the program's success, but for years our government -- despite promises -- has failed to make Head Start available to all the children who need it. With this initiative, one of our country's most cost-effective programs will become far more widely available and help change countless lives.

The Administration's goal is to move swiftly on a path towards full-funding for an estimated 1.4 million eligible disadvantaged children.

In its stimulus package, the Administration is also proposing a Head Start Summer Program to enroll up to 350,000 disadvantaged children this summer. In addition, the President's proposal pays for related programs, such as Head Start-related child care feeding to pay for meals at Head Start centers and Head Start related Medicaid to fund new entrants in the Medicaid program resulting from Head Start expansion.

FULL FUNDING OF WIC PROGRAM:

If our nation is going to prosper, our children will have to grow up healthy, not hungry. This special supplemental food program for women, infants, and children (WIC), helps make sure they do.

The Administration aims to expand 1993 funding to serve an additional 300,000 participants this year (mostly children ages 1-4). By the end of 1996, all eligible children ages 1 to 4, including some 2 million who were not served last year, can be assisted with the proposed investment of \$1 billion in 1997, \$2.6 billion over four years.

EDUCATION REFORMS AND INITIATIVES:

All American children need greater access to better education -- not just to make the American Dream more available, but to make the American economy more productive.

These initiatives will provide \$2.7 billion in 1997, \$6.2 billion over four years, to support reforms and reauthorizations in elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education, including state and local systemic reforms, a new SAFE Schools program, student assistance program improvements, and support of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The President also proposes an expanded Chapter 1 Summer School program this summer for educationally disadvantaged children.

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT (EITC):

In America, no one who works should have to raise a family in poverty. The EITC currently provides refundable tax credits to low-income working families with children. By expanding the EITC, we will assure that a family of four will not be forced to live in poverty, if one of the parents works full-time at a minimum wage job.

IMMUNIZATIONS:

The President's plan to increase childhood vaccinations to help fight against resurgence of preventable childhood diseases will immunize one million children during the summer of 1993 and will ensure that the United States guarantees immunization for all its children.

As a result, Americans will not have to face \$10 in avoidable health care costs for every \$1 we should have spent on vaccines. The Administration proposes to award \$300 million to support a community-based effort to finance vaccine purchases and education and outreach campaigns.

This program will help to raise the Nation to the standards of child immunizations set by other advanced countries, which we have fallen far behind. Too many families are deterred by outrageously high costs from having their children immunized. The President intends to end that problem.

The President will direct HHS Secretary Shalala to enter negotiations with drug manufacturers to assure that states can purchase the vaccines they need at affordable prices. And the health care task force is preparing legislation that will guarantee the immunization of every child.

JOB CORPS, YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, AND APPRENTICESHIPS:

The Job Corps program provides remedial education, occupational skills training, supportive and job placement services to severely disadvantaged youth in its network of 110 residential centers. The President would provide resources to increase the size of the Job Corps program by 50% by the year 2001; increase the number of participants to 104,000; finance 50 new residential centers; and repair and renovate existing centers.

The Summer youth employment and training program (SYETP) offers economically disadvantaged youth work experience in public and nonprofit agencies during the summer. This summer, the President would add 700,000 summer jobs. Over the succeeding four years, the proposal includes a \$2 billion investment in this program to provide 2 million additional summer youth jobs, including an enriched program of work experience, basic skills training, testing, counseling, and closer coordination with schools.

For high school youth who do not plan to attend college, the President's

proposal includes a nationwide system of school- and work-based learning programs in order to reduce drop-out rates and help them make a successful transition to meaningful careers in technical occupations.

PARENTING AND FAMILY SUPPORT:

These initiatives stem from a simple reality: governments don't raise children; parents do. These proposals will empower parents with the skills and the tools they need to help raise their children.

They will support disadvantaged parents, including activities to help them work with their children at home and parenting classes, with an investment of \$500 million in 1997, \$900 million over four years.

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT:

Of the over 10 million women living alone with their children, only half have child support orders and only half of those women receive full payment. Child support enforcement will be strengthened by streamlining paternity establishment; using the IRS to collect seriously delinquent child support; making sure that absent parents who can pay child support do; setting up a national registry to track down deadbeat parents; requiring employees to report child support obligations on IRS W-4 forms; and improving medical support for children.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 14, 1993

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
IN BLUE RIBBON CEREMONY

The South Lawn

9:51 A.M. EDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. Thank you, Secretary Riley. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

I want to welcome you all to the White House today on this gorgeous day. I hope you've enjoyed yourselves. The Marine Band has been in especially fine form this morning. I woke up to them; I went jogging to them. (Applause.) I almost felt like a President this morning for sure when I was walking over to the Oval Office -- they were playing a march that was written for the coronation of a British monarch, so I almost got myself confused. (Laughter.)

There are 228 schools here represented today, the winners of the Blue Ribbon Awards this year. And all of you are winners representing what is best in American education and public and private schools and urban and suburban and rural schools. You all share some common features with all your differences: Visionary leadership; a sense of shared purpose; a climate conducive to learning; impressive academic achievement brought on not only by gifted teachers but also by responsible and open student behavior; and real involvement of parents and often the broader community in the life of the school.

I spent a lot of time thinking about these educational issues over the last 12 or so years. I spent more of my time as a Governor on education than on any other single issue except for the economy of my state. I spent hundreds of hours, I suppose, in schools in my state and around the country over the last 12 to 15 years and some time in one of the schools from Arkansas that's being honored today.

A hundred years ago the key to a strong economy was our raw material base. Fifty years ago it was mass production. Now it is clearly the trained human mind. We live in a world where the average person will change work seven or eight times in a lifetime, when the volume of knowledge is doubling every few years. When people in Silicon Valley making new computers and new computer programs tell me their average product life is now down to 18 months, clearly the reasoning, creative, facile but also deep mind is key to the future of the United States. We also live in a time when hardly anybody can get and keep a decent job without more education that too

If we could multiply the grade schools here represented on this lawn all across the country, we could really revolutionize education in America. I must tell you that the most challenging -- (applause) -- give yourselves a hand. That's a good idea. The most challenging thing I ever faced as Governor and the most continually frustrating was going into our schools and realizing that virtually every challenge in American education has been met successfully by somebody somewhere.

There are people succeeding against all the odds and producing magnificent results in extremely difficult circumstances. There are schools producing world class results by any rigorous measure. The problem with American education is that we have never found an effective way to help replicate success, partly because the magic of education is always what happens in the individual classroom between the teacher and the student, supported by the parents, strengthened by the culture of a school that is set overwhelmingly by a gifted principal. I know that.

But there have to be ways to recognize the plain fact that notwithstanding the funding problems, notwithstanding the inequalities, notwithstanding all the problems that American education, you can find virtually every problem in our country solved by somebody somewhere in an astonishingly effective fashion if you look at enough schools. So the challenge for us here is to figure out how to replicate that. That is what Secretary Riley and I are trying to do with the Educate America Act, the Goals 2000 Act that we presented to the United States Congress, a bill we believe will lead to the creation of world-class learning standards, and also help to promote the idea that, clearly, all reforms must occur school by school.

Goals 2000 will, in effect, enshrine the national education goals in the law of the land, raise expectations for all students, and help to enrich the content of our courses, the training of our teachers, and the quality of our textbooks and our technology.

Finally, the bill will challenge our schools to show real results. We believe students and schools should have more flexibility in dealing with federal programs and should be shooting toward real results and clear standards. Goals 2000 is the framework for that educational effort in this administration. It will facilitate fundamental reforms in our schools, and I must say that's probably why some people don't like it all that well, including some members of my own party in the Congress.

But we can't raise standards and achievement either by leaving things the way they are, or simply by piling on more particular governmental programs and mandates from Washington. After all, we're only providing about seven percent of the total financing of public schools today, and while I hope to reverse that trend and, over the next five years, get the percentage back up to somewhere to where it was over the last several years -- (applause) -- still the lion's share of the financing and the lion's share of the learning reforms must come from you and people like you. And that means we have to have a different approach in the way the national government relates to our schools.

I hope that the Congress will not dilute the package that I sent to them. I hope we can pass the bill in a way that will represent a real change in the way the national government relates to

leaders.

I'd also like to say that the private sector in this country has shown an astonishing willingness to become more involved in education ever since the issuance of The Nation at Risk Report 10 years ago. The New American Schools Development Corporation, on which Governor Baliles serves on the board and which Governor Riley and now Secretary Riley mentioned, has already raised millions of dollars from public spirited business leaders. It has path-breaking design teams which are providing us with valuable lessons about how school innovations all around America can help us to reach world class standards. And it is trying to help replicate what works, which I still believe is our most urgent task.

Through these new designs they will be able to provide promising alternatives for schools and states as they work to reinvent their schools with the help of Goals 2000 and other reform efforts that this administration will make. I ask all of you to support this legislation and the work of the New American Schools Corporation. I ask you to support it in the larger context of what we must do as a nation.

Think of what has happened to bring us to this point where we have come to 17 months in a row with unemployment rate at seven percent or higher in every month, even though we are allegedly in an economic recovery. What has happened to bring us to a point where most American families are spending more hours on the job than they were 20 years ago with lower real incomes than they made 10 years ago, including some of the families represented in this audience?

What has caused that? Our lack of ability to be continuously productive, our lack of ability to create more and more new jobs that will stand the test of the rigorous global economy. What we have to do in our administration, and what I earnestly ask for your support in doing is to reverse the trends that have brought us to this past.

Let us first of all bring down the government deficit that has gotten our debt from \$1 trillion to \$4 trillion in the last 12 years simply by telling people at election time what they wanted to hear: I'll cut your taxes and write you a check. All the arithmetic teachers in this audience could have figured out that sooner or later that would get us in trouble. Nobody could have passed math in this town in any of your schools in the last 12 years who with a straight face said I've got you a deal, I'll cut your taxes and I'll send you a check. (Applause.)

So it fell to me to try to change that ratio. And the House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means yesterday reported out a bill which does a lot of that. It restores both spending cuts and tax increases to a proper balance. It will bring the deficit down by \$500 billion over the next five years. It will provide important new incentives for small businesses and for larger businesses to continue to invest, to create jobs in our country. It provides a real tax break for working families with children with incomes of under \$29,000 to offset the impact of the energy tax and reward work so there will never be an incentive for people with families not to work. Because if this tax bill passes, for the first time in our country's history, because of the changes in the tax code, we'll be able to say that if you work 40 hours a week and you've got a child in the house, you will not live in poverty. These

people with incomes above \$100,000. (Applause.)

The budget package also over the next five years will increase our commitment to Head Start, to apprenticeship training, with partnerships with our schools and our post-high school programs, and opens the doors of college education to everyone through a radical reform in the student loan program and national service. (Applause.) It focuses on, in other words, increasing investment, bringing down the deficit, and bringing us together as a country again. This Goals 2000 legislation is an important part of that. It is our effort to do our job here as well as you do your job back home. If we did our job here as well as you've done yours, then America could celebrate and give itself a blue ribbon in just a few years. (Applause.)

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

END

10:02 A.M. EDT