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**270. Youth Violence
And Ent. Industry 9/13/00**

Divider Title: _____

***(On back of tab)* 270. Youth Violence
And Ent. Industry 9/13/00**

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2000, AND THEREAFTER

Let me describe an after-school scene you might recognize: A teenager is slouched on the couch in the family room, doing his homework in front of the television. It's 4 p.m., and he's watching reruns of a video music award program featuring performances by gangsta rappers. The lyrics to the songs are obscene and celebrate violence; and some female singers sport costumes clearly designed to shock. A 15-year-old is sitting in her room with the door closed, surfing the Web and talking to strangers in a teen chat room. The youngest son is in the basement with his friends, playing a video game where the one who kills the most wins.

Ask the harried mother or father who has worked a full day and is trying to get a meal on the table, and you're likely to get this response: "I'm doing the best I can. And anyway, how do you even know there's a connection between violence on TV and the real world?"

In my 1996 book, "It Takes a Village," I wrote about just such a family and about the steady stream of articles, books and studies that have documented the harm the media's depictions of violence have on children. According to the research, saturating young minds with graphic and sensational violence prevents them from developing the emotional and psychological tools they need to deal with the threat and reality of violence. Children become, in effect, numbed to violence.

Everywhere I go, parents tell me that the violence their children are exposed to is so pervasive that they, too, don't know what to do about it. That is why, shortly after the tragic shootings at Columbine High School, the President and I, along with the Vice President and Tipper Gore, who has been a courageous leader on this issue for 20 years, hosted a meeting of media and gun industry executives, parents, teenagers, community leaders and other experts to talk about appropriate responses. It was an unprecedented gathering that has spawned action on several fronts.

On June 1 of last year, the President called on the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice to conduct a joint study to answer two questions: Do the industries promote products they themselves acknowledge warrant parental caution in venues where children make up a substantial percentage of the audience? And are these advertisements intended to attract children and teenagers?

Based on the results of the study, which were released this week, the answer to both questions is a plain and disturbing "yes."

For nearly eight years, this administration has looked to every segment of our society to seek a broad range of solutions to youth violence. In many instances, the industry has been responsive, leading to many positive accomplishments: a 1994 conference on how the coverage of violence on the news affects children; a White House roundtable on the importance of public television to children; a White House Conference on Children's Television where industry executives agreed to air a minimum of three hours of educational children's programming a week; the television industry's breakthrough agreement to create a voluntary ratings system; the development of the V-chip; and this year's White House Conference on Teenagers, where I announced the creation of a task force to provide parents and teens the tools they need to navigate all kinds of media -- from video games to sophisticated Internet sites, movies, and CDs.

The results of the FTC study, though, tell us that there is still work to be done. The entertainment industry has taken steps to identify and flag inappropriate content. But we now have irrefutable evidence that individual companies routinely target children under 17 as the audience for movies, music and games that, according to their own ratings, are too violent. In addition, children under 17 are frequently able to buy tickets to R-rated movies and can easily purchase music recordings and electronic games that have parental advisory labels or other restrictions.

These practices are unconscionable and outrageous. They not only undermine the credibility of the industry's own ratings, they frustrate parents' attempts to make informed decisions about their own children's exposure to violence.

The report calls on the entertainment industry to end the practice of target marketing to children; make sure that more stores and theaters check identification before selling games or tickets to children under 17; and help parents understand the myriad of ratings.

I say we must go further. I have long advocated a uniform rating system with simple and clear codes that aid parents who want to enforce restrictions at home. And, all retailers should follow the example of Wal-Mart and Kmart, both of which have pledged to check the identification of children purchasing restricted video games.

Television, movies, video games and music are here to stay, and will continue to be influential in shaping the opinions and behavior of our children for years to come. In the face of an industry that targets our children with

harmful products, we parents must be willing to assert our power as consumers and take back our authority over what our children see and hear in our own homes.

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271. Ritalin

9/20/00

Divider Title: _____

***(on back of tab)* 271. Ritalin**

9/20/00

TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2000

Last February, the Journal of the American Medical Association reported startling increases in the use of prescription drugs by preschoolers. The use of Ritalin alone, the most commonly prescribed treatment for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, increased 150 percent between 1991 and 1995.

Like many others, I am taken aback by the dramatic increases in the prescription of these drugs for such a young population. On the other hand, though, I know that Ritalin has been a godsend to millions of children, allowing them to conquer their impulsive, hyperactive and inattentive behaviors, and giving them the chance to reach their full developmental potential.

Unfortunately, Ritalin, like many other psychotropic drugs, has never been tested on children younger than 6. And because diagnosis of ADHD is not easy -- there are no diagnostic tests -- concerns linger about both over- and under-diagnosis.

When the JAMA reported the newest figures, I was so concerned that I asked our most senior health policy officials -- including Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, Surgeon General David Satcher, Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Jane Henney, Assistant Secretary of Education Judith Heumann and National Institute of Mental Health Director Steve Hyman -- to meet with me at the White House to talk about what could be done to ensure the best course of treatment for children with mental disorders. At the end of our meeting, just weeks after the release of the report, we launched an unprecedented public-private effort to improve the diagnosis and treatment of emotional and behavioral conditions in children.

Since that day, our efforts to ensure that all our children get the care they need have led to progress on several fronts: The American Academy of Pediatrics has issued new guidelines for diagnosing ADHD. The National Institute of Mental Health has begun funding a \$5 million multi-site trial on the use of Ritalin to treat ADHD in preschoolers. And because information about the proper diagnosis and treatment of these cases has not reached many of the people who need it most -- including families, teachers and pediatricians -- the NIMH has released a new and easy-to-understand fact sheet designed to help parents make the right decisions when it comes to treating their children.

The FDA has begun to look at some common psychotropic drugs to determine what dosage levels are appropriate for the very young. They are also considering the ethical issues posed when tests are done on such a vulnerable group. And the FDA, together with the NIMH, is planning a meeting next month to discuss pediatric psychopharmacology.

This week, the Surgeon General, in cooperation with 12 other federal agencies, convened a major national conference of experts to discuss the issues that arise when children suffer from mental health problems. Participants are being called on to examine the barriers and challenges to identifying, referring, and treating children with mental health needs, and the obstacles to delivering appropriate care to patients and their families. After listening to their recommendations, the Surgeon General will develop a National Action Agenda to improve the way mental health disorders are diagnosed and treated in young children.

Despite the progress we've made since last March, we know that there are still many unanswered questions that demand our attention. Are the children who are diagnosed with emotional and behavioral conditions provided appropriate care in today's health care system? More specifically, are they receiving the full range of services they require? Are these services being managed appropriately? And finally, does insurance cover the options necessary to provide the best care?

We must also look at the extraordinary increase in marketing expenditures for a whole range of medications, including Ritalin. We need to determine whether such marketing has encouraged excessive and inappropriate use of pharmaceutical products, or if it has been constructive in making the public more aware of available treatment options.

This much is clear: Coordination between the various providers in a child's life must improve. Health providers and educators must be better trained to assess behavioral and mental problems. Families must be involved in all aspects of treatment. And there must be more research on the 0-5 year old population, so that parents can be well-informed about the treatment choices they are called upon to make for their own children.

This week's conference, together with the actions we have already taken, marks a very important step forward. But in no way can this be the last step. We must continue to demand answers to our questions. Nothing less than the health and hope of our nation's children -- as well as the peace of mind of their parents -- is at stake.

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272. 9/27/00

Reauthorization of VAWA

Divider Title: _____

(On back of tab) 9/27/00 # 272

Reauthorization of VAWA

TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2000

For nearly eight years, this administration has worked to bring peace to some of the most troubled spots in the world -- from Northern Ireland to the Balkans, Africa and the Middle East. But it is hard for us to make peace around the world unless we first commit ourselves to make peace within our own homes.

That is why it is critical that the Senate vote this week to reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act.

Congress first passed VAWA in 1994. Part of the President's crime bill, this landmark legislation improved the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking, and provided critical services to victims. Since its passage, VAWA has made a difference in the lives of countless women and children. Between 1993 and 1998 alone, violent attacks on women by an intimate partner declined 21 percent.

Under VAWA, the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services have awarded over \$1.6 billion in grants nationwide -- grants that support the work of prosecutors, law enforcement officials, courts, victims' advocates, health care and social service professionals, and intervention and prevention programs. In addition, VAWA has established a domestic violence hotline that has received half a million calls.

Although tremendous strides have been made, domestic violence still devastates the lives of too many women and children each year. These statistics tell the story in stark detail:

- Each year, nearly 900,000 women are victims of violence at the hands of an intimate partner.
- Domestic violence is the No. 1 health risk for American women between the ages of 15-44.
- Close to one-third of women murdered each year are killed by an intimate partner.

This week, the President traveled to New Mexico, where he visited the Genoveva Chavez Community Center in Santa Fe, N.M., and called on members of Congress to reauthorize VAWA, which is due to expire on Sept. 30. If Congress fails to reauthorize this landmark bill, critical programs will be jeopardized.

Reauthorization will allow the continued maintenance and expansion of the domestic violence hotline, as well as shelter, rape prevention and education programs. It will expand the investigation and prosecution of violent crimes against women, provide assistance to a greater number of victims, and support effective partnerships between law enforcement, victims' advocates and communities.

While in New Mexico, the President announced \$1.7 million in new VAWA grants that will be used by state officials to combat domestic violence, especially among Native American women. Among the programs that will benefit from the funding: El Refugio, Inc., a legal services center that trains law enforcement staff to respond to domestic violence issues and represents victims who desperately need legal assistance.

The Eight Northern Indian Pueblos Council, Inc., provides services to the eight local pueblos, as well as supporting legal services for victims and improved collaboration among social services, tribal police departments, prosecutors, courts and the PeaceKeepers Domestic Violence Program. Morning Star House, a community-based advocacy program for women and children in Albuquerque, N.M., is working to identify a network of safe houses for native women and children and to develop a plan for a permanent shelter.

VAWA funding has also supported the work of Connie Trujillo, who, for 20 years, has been the executive director of the Esperanza Shelter for Battered Families, one of the oldest battered women's shelters in the country. Connie, herself, is a survivor of domestic violence. Her former husband killed one child, and caused her to miscarry another. Since its founding in 1976, Esperanza has served as a safe haven for over 36,000 women and children, providing crisis intervention, counseling, educational activities for children, medical referrals, legal advocacy and assistance in finding transitional housing.

As I was writing this column, the House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to reauthorize VAWA, taking a step toward a brighter future for programs like those I've described. Although the 415-3 vote is proof positive that there is broad bipartisan support for the legislation, the Republican leadership in the Senate has been curiously reluctant to schedule a clean vote. Today, I hope that the spirit of bipartisanship -- the willingness to put the public good over party politics -- will prevail, and that the

Senate, too, will be afforded the opportunity to vote on and pass this critically important bill.

When Bill and I lived in Arkansas, our house was close to the local domestic violence shelter in Little Rock, Ark. There, I spent many hours talking to the women and children, listening to their stories and trying to help them get the resources they so desperately needed.

It must be clear to everyone that domestic violence is a crime that affects not just its immediate victims, but all of us. It increases health costs, keeps adults from work and children from school. It destroys families, relationships and lives, and robs our children of their right to be children.

It's time for the Senate leadership to schedule a vote on VAWA. We cannot turn our backs on millions of women and children. We cannot let them face the nightmare of violence alone.

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273. 10/4/00 Reauthori- zation of AmeriCorps

Divider Title: _____

***(on back of tab)* 273. 10/4/00
Reauthorization of
AmeriCorps**

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2000, AND THEREAFTER

I have often heard my husband say that his proudest accomplishment as President has been the success of AmeriCorps -- the national service program he created to provide people with money for college in exchange for substantial service.

Since the launch of AmeriCorps six years ago, nearly 200,000 Americans have served on the front lines in hard-pressed neighborhoods -- tutoring in schools, responding to natural disasters, helping to make our streets safer, building homes and more. They can also be found in rural towns, Indian reservations and national parks -- and in every state in America. They come from all walks of life, but they have two things in common: a mission to get things done and a track record of hard-hitting results.

While communities benefit, so, too, do the AmeriCorps members themselves. Not only are they improving their communities, they are also improving their own skills as citizens. Last year, an independent evaluation of the program determined that after participating, members shared a lifelong commitment to service; all members, but especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, gained skills they would one day need in the work world; and on top of that, they earned grants to further their education or to pay off student loans.

In an era of fierce partisan politics, the bipartisan outpouring of support for one of this Democratic president's signature programs might well come as a surprise. But surprise aside, the enthusiasm from government leaders of every political stripe is an honest testament to the leadership of former Senator Harris Wofford, CEO of the Corporation for National Service, and to the success of this very special program. Just listen to what these prominent Republicans have to say about AmeriCorps:

General Colin Powell: "It is a tremendous investment in young people, a tremendous investment in the future, and I am a strong supporter of AmeriCorps. I think they have demonstrated their worth, they have paid their dues, and they are worthy of the support I hope they will get from Congress."

Senator John McCain: "I was wrong about AmeriCorps. I was extremely skeptical at first, mostly because I didn't trust the authors. But I've got to say that overall, the program's been a success. And it was a failure on my part not to recognize that earlier."

Montana Governor Marc Racicot: "AmeriCorps works. It is cost-effective, and achieves results all Americans want -- safer streets, better schools and healthier children. At the same time, by teaching young people to serve their country, AmeriCorps is rekindling a sense of patriotism and civic duty that our country sorely needs."

Governor Racicot feels so strongly about the benefits of AmeriCorps that he led an effort to win the support of his colleagues, 48 of whom -- including Texas Governor and Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush -- have signed a letter urging Congress to renew AmeriCorps and the other national service programs administered by the Corporation for National Service for the next five years.

Here's how the letter concludes: "As Governors, we recognize the value of national service as a tool in meeting important needs in our states. We have seen national service at work in our states. We do not want to lose this force for good in our communities, states and country."

More than half of all AmeriCorps members work with children -- many at the forefront of the national effort to teach children to read. In one year, AmeriCorps members at the Reading One-to-One AmeriCorps in Dallas, Texas, provided 50,000 hours of tutoring to more than 1,100 elementary students. Improvement among first graders was dramatic. Other members work with some of the country's most effective nonprofit organizations, from Habitat for Humanity to the Red Cross.

One of the collateral benefits of AmeriCorps is how contagious it is. In Alabama, 12 AmeriCorps members recruited and placed more than 1,300 volunteer tutors in schools across the state. In Oregon's Project SMART (Start Making A Reader Today), 73 AmeriCorps*VISTA members recruited more than 8,500 community volunteers last year. SMART now serves 167 schools in 14 counties, reaching 8,535 children.

In the face of this record of achievement, the overwhelming bipartisan support and the President's request to fund 12,000 new members, which would bring the total annual work force to 62,000, I have to wonder why the House appropriations bill cut funding for AmeriCorps entirely? And why the Senate version cut \$26 million -- not only refusing the President's request for an increase of 12,000 members, but reducing opportunities to serve in AmeriCorps by 3,000.

I applaud the governors who have signed the letter of support for AmeriCorps, and I sincerely hope that our elected officials in Washington will follow suit. Before they return to their districts for the election, I urge them

to reauthorize the program and approve the President's requested funding for next year.

If we want our children to grow up as good citizens who understand the saying "Service is the rent we pay for living," it is up to us to lead the way.

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274. 10/11/00

Microenterprise Act

Divider Title: _____

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Microenterprise Act

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2000, 2000

Poor families around the world stand to gain unprecedented access to economic opportunity with last week's passage by Congress of the Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act, a bill that authorizes \$155 million in each of the next two years for microenterprise development programs around the world.

Despite the current economic prosperity in our own country, more than 1.2 billion people in the developing world -- one-fifth of the world's population -- subsist on less than \$1 a day. Even those who generate income by selling food, crafts and the like, find themselves trapped in poverty with no access to credit to expand their businesses.

Microenterprise programs can offer these willing workers the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty and improve their families' welfare. Women, especially, could alter the face of global poverty by having an impact not only on family incomes, but also on child nutrition, health and education.

As I have traveled around the world, I have met women whose lives and communities have been transformed by small loans. In March of 1998, when we were in Uganda, I took my husband and President Yoweri Museveni to a microenterprise program that neither man had heard about before.

There we met Robinah, a brickmaker who has used loans from the Foundation for International Community Assistance, or FINCA -- a non-profit borrowing group devoted to extending credit in order to improve the lives of poor families around the world. Her loans built a brick business that employs two workers with enough left over to pay her children's school fees. Proudly explaining that she has put aside bricks to build herself a house, Robinah says, "I have a happy marriage, and my husband respects me. ... My children are also happy and respect me because I can provide for them and feed them."

Margaret, too, has put enough money aside to build a house for her family. Now on her fifth loan, Margaret has financed the purchase of poultry, rabbits and materials for hutches. The mud hut where she and her husband used to live now houses the rabbits.

A tailor by trade, Teddy runs three profitable businesses, thanks to her FINCA loans. In one year she has bought two sewing machines and employed two people who help her make uniforms for the local school. With her next loan, she hopes to buy 10 more sewing machines so that she can start a tailoring school.

Microcredit works not only in foreign countries, but in many parts of this country, as well. After I first heard about the work of the Grameen Bank in India and the South Shore Bank in Chicago 15 years ago, I was determined to translate those success stories to other regions. Today, microcredit enterprises flourish in many parts of this country.

My husband has become such a proponent of microcredit that when he hosted the recent White House Conference on the New Economy: Bridging the Digital Divide he invited not only powerful business leaders, but also microcredit experts like Marai Chatterjee from the Self-Employed Women's Association in India. She spoke eloquently about what poor people -- especially women -- need in order to close the digital divide: technology and health care, education, credit, employment and self-empowerment. In short, all the things that microcredit offers.

Three years ago, I stood with members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to support USAID's microenterprise initiative. The Microenterprise for Self-Reliance Act institutionalizes that initiative and authorizes support for programs that provide credit, insurance, training and other services to entrepreneurs -- 50 percent of whom must be very poor or women. Much of the credit for its passage goes to the women themselves -- 97 percent of whom have repaid their loans in full and on time.

But this bill goes beyond helping women develop small businesses. The programs it supports will change the face of foreign aid, expanding access to financial services and making microlending a component of U.S. foreign policy.

This bill is the product of tireless leadership on both sides of the aisle. Upon passage, Rep. Benjamin Gilman, the Republican Chair of the House International Relations Committee, noted that the microenterprise programs are the most effective manner in which the United States can deliver anti-poverty foreign assistance. His co-sponsor, Democrat Sam Gejdenson, agreed: "Through modest loans going directly to those who need them most, we are able to break the cycle of poverty by helping to promote self-sufficiency, individual responsibility and free enterprise -- the very principles that drive our democracy."

Three years ago, I was invited to give the keynote address to the Microcredit Summit in Washington, D.C. Whereas today microcredit is helping more than 20 million creditors, the summit set a new goal five times that

number. This bill will go a long way toward helping us meet that goal, and I applaud all who voted for it.

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275. 10/18/00

Trafficking of Women and Children

Divider Title: _____

***(On back of tab)* 275. 10/18/00**

Trafficking of Women and Children

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2000

Many people in this country would be shocked to learn that a modern form of slavery has become one of the fastest-growing criminal enterprises in the world.

According to Theresa Loar, Director of the President's Interagency Council on Women, "Trafficking in women and children is now considered the third largest source of profit for organized crime, behind only drugs and guns."

Trafficking is distinguishable from the smuggling of human beings in one horrific detail: Trafficking moves people for the purpose of placing them in modern-day slavery or servitude.

I'm sure that many Americans assume this is a problem limited to other parts of the globe -- that, surely, it doesn't go on here. But it does. I remember reading with horror the story of 60 Mexican immigrants brought to the United States, enslaved, beaten and forced to peddle trinkets in New York; the Thai women held captive and forced to work as garment workers in California; and the Latvian nationals forced into the sex industry by threats of violence in Chicago.

"Traffickers know that throughout the world they can reap large profits while facing a relatively low risk of prosecution," explains Loar. Between one and two million men and women -- although the victims are predominantly women -- are trafficked annually around the world. Fifty thousand are sent to the United States -- about half for sweatshop labor and domestic positions, the others for sexual servitude.

In 1997, the United States, along with the European Union, formally launched a campaign to combat trafficking in women and girls and to warn potential victims of the risks. I was pleased to speak out publicly on that occasion because I have seen firsthand the horrors visited on victims and their families.

At that event, I urged the world's leaders to take a much stronger stand. Trafficking of women and girls is, after all, nothing less than a human rights violation that will haunt us into the 21st century if we do not take strong measures against the practice now. Women sold as domestics and slaves in illegal sweatshops are sometimes literally worked to death. And young girls trafficked into the sex industry are commonly exposed to deadly diseases such as HIV and AIDS.

In Ukraine, women with tears streaming down their faces told me about young girls in their towns -- children really -- who had disappeared. Poverty and economic desperation led them to answer ads promising a better future in a faraway land. Or, they fell victim to bogus travel agents who deceived them with stories of good jobs in prosperous nations like the U.S. Filled with optimism, they left -- never to be heard from again.

In March of 1998, the President, denouncing trafficking as a fundamental human rights violation and a growing organized crime problem, directed his Interagency Council on Women to coordinate development of a three-part strategy: First, prevention of trafficking; second, protection of and assistance

for trafficking victims; and third, prosecution of and enforcement against traffickers.

I'm pleased to report that last week, Congress adopted comprehensive legislation to combat trafficking in this country -- legislation that incorporates and strengthens the President's three-part strategy by providing new tools to protect trafficking victims and punish traffickers. It institutionalizes our response so that future administrations will be able to carry this important work forward. Furthermore, it elevates the buying and selling of human beings to the prominent place on the world's agenda it deserves.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, chair of the President's Interagency Council, has raised the issue of trafficking with leaders around the world, reminding them that "Our goal, ultimately, is to mobilize people everywhere so that trafficking in human beings is met by a stop sign visible around the world.

I congratulate Congress for taking an important first step toward this goal. Working in a bipartisan fashion, they put the victims of trafficking above party politics. Now it is time to turn our attention to winning support for an international protocol on trafficking in women and children that would be part of a global Organized Crime Convention.

Every one of us has a stake in making sure that this new instrument of international cooperation sets the standards for our efforts to prevent trafficking, punish the traffickers and protect their victims. Trafficking is nothing less than a pervasive human rights violation and a transnational crime. It is time for us to lead the way and bring it to an end. With the passage of this new law, we can do just that.

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276. 10/25/00

Passing Important Legislation

Divider Title: _____

***(On back of tab)* 276. 10/25/00**

Passing Important Legislation

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2000

Over the past five years, I have written nearly 300 columns, many of them about issues I have cared about and worked on for 30 years. As I look back over the list, I'm struck by the extraordinary opportunity this column has afforded me to bring these important topics to national and even international attention.

Only a few days remain in the 106th Congress, after which members will return to their districts to campaign. Unfortunately, Congress has not yet acted on several important fronts: Members have failed to provide Americans with a Patient's Bill of Rights; they have not passed targeted tax credits for long-term care givers; and they have yet to pass the appropriations bill that would fund our education and child care proposals.

Congressional action has shown, though, that the spirit of bipartisanship can lead to the passage of important legislation, much of which I have written about in this space.

One example is the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act, an important bill passed by Congress last week, aimed at ending two heinous practices: trafficking and violence against women. At my request, members of my staff led an interagency effort to win passage of this bill, which will ensure vital assistance for victims, and provide important new tools and resources to help bring an end to the sale of women and children.

Congress also reauthorized and strengthened the Violence Against Women Act, adding new protections and assistance for battered women, reauthorizing the domestic violence hot line, and helping to improve interstate enforcement of protection orders.

In June, when VAWA was winning scant attention on Capitol Hill, I stood with a group of law enforcement officers and members of Congress from both sides of the aisle to urge its passage. Since then, my staff has worked tirelessly with members of the administration and lawmakers to make sure that ending violence against women stayed at the top of their agenda, ultimately ensuring not just the bill's survival, but also its new and stronger provisions.

On the health front, Congress passed legislation expanding the Medicaid treatment options for low-income, uninsured women with breast or cervical cancer. For eight years, I have worked with the National Breast Cancer Coalition, first to create a National Action Plan on Breast Cancer, and then later with the President, to bring much-needed federal support to the fight against cancer.

Many of our children will be healthier and better off thanks to passage of the Children's Health Act. Signed by the President last week, this bill includes grants to improve the safety and health of children in day care. In 1997, the President and I hosted the first-ever White House Conference on Child Care, an event that highlighted the critical shortage of high-quality, affordable day care in this country. The following January, the President, in his State of the Union address, unveiled a child care initiative similar to the one he signed last week. Like the President's proposal, the Children's Health Act includes funds to train child care providers, improve health and safety standards, and strengthen enforcement mechanisms.

Parents hoping to adopt will also be pleased by recent Congressional and administration efforts on their behalf. Earlier this month, the President signed the Intercountry Adoption Act, based on a Hague Convention negotiated by the U.S. and 65 other countries. In response to abuses in the foreign adoption process -- including the trafficking of children -- and, in light of the rapidly increasing numbers of foreign children being adopted by American families, I have been a strong supporter of this convention. It establishes important protections for internationally adopted children, as well as for their birth and adoptive parents.

Congress also passed important legislation that will continue and expand microcredit assistance for the world's poorest entrepreneurs, many of whom are women. My enthusiasm for microcredit dates back to my years in Arkansas, when my husband and I introduced some of the first microenterprise programs in the United States. I have spoken out on microcredit many times, and my enthusiasm has infected my staff, who have worked hard to secure passage of this bill.

Finally, our children and arts education got a boost from lawmakers. A longtime arts supporter, I am a true believer in the importance of arts education, so I was pleased to see approval of the first significant increase in the National Endowment for the Arts budget since the Republican takeover of Congress six years ago.

Over the past seven years, we have seen partisan politics scuttle important legislation -- even a bill as popular as the President's proposal to keep guns out of the hands of children. In these last few days of the 106th Congress, I hope the spirit of bipartisanship is the spirit that prevails -- and that our lawmakers use this time to pass legislation that matters to the American people.

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277. 11/1/00

Importance of Voting

Divider Title: _____

***(on back of tab)* 277. 11/1/00**

Importance of Voting

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2000

After the 1998 election, a survey of 18- to 24-year-olds conducted by the National Association of Secretaries of State drew this frightening conclusion: We may be witnessing the emergence of a permanent class of non-voters.

In 1993, the National Voter Registration Act, or "Motor Voter" law went into effect. Aimed at young voters especially, Motor Voter proved a stunning success. The idea of registering people to vote as they applied for a driver's license added 11 million new names to the list of registered voters.

But something happened on the way to the voting booth: They didn't come. Although Motor Voter was successful at adding millions to the rolls, the turnout was lower than for any election since 1924. Now we need to get those who've registered to actually go to the polls on Election Day.

Over the course of the past eight years, I have traveled all over the world. Many times I have visited emerging democracies where, just as they did in this country, patriots fought and died for the right to vote. I've met people who have stood in line for hours -- sometimes even days -- to exercise their hard-fought and precious new right.

Why, then, are Americans turning their back on this privilege -- the cornerstone of our democracy?

In 1960, 63 percent of the electorate voted. By 1996, that number had dropped to under 40 percent, leaving us to ask: What will it take to remind the American public that voting is not just a precious right, but in Lyndon Johnson's words, "the first duty of democracy"?

Leading up to this year's election, I have received several letters from newly turned 18-year-olds asking the same question: "Why should I vote?" They are convinced that, in a climate where elections seem to turn on who spends the most money on TV ads, casting a ballot is meaningless. And they are not alone.

In 1998, fewer than one in five 18- to 24-year-olds voted. When asked why by the NASS researchers, they cite a number of reasons: They feel ignored by politicians; they feel their vote doesn't really count; and they say that they don't get the kind of information they need to make an informed decision.

The survey concludes that the single factor that most influences whether a young person will vote is whether his or her parents vote. But almost half of this group reported that they never - or almost never -- talked about politics, government, or current events with their parents.

There is at least one hopeful sign that might help us bring this generation into the

process: More than half of them volunteer on a regular basis, and 94 percent define the most important aspect of citizenship as "helping others." I hope that the trend toward service learning in the schools will provide the opportunity for young people to see that the work they do in their communities, and the issues they care about as a result, can be and are affected by what happens in the voting booth.

There are 70.2 million people in this country under 20. The thought that this huge segment of the population might never bother to vote for President or governor, state legislator or town clerk, is extraordinarily alarming. It is incumbent on those of us who do vote, who do believe in the power of one vote to change history, and who do believe in our system of government to consider very carefully how best to bring them into the political process.

Young people today are doers. According to the survey, they are less pessimistic than their elders, and with the exception of Social Security, they care about many of the same issues: education and violence, the economy and jobs.

If you are skeptical about whether your vote can make a difference, think about this: If indeed you care about education and jobs; if you care about the Supreme Court and individual rights; if you care about hate crimes, the military and foreign policy; if you care about health care and welfare reform, or paying down the national debt; if you care about global warming and protecting the environment, you owe it to yourself and your country to vote.

It doesn't matter if you're black or white, old or young, rich or poor, male or female, Republican or Democrat. Don't throw this precious privilege away. When you wake up next Tuesday, please go vote.

(SET ITAL) If you'd like to use the Internet to learn more about the candidates and issues, you can start here: www.stateofthevote.org; www.vote-smart.org; www.bettercampaigns.org; www.voter.com; www.speakout.com. (END ITAL)

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278. 11/8/00

New York Senate Race

Divider Title: _____

***(on back of tab)* 278. 11/8/00**

New York Senate Race

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2000

It was nearly two years ago that I was first asked to consider running for the United States Senate from New York. The thought of trying to fill the shoes of one of this country's finest public servants, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, was daunting. Yet, the prospect of continuing to work for the issues that Americans care about was the motivation I needed -- at least to study the idea. Six months later, I stood with Senator Moynihan at his farm in Pindars Corners, prepared to embark on a listening tour of the state to hear what New Yorkers had to say.

The months between that day and my official announcement the following February offered an unprecedented opportunity to listen to New Yorkers from Brooklyn to Buffalo, Staten Island to Skaneateles. What I heard convinced me that the people of New York care about the same issues I have championed for 30 years -- among them: the best education for our children, reliable and affordable health care, and dependable, high-quality child care.

I know that government is not the source of all our problems nor the solution to them. Rather, when people work hard to live up to their responsibilities, it's the role of government to help them make a better life for themselves and their families.

As is the case around the country, there are people in New York who need the government's help. They need jobs and investment; in many cases, they need help shifting from old-fashioned manufacturing jobs to the high-tech economy of the 21st century. And they need a champion -- someone who not only acknowledges and cares about their problems, but who will fight to solve them as well.

Since July of '99, I have shaken literally thousands of hands and cooed at almost as many adorable babies. More importantly though, I have listened to their parents, friends and neighbors tell me stories I will never forget. If they choose me to represent their interests in the United States Senate, their stories will keep me going as I fight to win them health insurance, child care and college tuition tax credits; federal legislation to deter hate crimes; modern schools with quality teachers and smaller classes; a prescription drug benefit for our seniors; and a meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights.

I'll never forget Suanne, whom I met at the Dutchess County Fair in August. Although Suanne is a single mother with no health insurance, her 13-year-old daughter is covered by CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program). CHIP was created by my husband's administration specifically for working families who can't afford insurance for their children. Unfortunately, Suanne has medical problems of her own, the cost of which, she fears, could send her onto welfare.

Mercedes is a lifelong resident of Queens and the mother of three daughters. She stays at home because she can't afford child care, yet the family struggles to get by on her husband's salary alone. Although she wants to return to work, she cannot afford to pay someone to care for her children after

school.

John Smith is the principal of Central Islip High School, which has 1,603 students enrolled now and expects a 30 percent increase over the next five years. He laments that the lack of adequate classroom space prevents the school from offering the additional classes that New York's students need to prepare for the tough new Regent's requirements.

Graham is a registered Republican who promised me his vote. He wants prescription drug coverage for seniors so that he -- and thousands like him -- don't have to cross the border to buy their drugs in Canada.

Carol lives in Manhattan where she cares for her husband who was severely disabled in a car accident ten years ago. Like so many other women of her generation, she fills two roles in the family: sole breadwinner and full-time caregiver.

Like every one of these people, Carol would benefit from a proposal that the administration has put before Congress, but that Congress has failed to enact. Your lawmakers went home last weekend without passing a Patients' Bill of Rights, education funding, a prescription drug benefit for seniors, child care funding and a tax credit for long-term caregivers. In addition, they failed to pass meaningful gun control, hate crimes legislation, the President's New Markets Initiative and an increase in the minimum wage.

Today is Election Day, and as I write this, it's too early to know how people here in New York and across the country have voted. We don't yet know whether they have voted to turn back the clock or to continue the policies of the last eight years that have brought unprecedented prosperity to our nation.

What I know, though, is this: If the people of New York send me to the Senate, they know where I stand on the issues that are important to them. And they know that I'll spend the next six years fighting for every one of them -- old or young, black or white, rich or poor, male or female, upstate or down -- even Yankees fan or Mets.

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279. 11/15/00

200th Ann. Of Wh. House

Divider Title: _____

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200th Ann. Of Wh. House

Talking it Over

Hillary Rodham Clinton

November 15, 2000

Last week, Americans went to the polls to cast their ballots in our national election. One week later, as I write this column, an extraordinary drama has unfolded, and we still do not know who the next President will be.

While there have been demonstrations, lawsuits, appeals and challenges to the vote cast in Florida, our constitution and our democracy continue to stand as a model to the world, just as they have for more than 200 years.

Last week, to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the White House, my husband and I were profoundly honored to welcome three former Presidents, their wives and Lady Bird Johnson to a very special dinner. Never before have so many former Presidents and First Ladies gathered in the East Room. This would have been an extraordinary evening even under ordinary circumstances. But given these times, these four Presidents -- Democrats and Republicans alike - reminded us of the power of our democracy to endure and thrive.

"Once again," President Gerald Ford, the first to speak, said, "the world's oldest republic has demonstrated the youthful vitality of its institutions and the ability and the necessity to come together after a hard-fought campaign. The clash of partisan political ideas does remain just that - to be quickly followed by a peaceful transfer of authority."

President Carter, who has devoted the years since his presidency to human rights, concluded his remarks with these words: "The White House epitomizes for all Americans the stability and the greatness of peace and freedom and democracy and human rights not only for all Americans, but for all people in the world. And my dream is that the epitome of the high ideals of humankind expressed in physical terms in the White House will continue for another hundred or even a thousand years."

Presidents Carter and Ford both noted that during their hard-fought 1976 campaign, neither could have predicted the close relationship that they enjoy today. In fact, at a press conference earlier in the day, President Carter was asked whether he found it strange that he and my husband would be attending an event with Gerald Ford and George Bush. His response? "I think that's a vivid demonstration of what the White House and service in it means to all of us."

When it came time for President Bush to speak, every person in the room had to be wondering how he felt as he looked around the house, considering whether his own son would be its next occupant. Referring to the unsettled nature of the outcome, he talked about the timeless quality of the People's House:

"For 200 years and eight days, this old house had been buffeted by the winds of change and

battered by the troubled waters of war. We've been favored by calm seas, too. But history tells us a democracy thrives when the gusts and gales of challenge and adversity fill its sails and compel it into action. And through it all, through trial and tribulation, as well as triumph, the White House has served as our nation's anchor to windward, a vision of constancy, a fortress of freedom, the repository of a billion American dreams. Age and the elements occasionally wear her down, but this house is forever renewed by the ageless fidelity of its founders, and the boundless promise of its future heirs."

It is impossible to walk down the halls of this living museum without being touched by the lives of all who have come before. President Ford talked about being "humbled by the inescapable presence of (his) predecessors -- Jackson, Lincoln, the two Roosevelts, Truman and Eisenhower, and so many others who live in our imagination and our idealism." And he went on to talk about the roles the White House has played in American history -- office building, museum, cultural showcase, think tank, war room and the symbol of democracy. But most of all, he reminded us, "It is a home," -- an enduring tie that binds us to everyone who has lived and worked here before us.

My husband and I -- along with every other former resident -- know that the White House belongs to the people, not to any one of us. That is why we are here 200 years after John Adams became the first President to live at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

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**280. 11/22/00
Trip to Vietnam**

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***(on back of tab)* 280. 11/22/00
Trip to Vietnam**

NOTE TO CLINTON EDITORS: DUE TO UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES, THIS COLUMN IS BEING TRANSMITTED ON THE DAY OF RELEASE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION. -- CREATORS SYNDICATE

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2000

At times, over the past week, as I traveled with my family in Vietnam, I was overcome with emotion. Thirty years ago, when our countries were at war, I never could have imagined I'd see Vietnamese and Americans working side by side at an excavation site, searching for the remains of an American pilot. With us at the site were the pilot's two sons, looking on and hoping that, after all these years, they would finally bring their father home. It is a moment I will never forget.

I will also never forget the welcome that the Vietnamese people gave us when we arrived, stopping their bicycles and mopeds, smiling and waving as we passed by. We can never erase the past -- nor will we completely erase the pain felt by so many men and women on both sides. But we can strive together to make a brighter future for all the people of Vietnam.

This will no doubt be one of our family's very last trips overseas while my husband is President. I wanted to join him on this historic visit to help strengthen relations between our countries, and to see firsthand the role that women are playing to build a more prosperous Vietnam.

When we landed in Hanoi and drove in from the airport, I saw women working in beautiful green fields. And in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, I visited many successful women-run businesses. One woman I met was the head of one of the first State enterprises to be privatized and listed on the new Vietnam Stock Exchange. She represents the promises of the new economy, and yet, it took over a year for her to convince her colleagues that privatization was the way to go. Today, the size of her workforce has more than tripled, and stock values have multiplied by 20.

In 1995, when I spoke at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the NGO Forum in Harbin, I was impressed by the large Vietnamese delegation, made up of women from every walk of life. They joined 50,000 others from around the world, all determined to improve the lives of women. We spoke different languages and came from different countries and communities. But with one voice we proclaimed that, in this century, economic progress depends on the progress of women. Political progress depends on the progress of women. Women's rights are human rights, and human rights are women's rights.

This week, I listened to the women of Vietnam calling for change -- just as I have listened to so many others around the world.

In a village outside of Hanoi, I listened as several women talked excitedly about the small loans that had changed their lives. One woman borrowed \$20 five years ago to buy a tofu machine. She has

since borrowed -- and paid back -- much more. She couldn't conceal her pride as she demonstrated her tofu-making techniques, and explained that she and her husband have saved enough to build a new house -- all because of that first \$20 loan.

All over the world, I have witnessed the changes that women like this can effect in their own lives and in the lives of their families, if only they are offered the same rights, respect, education and economic independence as men. No country will prosper in the new century if women are denied equal rights and responsibilities; when they are valued less, fed less, fed last, overworked, underpaid, and subjected to violence or trafficking.

Soon I will be closing an extraordinary chapter in my life and beginning another that I'm sure will be just as full of promise and challenge. When I take my seat in the U.S. Senate, I will remember the women I have met around the world -- women whose determination, struggles and triumphs have transformed the lives of so many. It is up to all of us to speak out when these women are blocked from owning or inheriting property or having custody of their children. We must speak out when women are stopped from organizing NGOs and freely expressing their views.

We must speak out in the face of human rights abuses or a muzzled press; when religious freedom is suppressed or political expression denied. Every leader must remember that there is no greater influence on whether a family, a community or a country succeeds than whether its women and girls have access to education. The free market holds no promise when millions of a nation's children cannot read or write.

When I was in Hanoi, the Vietnamese Women's Museum displayed the winning posters in an art contest called "Toward Gender Equality in the Year 2000." One of the pictures, drawn by a 7 year old, shows a young girl driving a car full of other girls -- girls who are doctors, teachers, nurses and students. I will carry this image with me into the Senate, for this is the future we must promise not just our daughters, but our sons as well.

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281. 11/29/00

Invitation to the WH

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Invitation to the WH

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2000

When I was a little girl, I was fascinated by the White House, and couldn't wait to see it. Finally, the summer I was 10, my family visited our nation's capital. We stood outside the fence along the south side, staring at one of the most beautiful houses I had ever seen -- the house that symbolizes America for the world.

Years later, whenever I flew into Washington, I would strain for a glimpse of its graceful, stately lines as the plane swept low over the Potomac. But I didn't go into the White House until 1977, when Bill and I were invited by President and Mrs. Carter to attend a dinner honoring the Prime Minister of Canada.

When Bill was governor of Arkansas, we were fortunate to return many times for the annual Governors' Dinners hosted by Presidents Reagan and Bush. I loved walking up to the East Wing portico, dressed in a formal gown. A social aide would hand us our table cards and escort us up to the State Floor where we would be greeted by the President and First Lady.

Nothing, however, could prepare me for the sense of awe I felt when my family arrived at the White House in 1993. Wherever we looked there was something -- a clock, a chandelier, a painting, a chair -- that told a story about the people and events that have shaped our country's history. In the hallways, we saw Presidents and First Ladies peering down from their official portraits. Outside our bedroom windows stood the grand magnolia planted by Andrew Jackson, which still blooms magnificently in the spring.

As I walked through the grand hallways, I could picture Dolley Madison, with dinner on the table, preparing to flee the oncoming British soldiers, and directing her servants to save the Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington. I could feel the presence of Abraham Lincoln as he worked on the Emancipation Proclamation, and Franklin Roosevelt as he held his fireside chats, or met with Winston Churchill to chart troop movements during World War II.

Earlier this month, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of this wonderful building. Not only the most enduring symbol of our democracy, the White House is a living museum for the best American art, culture, history and ideas, a tourist destination, the central office for the Chief Executive and his staff, and the place the President and his family call home.

During the last few years of my husband's administration, I felt so strongly that this national treasure -- often called the People's House -- should be shared with all Americans, that I began to formulate the ideas for a book. This month, in celebration of the 200th anniversary, I'm pleased to say that "An Invitation to the White House: At Home with History," has just been published.

Besides honoring this special birthday, and offering a glimpse inside for those who may never have the opportunity to visit, proceeds from the book will benefit the White House Historical Association, the organization that helps educate the public about the White House.

As our time here draws to a close, and I look through the pages of my book, I find myself growing more nostalgic. In the photos I see the faces of people from all walks of life whom Bill and I have welcomed to the White House -- from South African President Nelson Mandela and Princess Diana, to Special Olympian Sophia Wesolowsky and former foster child Dianna Collins, who has proved the power of adoption to create a permanent and loving family.

Although I think about all the historic events, the pieces of legislation signed, and the steps toward peace taken, I also remember all the personal moments we shared here -- the movies we watched, the birthdays we celebrated, the time we spent playing with our nephews, and our attempts to negotiate détente between Socks and Buddy -- and I realize just how much we have made this historic house a home.

Even after living here eight years, I still look at the White House with the same awe I felt as a little girl pressing my face up to the fence to get a better look. Sometimes I walk down to the Children's Garden on the South Lawn. There, in a shaded spot, is a pond with small handprints around it -- prints that were made by the grandchildren of the first families ever to have lived in the White House.

We have all left our handprints here -- in the history we have preserved and passed on, and in the new chapters we have written. It was the greatest privilege of my life to spend the last eight years at the White House -- truly at home with history.

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282. 12/5/00

Passing Labor/ HHS/ ED Bill

Divider Title: _____

282. 12/5/00

Passing Labor/ HHS/ ED Bill

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2000

This week, an important tradition is taking place on Capitol Hill -- the biannual orientation for newly-elected members of Congress. Unfortunately, our lawmakers are sharing the stage for a more somber undertaking -- a lame-duck session called to finish work on the federal budget.

At midnight tonight, the 16th Continuing Resolution -- the temporary spending bill passed to keep the government functioning in the absence of a budget -- expires. After passing yet another CR, the members must turn immediately to the appropriations and other spending measures that remain, among them the important Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill.

Before Congress left in November, a spirit of bipartisan compromise led to an agreement between administration and Hill negotiators on several issues important to Americans and key to the well-being of our country's families and children. Unfortunately, Congress left town for the November election before the bill was passed. Now, for our children's sake, I hope that the constructive spirit that led to an agreement on this bill will reemerge, preparing us to enter the 107th Congress -- the first Congress of the 21st century -- energized, optimistic and committed to progress and bipartisanship.

Many of you have children who attend schools that are deteriorating seemingly before your eyes. Their roofs leak, heating systems don't work, and classrooms are plagued by broken windows and dangerous wiring. Unfortunately, among the agreements in danger of being lost if the Labor, HHS, and Education bill is not approved, is a landmark emergency repair fund established to help school districts fix these very problems. Another aspect of the bill would reduce the financial burden on local and state governments by having Washington shoulder a larger share of the cost of special education.

Initiatives that would put us on track to hire 100,000 new teachers, reduce class size, and fund important professional development opportunities are on the table again this week. Then there is the initiative I call "small, safe and successful high schools." For too long, as the population of school-aged children has ballooned, too many high schools have grown to resemble warehouses, handling, in some cases, many thousands of students. Such numbers make it virtually impossible to give individuals the attention and care they need and deserve. The appropriations bill that I hope will pass this week would support grants to schools that want to create smaller learning communities, such as schools-within-schools and career academies.

Before their break, legislators had also agreed to increase funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant, which provides subsidies to working families burdened by the high costs of day care. And they agreed to help communities improve the quality of child care, foster cognitive development in young children, promote readiness for school, and train thousands of early childhood educators and caregivers to help improve children's language and literacy skills. The final compromise also supported

the largest funding request ever for Head Start, keeping us on track to reach our goal of enrolling 1,000,000 children by the year 2002.

We cannot allow the education of our children to be derailed by politics. Especially as we move into the new century and adjust to the lightening-fast changes in technology that are taking place, it is our responsibility to make sure our children have the best schools and the best teachers we can provide.

State legislators should take heed, for if Congress fails to pass the bipartisan education plan, the financial impact on state and local governments will be severe. California, for instance, could lose almost three-quarters of a billion dollars. New York could find itself short more than \$40 million for after-school and summer school programs alone. And Illinois could have to do without nearly \$70 million in support for disabled students.

We are too close to having an excellent package to give up now. It's time to work together to bring this historic agreement to a close so that we can get on with other important pieces of the nation's business -- negotiating a fair and productive tax cut, enacting common-sense gun legislation, and passing the Patients' Bill of Rights, comprehensive campaign finance reform, hate crimes legislation, reauthorization of the National and Community Service Act and expansion of health coverage to vulnerable Americans.

As I reflect on the daylong series of meetings I attended at the Senate orientation today, I am more committed than ever to operate in the positive and productive atmosphere that prevailed before the election. And given the razor-thin margin of the presidential vote, I know that it will be more important than ever to reach out and work together for what's right and what's good.

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283. 12/13/00
Ireland and Vital Voices

TALKING IT OVER
BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

As I write this, my husband, my daughter and I are in Northern Ireland. This is my fifth trip here -- an especially meaningful one, as it is probably the last overseas trip we will take together as a family while my husband is President.

We are very pleased to be returning at this historic time. Despite the obvious obstacles that remain, the Good Friday agreement is working. For the first time in 30 years, politicians across the divide are coming together to address the issues that most affect the lives of people here.

As we touched down and drove through the streets of Belfast, my husband and I reminisced about our earlier trips. One memory that will stay with us both is lighting the Christmas tree at Belfast City Hall five years ago, with thousands of people who were finally able to celebrate the holidays with hope -- after so many seasons of darkness.

I will never forget two students who stood with us that day: Mark and Cathy, one Catholic and one Protestant who shared the same dream. When she was 12, Cathy wrote to my husband: "My dreams for the future, well, I have a lot of them: Hopefully the peace will be permanent, and one day Catholics and Protestants will be able to walk hand-in-hand ... Catholics, Protestants, black or white, it is the person inside that counts. What I hope is that when I have my own children there will still be peace, and Belfast will be a peaceful place from now on."

Today, we have moved so much closer to that day. Building peace is never easy -- and there are always people who would rather throw up their hands than roll up their sleeves. But not the wives and mothers, daughters and grandmothers of Northern Ireland. They have lived for, died for, and now voted for peace.

This is one of those special moments -- a moment in which you have the chance to defy generations of hatred -- the kind of moment that comes around only once or twice in a generation.

The women of Northern Ireland, whose whispers of "enough" joined to become a torrent of voices that brought us to this day, have taken that chance. Although they may worship in different churches on Sunday, they pray the same prayers -- for their children to return home from school safely; and that the violence and despair that tear at families will stop.

In the last few years, I have met women of many nations who are raising their voices in political systems and a new economic system once reserved only for men. Just over three years ago, anxious to harness the growing chorus of these voices, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and I launched the Vital Voices Democracy Initiative. Vital Voices embodies our commitment to the advancement of women as a U.S. foreign policy objective. Vital Voices

programs, which now reach thousands of women around the world, strive to ensure that democracies succeed, economies prosper, and peace agreements take hold -- understanding that no democracy, economy or peace agreement can ever fully succeed when one-half of a nation's population remains unrepresented.

I was pleased to be able to announce three new initiatives here that continue the important work of Vital Voices in Northern Ireland. First, there will be a conference for women Parliamentarians next year so that the recently elected women of the new Assemblies in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will have an opportunity to learn from their counterparts in Westminster and the Dail.

Next, political and media experts from the United States will come to Northern Ireland next spring to host small-group training sessions for hundreds of community activists.

And finally, in an effort to ensure that women are not left on the wrong side of the digital divide, Vital Voices Northern Ireland will host a Women and New Technology conference next March. This conference will help make women part of the revolution in information technology that are transforming economies all over the world.

Working with the women of Northern Ireland, as well as those in other countries I've visited over the past eight years, has been one of the greatest privileges of my lifetime. As I close this chapter to begin another, I know that their voices and their prayers will be with me every day, as we continue to work to fulfill our children's dreams of peace.

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284. 12/20/00

Interagency Council on Women

Divider Title: _____

***(on back of tab)* 284. 12/20/00**

Interagency Council on Women

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2000

The Women's Bank occupies a one-room building in western India. The teller's counter is an old kitchen table covered with cloth. Bank clerks record all transactions by hand on yellowed sheets that resemble worn-out telephone books. When I visited in 1995, I saw poor women who had walked 12 to 15 hours from their villages to take out loans -- some as small as \$1 -- to invest in dairy cows, plows or goods that could be sold at market.

The most vivid image that has stayed with me from that trip happened there. Although the women in that room were from rural areas with little contact outside their communities, and although most of them certainly didn't speak English, they all stood together and sang as one "We Shall Overcome."

Later that year, I traveled to Beijing as part of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, an event that drew 50,000 women from around the world, 7,500 of them Americans. In Beijing, the United States joined 189 other states agreeing to the "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action," a document that addressed 12 areas of concern regarding the advancement and status of women.

The issues were: women and poverty, education, health, violence, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, human rights, the media, the environment and girls. Determined that we would return from Beijing steeled to act rather than write a report and put it on a shelf, the President named an Interagency Council on Women on the eve of our departure for China.

"The Women's Conference is going to talk about education and domestic violence and grass-roots economics, employment, health care and political participation," said the President. "And we don't intend to walk away from it when it's over. I'm going to establish an interagency council to make sure that all the effort and good ideas actually get implemented when we come back home."

I was pleased to serve as the honorary chair of the conference in Beijing, and agreed to continue in the same role on the President's Interagency Council. Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala led the Council for two years, at which time Secretary of State Madeleine Albright took over. The progress we've made in the intervening half decade is a testament to their leadership, and cause -- particularly now as the members of this administration move on -- for celebration.

This week, in the East Room of the White House, several hundred people gathered to do just that -- to celebrate the commitment that this administration has made in Beijing.

In the audience were women who had traveled with us to Beijing, many of them representing non-governmental organizations. There were people who have worked to pass legislation combating domestic violence, ending the trafficking of persons, especially women, and supporting microcredit. There were members of the press who turned a bright light on the egregious human rights abuses still plaguing women.

There were those who created the Vital Voices network, and who are now helping women find their rightful place building democracies and free market economies around the world. And there were NGO leaders who have stood, spoken, and inspired us to act so many times. As many of us prepare to leave, it will fall to them to ensure that the next administration continues these fights.

Finally, there were cabinet members and other administration officials -- no administration has ever had so many women appointees. Donna Shalala jokes that there are pieces of legislation passed by this administration that were never seen by a man until they reached my husband's desk.

The shift in foreign policy has been dramatic under Albright. She took concerns about the human rights of women and made them an integral part of U.S. foreign policy. In her words, "We changed the way people think."

Recently I was talking to a man who commented that most observers talk about the development of technology as the single most important change of the 20th century. He looked at me and said, "The most important change is the role of women."

I agree. But I must inject a note of caution: Looking into the 21st century, the question I find most important is this: What will we do with our new role?

Earlier this year, many of us traveled to the United Nations for Beijing + 5, the special session called to review and appraise the progress made in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. I was honored to speak at the session, and when I finished my remarks, two women in the audience stood up and began to sing. Spontaneously, every other women in that vast auditorium joined them, raising their voices to sing "We Shall Overcome."

It happened again this afternoon -- this time in the White House. As our celebration ended, every woman in the room gathered round the podium and sang again. We have come so far in five short years, but as the words to the song imply, we aren't there yet. And we won't be until women in every country participate fully and equally in their families, their communities and their governments.

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285. 12/27/00
The People's House

Divider Title: _____

***(On back of tab)* 285. 12/27/00**

The People's House

NOTE TO CLINTON EDITORS: MRS. CLINTON'S NEW BOOK IS CALLED "AN INVITATION TO THE WHITE HOUSE: AT HOME WITH HISTORY." ALL AUTHOR PROCEEDS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO THE WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION. A PORTION OF THE PUBLISHER'S PROFITS WILL BE DONATED TO THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION. THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION. -- CREATORS SYNDICATE

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2000

When I was a child, we decorated our family tree on Christmas Eve. With only one to decorate, we could afford to wait until the last minute. So, it was a surprise when the Chief Usher and the Social Secretary came to me shortly after my husband's first inauguration to give me the news that it was time to begin planning for Christmas.

Christmas in the White House is magical. There are dozens of trees, dozens of parties and thousands of guests to prepare for. Every detail is planned and executed with the help of not only the White House staff, but also volunteers from all over the country.

Each First Family adds its own unique mark to the holiday traditions -- from the choice of a theme and a Christmas card, to the decision the President and I made to light a menorah during Hanukkah, and host a reception at the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

Our own family celebration has changed over the last eight years, especially with the joy of having two young nephews around. But most of our family traditions have remained intact. We open our gifts on Christmas morning, and it doesn't take too long for our home to look like so many others around the country. By midday, all that is left of Christmas are our memories and gifts, scraps of wrapping paper and bows, the laughter and excitement of family members, and our gratitude for the many blessings we have been given.

This year, especially, as we prepare to move, we are even more mindful of the special wonder of celebrating Christmas at the White House. And, triggered by the photographs in my new book, "An Invitation to the White House: At Home with History," we find ourselves reminiscing about the remarkable events that have taken place since January of 1993, when we first moved in.

We have seen many of life's changes, both good and bad. We weathered investigations and impeachment. We lost Bill's mother and my father, as well as close friends and advisers such as Ron Brown, Vince Foster and Chuck Ruff. We watched our daughter grow from a teenager into a young woman; welcomed Tyler and Zachary, our two new nephews, to the family; and we marked a new century and millennium.

We hosted historic events, including last year's celebration of the 50th anniversary of NATO, an event that saw the largest gathering of foreign heads of state ever to assemble at the White House, and

the South Lawn handshake between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat. This week, even as we prepare to leave, the President is working to bring Mideast leaders together for yet one more peace summit.

On Nov. 1, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the White House. Imagine the wear and tear that comes with welcoming as many as 30,000 guests a week, and the care it requires to protect and preserve the 132 rooms and priceless artifacts and furnishings. But we know, just as every First Family has before us, that we are stewards, not owners of the People's House, and that we have the responsibility to pass it on -- in better shape than we found it -- to future generations.

Although there were many areas of the mansion that needed work when we arrived, the Blue Room, the State Dining Room and the Cross Hall required the most attention. Working with a group of historians, curators and designers from the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, we made decisions based not only on the history of the rooms, but also on how they are used today.

I hadn't been living here very long before I knew I wanted to write a book about our years here. Since the day we moved in, Bill and I were determined to open the White House to as many people as possible, and I knew that a book offered perhaps the next best thing to a visit for those who might never be able to come in person.

The title, "An Invitation to the White House: At Home with History," conveys a great deal about the way I've approached my years here. While a lovely and inviting venue for entertaining, the White House is also the center of our nation's political life, and a living museum of America's history.

As First Lady, I have worked hard, whether planning a social event, a policy announcement, a bill signing or a state arrival, to showcase the best of America -- from food and furnishings, to guests and entertainment. At every turn, I have been supported by a top-rate staff, eager to make my family -- and America's family -- feel at home in what is, after all, the People's House.

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286. 1/3/01

Memories and Achievements – Part 1

Divider Title: _____

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Memories and Achievements – Part 1

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2001

This week, I will accept one of the greatest honors of my life when I take the oath of office of the United States Senate on behalf of the people of New York. Among other things, this means that until Jan. 20, when the new president is sworn in, I will be wearing two very distinct hats -- senator's and First Lady's -- and looking both forward and backward.

As the President and I organize our belongings and pack boxes, we find ourselves repeating this refrain: "Do you remember when ... ?" As much as we cherish the precious memories of places we've visited and people we've met along the way, we likewise take pleasure as we contemplate the milestones America has achieved during the last eight years, starting with the President's promise in 1992 to "Put People First." I am grateful that I had the opportunity to play a part in fulfilling that promise.

During these last eight years, I've been privileged to travel around the country, listening to Americans share their hopes and dreams for a better nation and a better life for their children. I was blessed to work with a dedicated staff to effect policy changes that made real differences in the lives of hardworking Americans and their children.

No achievements meant more than the comprehensive child immunization program started in 1993 that increased immunization rates among toddlers to 90 percent, and the creation of the Children's Health Insurance Program. CHIP gave working parents who could not afford health insurance the chance to enroll their children in state-funded insurance programs for the very first time. Although CHIP has provided treatment for millions of youngsters for whom critical medical care was once out of reach, there is still work to be done -- work that I hope to continue in the Senate until every child is covered.

In my many visits to children's hospitals around the country, I have witnessed firsthand the vital role they play in our nation's health care delivery system, including the education of future pediatricians. Although these remarkable institutions train the vast majority of our children's doctors, they, unlike other teaching hospitals, traditionally have received very few federal dollars for graduate medical education. I was delighted, therefore, when my husband included an unprecedented \$40 million in his year 2000 budget for graduate medical education at children's hospitals -- a number that was increased to \$235 million this year.

Throughout my career as a lawyer, I have worked to improve our judicial system's treatment of children in foster care. In the White House, the President and I worked together to secure legislative changes providing additional support to foster children and promoting adoption. As a result of these changes, the number of adoptions is up nearly 65 percent -- the first

significant increase since the national foster care program was created 20 years ago, and on target to meet the President's goal of 56,000 adoptions annually by the year 2002.

When I served on the William T. Grant Foundation Commission on Work, Family and Citizenship in 1998, more than 50 percent of our nation's young people did not go to college. The Commission's seminal report "The Forgotten Half," advocated more student aid, as well as improved family leave policies, school-to-work programs, youth service opportunities, an expanded Job Corps, and the development of mentoring programs.

The President addressed all these concerns, from national service to after-school care. The very first bill he signed after taking office was the Family and Medical Leave Act, which provides family members time off from work for the birth or adoption of a child, or to care for a close relative with a serious illness. I am also pleased we succeeded in more than doubling the federal funding for child care, opening up thousands of Head Start spots for needy children, and offering enriching after-school programs, and a better understanding on the part of the nation's business community that making quality child care available and affordable makes good economic sense.

Of course, there have been important achievements on many other fronts since my husband took office -- achievements that range from making mammograms more accessible, to ensuring that every American can change jobs without losing health insurance, winning improved health care for Gulf War veterans, creating community service opportunities such as AmeriCorps, and working to save many of our nation's cherished historic treasures. In next week's column, I'll take a look at some of the other memories I have of an extraordinary time in our country's -- and my -- life.

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287. 1/10/01

Memories and Achievements Part II

Divider Title: _____

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**Memories and Achievements
Part II**

TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2001

This week, some of you may have seen pictures of forklifts loading hundreds of boxes onto a Little Rock-bound airplane. Here in the White House, though, the piles of boxes containing the President's papers and other mementos don't seem to be getting any smaller.

For the sake of history, nothing is thrown out. Rather, every note and jot is packed up, labeled, and sent to the National Archives or the site of what will, in a few years, be my husband's presidential library.

As I wrote last week, the very process of packing these documents elicits vivid memories of the events and initiatives that actually changed the lives of millions of Americans. Many of the achievements noted in last week's column related to children -- but there have been many more.

I suspect that when my husband was elected President, many Americans didn't know the depth of my interest in the arts, or how much it would mean to me to be the steward of the White House collection. But it has truly turned out to be one of the great joys of living here.

Until Rosalyn Carter had the idea to create an endowment, refurbishing and acquisitions of art were funded by private donors. Barbara Bush launched the White House Endowment Fund, and I was able to help it along -- not only reaching, but exceeding its goal of \$25 million.

Anxious to showcase American artists and craftspeople, I was pleased to add two paintings to the permanent collection, a 72-piece collection of American crafts and eight exhibits of contemporary American sculpture.

I would hope every American has the opportunity to visit the White House. But there are four books, three of them new, that may be the next best thing: White House curator Betty Monkman's "The White House: Its Historic Furnishings and First Families"; photographer David Finn's record of the eight sculpture exhibits, "20th-Century American Sculpture in the White House Garden; The White House Collection of American Crafts"; and my new glimpse inside 1600, "An Invitation to the White House."

The White House is a living museum, and it has been my goal to showcase not only American art, but a sampling of our country's other talents, as well. I hired Walter Scheib, the first American chef to head the White House kitchen, and invited artists like Aretha Franklin and Lou Rawls, Rita Moreno, Tony Bennett, Liza Minnelli, Mary Chapin Carpenter and Stevie Wonder to perform.

If the arts are to thrive, of course, they can't be restricted to the White House stage. Rather, they must be part of every child's education. That is why my husband and I support more public funding for the arts and a return to strong arts education programs in our schools.

One example of the kind of successful private-public partnership that my husband and I have long worked to foster is VH1's "Save the Music," which collected instruments so that, once again, schools could offer music classes. I will never forget the look on the faces of the children when I walked into their schools

with violins, trumpets or flutes.

The seeds of another successful partnership were born in 1992 when representatives of the National Breast Cancer Coalition, en route to a meeting with me, found themselves stranded on the side of the road when their bus broke down. Determined not to miss our meeting, some resorted to hitchhiking, while others rode in sheriff's vehicles. A year later, we were working together to create the National Action Plan on Breast Cancer, a comprehensive blueprint that encouraged more women to get mammograms and increased federal research funding.

The President and I also worked to raise awareness and funding for other diseases, winning the largest increases ever in medical research funding.

Early in the administration, we received letters from thousands of Gulf War veterans who, disabled by undiagnosed and unexplained symptoms, were frustrated by their belief that the medical establishment was ignoring them. Working with representatives from agencies like the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense, we were able to open a toll-free advice line, and make sure that legitimate claims were approved and funds allocated for research into the treatment and prevention of Gulf War Illness.

As difficult as it is to pack up and leave the White House, it helps to think about stories like these, and take stock of the impact this administration has had on the lives of so many -- not only here, but also around the world -- the women of Vital Voices, the refugees in the Balkans, the children of Northern Ireland.

As I move to the Senate, I'll be working on issues like these and others to which I have long been deeply committed: building modern schools that offer our children the best education in the world, protecting our Earth from the effects of global warming and other environmental hazards, restoring human rights to the women of Afghanistan, expanding the rights of women and children around the world while protecting them from human trafficking, finding the key to peace in the Middle East, making cancer, AIDS and other dread diseases words that children read only in history books, and providing affordable health insurance to every single American citizen.

In the meantime, though, I've got to wrap up. The boxes are calling.

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288. 1/17/01

Goodbye – Thank!

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TALKING IT OVER

BY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON

RELEASE: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2001

As I continue to sort through my belongings, packing the seemingly endless supply of boxes, I can see workers putting the finishing touches on the reviewing stand from which the Bushes and their guests will watch the Inaugural parade on Saturday.

What an incredible experience -- one that my family and I will never forget. After my husband's swearing-in ceremonies in January 1993, we walked down Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House. After watching the parade from the reviewing stands, we proceeded to the North Portico. When we stepped into the Grand Foyer, we were greeted by the many people who work so hard to make the White House not just the center of the executive branch of our government, but also a warm and inviting place for the First Family to live.

My priority, upon moving in, was to create a home for my family -- especially my daughter, who was only 12 at the time, and had just left so many good friends behind in Little Rock. With the help of the curator's staff, we planned a special Inauguration-night party for Chelsea. While Bill and I attended 13 Inaugural balls, Chelsea and a group of friends shared pizza and soda. The highlight of their evening was "The History Mystery Tour," a scavenger hunt that had them roaming all over the house, searching for items of historical significance like the Gettysburg Address, and on the lookout for some of the little-known spots like the hidden staircase between the second and third floors.

This is just one example of the lengths to which the White House staff has gone over the last eight years to make us feel at home. Under Chief Usher Gary Walters, who describes his job as "the manager of a big hotel with only one tenant," the 91 employees have become an extension of our family. When we leave on Saturday morning, saying goodbye to them will be the hardest part of the day.

As difficult as the leave-taking will be, the memories of the last eight years will be with me forever: the first visit of Nelson Mandela; the moment Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat extended their hands to one another in a gesture of peace and goodwill; honoring American heroes like Rosa Parks; welcoming entertainers like Elton John and Barbra Streisand; the November day in 1998 when we gathered in the East Room to celebrate the adoption of 30 children who had never before known what it meant to have permanent and loving families; the day Chelsea left for college; peaceful weekends at Camp David; several surprise birthday parties; eight magical Christmases; marking the moment Dec. 31, 1999 turned to Jan. 1, 2000; watching fireworks from the Truman Balcony and movies in the family theater; late night swims; the first meeting of Buddy and Socks; and even a few incognito walks outside the grounds.

For every one of these incredible memories, I have members of the White House staff to thank -- not just the residence staff, but the Social Office, the kitchen staff, the florists, the military aides and musicians, the flight crews and employees of the White House Mess, communications experts, the White House operators, the Secret Service, domestic and international advisers, the correspondence offices, career employees who take care of a mind-boggling array of administrative details, historians and preservation experts, thousands of volunteers without whom this living museum could not function, and of course, the dedicated members of my own staff.

Even as we wind down to the last few days, this hearty group is going full tilt. On my schedule today, I will attend a meeting with the Holocaust Asset Commission; present awards to five groups for their efforts to extend microcredit to would-be entrepreneurs; and meet with the staff of our Vital Voices initiative, which works to bring women around the world into the mainstream of their nation's governments and economies.

Asked why, at this stage, we are still so engaged, I have to say that it's because of you. You asked us to do a job, and not one of us wants to leave while any part of that job remains undone.

So I thank you, too -- not just for the last eight years, but for the opportunity to continue the work we began together. Although I must say goodbye to the dear friends I've made here, I won't be far away. And I promise that every day I'm a United States senator, I'll continue the work begun in this house.

I wish the Bushes all the best. I know they will be well taken care of here. And once again, to my loyal readers around the world, I say, "Thank you."

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