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THE CAPITALIST THREAT

by GEORGE SOROS

Laissez-faire doctrine holds that markets are self-sustaining and that the common good is best served by the uninhibited pursuit of self-interest. Unless it is tempered by the recognition of a common interest that must take precedence over particular interests, this doctrine is bound to lead to social and economic breakdown

I AM fully aware of the pitfalls of generalizing from my own experience. In recent years I have devoted most of my energies and half of my income to propagating the concept of open society, but I can't expect a similar devotion from others. Nevertheless, I firmly believe that the world would be a better place if the concept of open society were better understood and more widely accepted.

The meaning of "open society" was clear during the Cold War; it stood for the values of the Western democracies in contrast to communism. But the Soviet system has disintegrated. There was an opportunity to lay the groundwork for a universal open society, but the Western democracies failed to rise to the occasion. The new regimes that are emerging in the former Soviet Union and the former Yugoslavia bear little resemblance to open societies. The Western alliance itself seems to have lost its sense of purpose, because it cannot define itself in terms of a Communist menace. Hence the need for a more positive, more constructive definition of what the free world stands for.

The term "open society" was coined by Henri Bergson, in his book *Two Sources of Morality and Religion* (19 TK) and given greater currency by the British thinker Karl Popper, in his book *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1944). Popper showed that totalitarian ideologies like communism and Nazism have a common element: they claim to be in possession of the ultimate truth. Since the ultimate truth is beyond the reach of man, they have to resort to oppression in order to impose their vision on society. Popper juxtaposed with these totalitarian ideologies another view of society, which recognizes that nobody has a monopoly on the truth; different people have different views and different interests, and there is a need for institutions that allow them to live together in peace. These institutions protect citizens' rights and ensure freedom of choice and freedom of speech. Popper called this form of social organization "open society." Totalitarian ideologies were its enemies.

Written during the Second World War, the book explained what the Western democracies stood for and fought for. The explanation was highly abstract and philosophical, and the term "open society" never gained wide recognition. Nevertheless, Popper's analysis was penetrating, and when I read it as a student in the late 1940s, having experienced at first

hand both Nazi and Communist rule in Hungary, it struck me with the force of revelation.

I was driven to delve deeper into Karl Popper's philosophy, and to ask, Why does nobody have access to the ultimate truth? The answer became clear: we live in the same universe that we are trying to understand, and our attempts at understanding can alter the subject matter to which they relate. If our thoughts belonged to one universe and their subject matter to another, the truth might be within our grasp: we could formulate statements corresponding to the facts, and the facts would serve as reliable criteria for deciding whether the statements were true.

There is a realm where these conditions prevail: natural science. That is where our knowledge is most advanced. But in other areas the separation between statements and facts is less clear-cut. In situations that have thinking participants, the participants' thinking forms part of the very subject matter about which they must think. Facts do not necessarily constitute a reliable criterion for judging the truth of statements, because correspondence is not a one-way affair. It may also be brought about by the impact that statements have on the subject to which they relate. There is a two-way connection—a feedback mechanism—between thoughts and events, which I have called "reflexivity." I have used it to develop a theory of history.

Whether the theory is valid or not, it has turned out to be very helpful to me in the financial markets. When I had made more money than I needed, I decided to set up a foundation. I reflected on what it was I really cared about. Having lived through both Nazi persecution and Communist oppression, I came to the conclusion that what was paramount for me was an open society. So I called the foundation the Open Society Fund, and I defined its objectives as opening up closed societies, making open societies more viable, and promoting a critical mode of thinking. That was in 1979.

My first major undertaking was in South Africa, but it was not successful. The apartheid system was so pervasive that I felt that whatever I tried to do made me part of the system rather than helping to change it. Then I turned my attention to Central Europe. Here I was much more successful. I started supporting the Charta 77 movement in Czechoslovakia in 1980 and Solidarity in Poland in 1981. I established separate foundations in my native country, Hungary, in 1984, in China in 1986, in the Soviet Union in 1987, and in Poland in 1988. My engagement accelerated with the collapse of the Soviet system. By now I have established a network of foundations that extends across more than twenty-four countries.

Operating under Communist regimes, I never felt the need to explain what "open society" meant; those who supported the objectives of the foundation understood it better than I did, even if they were not familiar with the expression.

I was aware of certain innate difficulties in the concept, and they bothered me, but only on an abstract, philosophical level. Does "open society" describe actual historical situa-

tions, or is it pure abstraction? Both Bergson and Popper posited a prehistoric tribal society whose stability and certitude modern ideologies tried in vain to recapture. This gave their argument a historical perspective, although their concepts of open and closed societies were clearly meant to be universal and therefore timeless.

In practice, the distinction between open and closed societies was very useful both in understanding a world divided into two blocks and in providing a guide for action. The goal of my foundation in Hungary, for example, was to support alternative activities. I knew that the prevailing Communist dogma was false exactly because it was a dogma, and that it would become unsustainable if it were exposed to alternatives. The approach proved effective. The foundation became the main source of support for civil society, and as civil society flourished, so the Communist regime waned.

After the collapse of communism, the mission of the foundation network changed. Recognizing that open society is a more advanced, more sophisticated form of social organization than closed society (because in a closed society there is only one blueprint, which is imposed on society, whereas in an open society each citizen is not only allowed but required to think for himself), the foundations shifted from a subversive task to a constructive one—not an easy accomplishment when the believers in open society are accustomed to subversive activity. Most of my foundations did a good job, but unfortunately, they did not have much company. The open societies of the West did not feel a strong urge to promote open societies in the former Soviet empire. On the contrary, the prevailing view was that people ought to be left to look after their own affairs. The end of the Cold War brought a response very different from that at the end of the Second World War. The idea of a Marshall Plan could not even be mooted. When I proposed such an idea at a conference in Potsdam (which was then still in East Germany), in the spring of 1989, I was literally laughed at.

Since then people living in open societies have shown little inclination to come to the aid of those who have defended the idea of open society in Bosnia or anywhere else. As for the people living in formerly Communist countries, they might have aspired to an open society when they suffered from repression, but now that the Communist system has collapsed, they are preoccupied with the problems of survival. After the failure of communism there came a general disillusionment with universal concepts, and open society is a universal concept.

These considerations have forced me to re-examine my belief in open society. For five or six years following the fall of the Berlin Wall, I devoted practically all my energies to the transformation of the formerly Communist world. More recently I have redirected my attention to our own society in an effort to understand what went wrong. The foundations continue to do good work; nevertheless, I felt an urgent need to reconsider the conceptual framework that guided me in

establishing them. Based on this reassessment, I have come to the conclusion that the concept of open society has not lost its relevance. On the contrary, it may be even more useful in understanding the present moment in history and in providing a practical guide to political action than it was at the time Karl Popper wrote his book—but it needs to be thoroughly rethought and reformulated. If open society is to serve as an ideal worth striving for, it can no longer be defined in terms of the Communist menace. It must be given a more positive content.

THE NEW ENEMY

POPPER showed that fascism and communism had much in common, even though one constituted the extreme right and the other the extreme left, because both relied on the power of the state to repress the freedom of the individual. I want to extend his argument. I contend that an open society may also be threatened from the opposite direction—from excessive individualism. Too much competition and too little cooperation can cause onerous instability and intolerable inequities.

Insofar as there is a dominant belief in our society today, it is a belief in the magic of the marketplace. The doctrine of laissez-faire capitalism holds that the common good is best served by the uninhibited pursuit of self-interest. Unless it is tempered by the recognition of a common interest that ought to take precedence over particular interests, our present systems—which, however imperfect, qualifies as an open society—is liable to break down.

I want to emphasize, however, that I am not putting laissez-faire capitalism in the same category as Nazism or communism. Totalitarian ideologies deliberately seek to destroy open society; laissez-faire policies may endanger it, but only inadvertently. Friedrich Hayek, one of the apostles of laissez-faire, was also a passionate proponent of open society. Nevertheless, because communism and even socialism have been thoroughly discredited, I consider the threat from the laissez-faire side more potent today than the threat from totalitarian ideologies. We are enjoying a truly global market economy in which goods, services, capital, and even people move around quite freely, but we fail to recognize the need to sustain the values and institutions of an open society.

The present situation is comparable to that at the turn of the past century. It was a golden age of capitalism, characterized by the principle of laissez-faire; so is the present. The earlier period was in some ways more stable. It had an imperial power, England, that was prepared to dispatch gunboats to faraway places because as the main beneficiary of the system it had a vested interest in maintaining it. Today the United States does not want to be the policeman of the world. The earlier period had the gold standard; today the main currencies float and crush against each other like continental plates. Yet the free-market regime that prevailed a hundred

years ago was destroyed by the First World War. Totalitarian ideologies came to the fore, and by the end of the Second World War there was practically no movement of capital between countries. How much more likely the present regime is to break down unless we learn from past experience!

Although laissez-faire doctrines do not contradict the principles of open society the way Marxism-Leninism or Nazi ideas of racial purity did, all these doctrines have an important feature in common: they all try to justify their claim to ultimate truth with an appeal to science. In the case of totalitarian doctrines, that appeal could be dismissed. One of Popper's accomplishments was to show that a theory like Marxism does not qualify as science. In the case of laissez-faire the claim is more difficult to dispute, because it is based on economic theory, and economics is the most reputable of the social sciences. One cannot simply equate market economics with Marxist economics. Yet laissez-faire ideology, I contend, is just as much a perversion of supposedly scientific verities as Marxism-Leninism is.

The main scientific underpinning of the laissez-faire ideology is the theory that free and competitive markets bring supply and demand into equilibrium and thereby ensure the best allocation of resources. This is widely accepted as an eternal verity, and in a sense it is one. Economic theory is an axiomatic system: as long as the basic assumptions hold, the conclusions follow. But when we examine the assumptions more closely, we find that they do not apply to the real world. As originally formulated, the theory of perfect competition—of the natural equilibrium of supply and demand—assumed perfect knowledge, homogeneous and easily divisible products, and a large enough number of market participants that no single participant could influence the market price. The assumption of perfect knowledge proved unsustainable, so it was replaced by an ingenious device. Supply and demand were taken as independently given. This condition was presented as a methodological requirement rather than an assumption. It was argued that economic theory studies the relationship between supply and demand; therefore it must take both of them as given.

As I have shown elsewhere, the condition that supply and demand are independently given cannot be reconciled with reality, at least as far as the financial markets are concerned—and financial markets play a crucial role in the allocation of resources. Buyers and sellers in financial markets seek to discount a future that depends on their own decisions. The shape of the supply and demand curves cannot be taken as given because both of them incorporate expectations about events that are shaped by those expectations. There is a two-way feedback mechanism between the market participants' thinking and the situation they think about—"reflexivity." It accounts for both the imperfect understanding of the participants (recognition of which is the basis of the concept of open society) and the indeterminacy of the process in which they participate.

If the supply and demand curves are not independently given, how are market prices determined? The answer is that they are not determined at all. Instead of tending toward equilibrium, they continue to fluctuate relative to the expectations of buyers and sellers. If we look at the behavior of financial markets, we find that there are prolonged periods when prices are far from any theoretical equilibrium. Even if they eventually show a tendency to return to equilibrium, the equilibrium is not the same as it would have been without the intervening period. Yet the concept of equilibrium endures. It is easy to see why: without it, economics could not say how prices are determined.

In the absence of equilibrium, the contention that free markets lead to the optimum allocation of resources loses its justification. The supposedly scientific theory that has been used to validate it turns out to be an axiomatic structure whose conclusions are contained in its assumptions and are not necessarily supported by the empirical evidence. The resemblance to Marxism, which also claimed scientific status for its tenets, is too close for comfort.

I do not mean to imply that economic theory has deliberately distorted reality for political purposes. But in trying to imitate the accomplishments (and win for itself the prestige) of natural science, economic theory attempted the impossible. The theories of social science relate to their subject matter in a reflexive manner. That is to say, they can influence events in a way that the theories of natural science cannot. Heisenberg's famous uncertainty principle recognizes that the act of observation may interfere with the behavior of quantum particles; but it is the observation that creates the effect, not the uncertainty principle itself. In the social sphere, theories have the capacity to alter the subject matter to which they relate. Economic theory has deliberately excluded reflexivity from consideration. In doing so, it has distorted its subject matter and laid itself open to exploitation by those who seek to convert the market mechanism into an ideology.

What allows economic theory to be converted into an ideology hostile to open society is the assumption of perfect knowledge—at first openly stated and then disguised in the form of a methodological device. Whatever its form, the assertion of perfect knowledge stands in contradiction to the concept of open society (which recognizes that our understanding of our situation is inherently imperfect). Since this point is abstract, I need to describe specific ways in which laissez-faire ideas can pose a threat to open society. I shall focus on three issues: economic stability, social justice, and international relations.

ECONOMIC STABILITY

ECONOMIC theory has managed to create an artificial world in which the participants' preferences and the opportunities confronting them are independent of

each other, and prices tend toward an equilibrium that brings the two forces into balance. But in financial markets prices are not merely the passive reflection of independently given demand and supply; they also play an active role in shaping those preferences and opportunities. This reflexive interaction renders financial markets inherently unstable. Laissez-faire ideology denies the instability and opposes any form of government intervention aimed at preserving stability. History has shown that financial markets do break down, causing economic depression and social unrest. The breakdowns have led to the evolution of central banking and other forms of regulation. Laissez-faire ideologues like to argue that the breakdowns were caused by faulty regulations, not by unstable markets. There is some validity in their argument, because if our understanding is inherently imperfect, regulations are bound to be defective. But their argument rings hollow, because it fails to explain why the regulations were imposed in the first place. It sidesteps the issue by using a different argument, which goes like this: since regulations are faulty, unregulated markets are perfect.

The argument rests on the assumption of perfect knowledge: if a solution is wrong, its opposite must be right. In the absence of perfect knowledge, both free markets and regulations are flawed. Stability can be preserved only if a deliberate effort is made to preserve it. Even then breakdowns will occur, because public policy is often faulty. If they are severe enough, breakdowns may give rise to totalitarian regimes.

Instability extends well beyond financial markets: it affects the values that guide people in their actions. Economic theory takes values as given. At the time economic theory was born, in the age of Adam Smith, David Ricardo, and Alfred Marshall, this was a reasonable assumption, because people did, in fact, have firmly established values. Adam Smith himself combined a moral philosophy with his economic theory. Beneath the individual preferences that found expression in market behavior, people were guided by a set of moral principles that found expression in behavior outside the scope of the market mechanism. Deeply rooted in tradition, religion, and culture, these principles were not necessarily rational in the sense of representing conscious choices among available alternatives. Indeed, they often could not hold their own when alternatives became available. Market values served to undermine traditional values.

There has been an ongoing conflict between market values and other, more traditional value systems that has aroused strong passions and antagonisms. As the market mechanism has extended its sway, the fiction that people act on the basis of a given set of nonmarket values has become progressively more difficult to maintain. Advertising, marketing, even packaging, aim at shaping people's preferences rather than, as laissez-faire theory holds, merely responding to them. Unsure of what they stand for, people increasingly rely on money as the criterion of value. What is more expensive is considered better. The value of a work of art can be

judged by the price it fetches. People deserve respect and admiration because they are rich. What used to be a medium of exchange has usurped the place of fundamental values, reversing the relationship postulated by economic theory. What used to be professions have turned into businesses. The cult of success has replaced a belief in principles.

SOCIAL DARWINISM

By taking the conditions of supply and demand as given and declaring government intervention the ultimate evil, laissez-faire ideology has effectively banished income redistribution. I can agree that all attempts at wealth redistribution interfere with the efficiency of the market, but it does not follow that no attempt should be made. The argument relies on the same tacit appeal to perfection as does communism. It claims that if redistribution causes inefficiencies and distortions, the problems can be solved by eliminating redistribution—just as the Communists claimed that the duplication involved in competition is wasteful, and therefore we should have a centrally planned economy. But perfection is unattainable. Wealth does accumulate in the hands of its owners, and if there is no mechanism for redistribution, the inequities can become intolerable. "Wealth, like muck, must needs be spread." Francis Bacon was a profound economist.

The laissez-faire argument against income redistribution invokes the doctrine of the survival of the fittest. The argument is undercut by the fact that wealth is passed on by inheritance, and the second generation is rarely as fit as the first.

In any case, there is something wrong with making the survival of the fittest a guiding principle of civilized society. This social Darwinism is based on an outmoded theory of evolution, just as the equilibrium theory in economics is taking its cue from Newtonian physics. The principle that guides the evolution of the species is mutation, and mutation works in a much more sophisticated way. The species and their environment are interactive, and one species serves as part of the environment for the others. There is a two-way feedback mechanism similar to reflexivity in history, with the difference being that in history the mechanism is driven not by mutation but by misconceptions. I mention this because social Darwinism is one of the misconceptions driving human affairs today. The main point I want to make is that cooperation is as much a part of the system as competition and the slogan "survival of the fittest" distorts this fact.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

LAISSEZ-FAIRE ideology is closely allied with another spurious science, geopolitics. States have no principles, only interests, geopoliticians argue, and those interests are determined by fundamentals such as geographical

location. This deterministic approach is rooted in an outdated nineteenth-century view of scientific method, and it suffers from at least two glaring defects that do not apply to the economic doctrines of laissez-faire with the same force. One is that it treats the state as the indivisible unit of analysis, just as economics treats the individual. There is something contradictory in banishing the state from the economy while at the same time enshrining it as the ultimate source of authority in international relations. But let that pass. There is a more pressing practical difficulty. What happens when a state disintegrates? Geopolitical realists find themselves totally unprepared. That is what happened when the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia disintegrated. The other defect is that it does not recognize a common interest beyond the national interest.

With the demise of communism, the present state of affairs, however imperfect, can be described as a global open society. It is not threatened from the outside, from some totalitarian ideology seeking supremacy. The threat comes from the inside, from local tyrants seeking to establish internal dominance through external conflicts. It may also come from democratic but sovereign states pursuing their self-interest to the detriment of the common interest. Open society may be its own worst enemy.

The Cold War was an extremely stable arrangement. Two power blocs, representing two opposing concepts of social organization, were struggling for supremacy, but they had to respect each other's vital interests, because each side was capable of destroying the other in an all-out war. This put a firm limit on the extent of the conflict; all local conflicts were, in turn, contained by the larger conflict. This extremely stable world order has come to an end as the result of the internal disintegration of one superpower. No new world order has taken its place. We have entered a period of disorder.

Laissez-faire ideology does not prepare us to cope with this challenge. It does not recognize the need for a world order. An order is supposed to emerge from states' pursuit of their self-interest. But, guided by the principle of the survival of the fittest, states are increasingly preoccupied with their competitiveness and unwilling to make any sacrifices for the common good.

There is no need to make any dire predictions about the eventual breakdown of our global trading system in order to show that a laissez-faire ideology is incompatible with the concept of open society. It is enough to consider the free world's failure to extend a helping hand after the collapse of communism. If there is any lesson to be learned, it is that the collapse of a repressive regime does not automatically lead to the establishment of an open society. An open society is not merely the absence of government intervention and oppression. It is a complicated, sophisticated structure, and deliberate effort is required to bring it into existence. Since it is more advanced than the system it replaces, a speedy transition would have required outside assistance. But the combi-

nation of laissez-faire ideas, social Darwinism, and geopolitical realism that prevailed in the United States and the United Kingdom stood in the way. If the leaders of these countries had had a different view of the world, they could have established firm foundations for a global open society.

At the time of the Soviet collapse there was an opportunity to make the UN function as it was originally designed. Gorbachev visited the United Nations in 1989 and outlined his vision of the two superpowers' cooperating to bring peace and security to the world. Since then the opportunity has faded. The UN has been thoroughly discredited as a peacekeeping institution. Bosnia is doing to the UN what Abyssinia did to the League of Nations in 1936.

Our global open society lacks the institutions and mechanisms necessary for its preservation, but there is no political will to bring them into existence. I blame the prevailing geopolitical realism, which holds that the unhampered pursuit of self-interest will bring about an eventual international equilibrium. I believe this confidence is misplaced. I believe that the concept of the open society, which needs institutions to protect it, may provide a better guide to action. As it is, it does not take very much imagination to realize that the global open society that prevails at present is likely to prove a temporary phenomenon.

A LARGER MEANING

It is easier to identify the enemies of the open society than to give the open society a positive meaning. Yet without such a positive meaning the open society is bound to fall prey to its enemies. There has to be a common interest to hold a society together, but open society is not a community in the traditional sense of the word. It is an abstract idea, a universal concept. Admittedly, there is such a thing as a global community; there are common interests on a global level, such as the preservation of the environment and the prevention of war. But these interests are relatively weak in comparison with special interests. They do not have much of a constituency in a world composed of sovereign states. Moreover, open society as a universal concept transcends all boundaries. Societies derive their cohesion from shared values. These values are rooted in culture, religion, history, and tradition. When a society does not have boundaries, where are the shared values to be found? I believe there is only one possible source: the concept of open society itself.

To fulfill this role, the concept of open society needs to be redefined. Instead of a dichotomy open and close, I see open society as occupying a middle ground, where the rights of the individual are safeguarded but where there are some shared values that hold society together. This middle ground is threatened from all sides. At one extreme, communist and nationalism doctrines would lead to state domination. At the other extreme, laissez-faire capitalism would lead to great

instability and an eventual breakdown. There are other variants. Lee Kwan Yu, of Singapore, proposes a so-called Asian model that combines a market economy with a repressive state. In many parts of the world control of the state is so closely associated with the creation of private wealth that one might speak of the "gangster state" as a new threat to open society.

Open society stands for a society open to improvement. We start with the recognition of our own fallibility, which extends not only to our mental constructs but to our institutions. What is imperfect can be improved, by a process of trial and error. Open society does not only allow this process, it actually encourages it. Open society offers a vista of limitless progress. In this respect it has an affinity with scientific method. But science has at its disposal objective criteria, namely the facts, by which the process may be judged. Unfortunately, in human affairs the facts do not provide a reliable criterion of truth, yet we need some generally agreed upon standards by which the process of trial and error can be judged. All cultures and religions offer such standards; open society cannot do without them. The innovation in an open society is that whereas most cultures and religions regard their own values as absolute, an open society, which is aware of many cultures and religions, must regard its own shared values as a matter of debate and choice. To make the debate possible, there must be general agreement on at least one point: that open society is a desirable form of social organization. People must be free to think and act, subject only to constraints imposed by the common interests. Where the limits are must also be determined by trial and error.

The Declaration of Independence may be taken as a pretty good approximation of the principles of an open society, but instead of claiming that social or political truths are self-evident, we ought to say, recognizing our fallibility, that these are principles we have agreed on.

Could the recognition of our imperfect understanding serve to establish the open society as a desirable form of social organization? I believe it could, although there are formidable difficulties in the way. First, imperfect understanding is a philosophical concept, and it is in the nature of philosophical concepts that they can be endlessly debated. Even if these obstacles could be overcome, there are some difficulties inherent in the concept of the open society itself. It has the appearance of a paradox. Open society is based on the recognition that our understanding is imperfect. We must therefore promote a belief in our own fallibility to the status that we normally confer on a belief in ultimate truth. But if ultimate truth is not attainable, how can we accept our fallibility as ultimate truth?

Here is the apparent paradox. It can be resolved. The first proposition, that our understanding is imperfect, is consistent with a second proposition that we must accept the first proposition as an article of faith. The need for articles of faith arises exactly because our understanding is imperfect.

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If we enjoyed perfect knowledge, there would be no need for beliefs. But to accept this line of reasoning requires a profound change in the role that we accord our beliefs.

Historically, beliefs have served to justify specific rules of conduct. Fallibility ought to foster a different attitude. Beliefs ought to serve to shape our lives, not to make us abide by a given set of rules. If we recognize that our beliefs are expressions of our choices, not of ultimate truth, we are more likely to tolerate other beliefs and to revise our own in the light of our experiences. But that is not how most people treat their beliefs. They tend to identify their beliefs with an ultimate truth. Indeed, that identification often serves to define their own identity. If their experience of living in an open society obliges them to give up their claim to the ultimate truth, they feel a sense of loss.

The idea that we somehow embody the ultimate truth is deeply ingrained in our thinking. We may be endowed with critical faculties but we are inseparably tied to ourselves. We may have discovered truth and morality but, above all, we must represent our interests and our selves. Therefore, if there are such things as truth and justice—and we have come to believe that there are—then we want to be in possession of them. We demand truth from religion and, recently, from science. A belief in our fallibility is a poor substitute. It is a highly sophisticated concept, much more difficult to work with than more primitive beliefs, such as my country (or my company or my family), right or wrong.

If the idea of our fallibility is so hard to take, what makes it appealing? The most powerful argument in its favor is to be found in the results it produces. Open societies tend to be more prosperous, more innovative, more stimulating, than closed ones. But there is a danger in proposing success as the sole basis for holding a belief, because if my theory of reflexivity is valid, being successful is not identical with being right. In natural science, theories have to be right (in the sense that the predictions and explanations they produce correspond to the facts) for them to work (in the sense of producing useful predictions and explanations). But in the social sphere what is effective is not necessarily identical with what is right, because of the reflexive connection between thinking and reality. As I hinted earlier, the cult of success can become a source of instability in an open society, because it can undermine our sense of right and wrong. That is what is happening in our society today. Our sense of right and wrong is endangered by our preoccupation with success, as measured by money. Anything goes, as long as you can get away with it.

If success were the only criterion, open society would lose out against totalitarian ideologies—as indeed it did on many occasions. It is much easier to argue for my own interest than to go through the whole rigamarole of abstract reasoning from fallibility to the concept of open society.

The concept of open society needs to be more firmly grounded. There has to be a commitment to open society be-

cause it is the right form of social organization. Such a commitment is hard to come by.

I believe in open society because it allows us to develop our potential better than a social system that claims to be in possession of ultimate truth. Accepting the unattainable character of truth offers a better prospect for freedom and prosperity than denying it. But I recognize a problem here: I am sufficiently committed to the pursuit of truth to find the case for open society convincing, but I am not sure that other people will share my point of view. Given the reflexive connection between thinking and reality, truth is not indispensable for success. It may be possible to attain specific objectives by twisting or denying the truth, and people may be more interested in attaining their specific objectives than in attaining the truth. Only at the highest level of abstraction, when we consider the meaning of life, does truth take on paramount importance. Even then, deception may be preferable to the truth, because life entails death and death is difficult to accept. Indeed, one could argue that open society is the best form of social organization for making the most of life, whereas closed society is the form best suited to the acceptance of death. In the ultimate analysis a belief in open society is a matter of choice, not of logical necessity.

That is not all. Even if the concept of open society were universally accepted, that would not be sufficient to ensure that freedom and prosperity would prevail. Open society merely provides a framework within which different views about social and political issues can be reconciled; it does not offer a firm view on social goals. If it did, it would not be an open society. This means that people must hold other beliefs in addition to their belief in open society. Only in a closed society does the concept of open society provide a sufficient basis for political action; in an open society it is not enough to be a democrat; one must be a liberal democrat or a social democrat or a Christian democrat or some other kind of democrat. A shared belief in the open society is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for freedom and prosperity and all the good things that open society is supposed to bring.

It can be seen that the concept of open society is a seemingly inexhaustible source of difficulties. That is to be expected. After all, it is based on the recognition of our fallibility. Indeed, it stands to reason that open society as an ideal is unattainable. To have a blueprint for it would be self-contradictory. That does not mean that we should not strive toward it. In science, also, ultimate truth is unattainable. Yet look at the progress we have made in pursuing it. Similarly, open society can be approximated to a greater or lesser extent.

To derive a political and social agenda from a philosophical, epistemological argument seems like a hopeless undertaking. Yet it can be done. There is historical precedent. The Enlightenment was a celebration of the power of reason, and it provided the inspiration for the Bill of Rights. The belief in

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reason was carried to excess in the French Revolution, with unpleasant side effects; nevertheless, it was the beginning of modernity. We have now had 200 years of experience with the Age of Reason, and an reasonable people we ought to recognize that reason has its limitations. The time is ripe for developing a conceptual framework based on our fallibility. Where reason has failed, fallibility may yet succeed.

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COPENHAGEN
3/7/95

The White House
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 7, 1995

**REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TO THE INTERNATIONAL NGO COMMUNITY AT A FORUM
OF THE U.N. WORLD SUMMIT ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
MARCH 7, 1995**

Thank you. Good morning. Thank you Ambassador Teymour, Mr. Desai, Mr. Nielsen.

I am honored to participate in this historic gathering, where civic, religious, and social organizations as well as government leaders from around the world are uniting in the fight to eradicate absolute poverty, create jobs, and empower women and men to become full participants in their societies.

It is a special pleasure to be able to speak to a gathering that includes so many non-governmental organizations. Whether they operate in great cities or in remote villages, NGOs always have played a vital role in strengthening our global community. But particularly today, as all nations face new challenges and choices, the experience and wisdom of NGOs will be critical in guiding us toward a safer, more just, and unified world.

The end of the Cold War has created extraordinary new opportunities for growth and progress. But at the same time, ethnic strife and civil conflict have erupted across the planet, depleting our resources, draining our energies, promoting hatred and intolerance, and imperiling our ideal of a free and open global society.

Today, too many nations waste precious resources on building weapons of mass destruction, staging wars, and doing violence to basic human rights, instead of investing those resources in people. Too often, natural resources are destroyed and human ones exploited through socially irresponsible behavior. Today, too much time is spent in naked pursuit of power instead of working for peace and prosperity.

It has become fashionable in recent years to assign blame for the world's problems to one group of nations or another. I hope this Summit does not succumb to that temptation. In fact, every nation needs to rethink its approach to social development and most nations need to do more for their own people and humanity.

To meet the goals of this Summit, governments will have to go about their business in new ways. They will have to rethink how to protect their most vulnerable populations in a time of shrinking resources and accelerated global competition. They will have to respect basic human rights, and that includes the rights of women and workers to be protected from exploitation and abuse. And they will have to create conditions that encourage individual initiative and a vibrant civic life.

Finally, as my husband said in a speech last week, governments will have to choose engagement over isolationism. With our economies and our societies becoming increasingly interdependent, we must work to create a global community in which economic growth and social progress result in shared prosperity and opportunity.

On a large scale, there is no better place to start than with an indefinite and unconditional extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The threat posed by these devastating weapons endangers all the work we do to end poverty, create jobs, and empower people. Moreover, in balancing priorities and resources, all nations will have to realize that investing in people, not the acquisition of nuclear arms, is the way to make their societies stronger. Clean water, safe sanitation, basic education and health care are better investments to strengthen societies in both the short and long term than the acquisition of or increase in nuclear arms.

Two days ago marked the 25th anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, now joined by 172 nations that realize that opposing the spread of nuclear weapons is in their self-interest. And to further the goals of the Treaty, the United States and Russia have agreed -- through START I and START II -- to reduce our own nuclear arsenals. We must all continue the effort to deal responsibly with this critical issue.

In addressing the world's social problems, we cannot expect governments to act alone, particularly in an era of scattered and, some believe, scarce resources. Governments need NGOs to monitor their actions and mobilize them to find innovative solutions to problems. NGOs also can inspire us to work more effectively with each other -- within the NGO community and within the community of nations. That is why the participation of NGOs at this and other United Nations Conferences is so invaluable.

The great social movements of my own country during the 19th and 20th centuries -- the abolition of slavery, the right of women to vote, as well as the civil rights movement would not have been achieved without the leadership of civic, religious, and social organizations.

The same is true elsewhere. As Ambassador Somavia knows well, civic organizations committed to human rights and the rule of law were instrumental in assuring Chile's transition to democracy. Through the work of nuns and lay people in the Philippines, civic groups in Bulgaria, grassroots organizations working across Africa and South America, and many others, NGOs have helped improve the lives of tens of millions of men, women, children and families struggling to escape tyranny, poverty, and social dislocation.

Ultimately, this forum and the Social Summit is about supporting and building on that work, not for the sake of governments or ideologies, but for people. It is about putting people first. And putting people first requires realistic, workable solutions to complex problems.

Too often, the assumption is that any solution will inevitably be costly and complicated. In fact, we have proof to the contrary.

We see grassroots efforts around the world that are reducing poverty, improving health and education, and promoting individual freedom.

UNICEF, to take one shining example, has had a decade-long focus on child survival and has pioneered many strategies that are low-cost, including breastfeeding and oral rehydration therapy and immunizations.

Last year polio was eradicated in the Western Hemisphere by a multinational effort. And the U.S. was the lead donor for that.

And around the world, the percentage of children immunized against major preventable diseases rose from 20 percent to 80 percent between 1980 and 1990.

In the United States, I'm frank to admit, we have had to follow the lead of other countries so that finally we are attempting to increase the immunization rates of our own children, and our rates have increased but are not yet where they need to be.

In South America, the involvement of NGOs in teaching pregnant women self-diagnosis of maternal health problems has resulted in a dramatic reduction in the infant mortality rate in rural areas.

I myself saw at the Fabella Hospital in Manila, news mothers staying in the hospital long enough to learn to nurse their babies, which promoted a stronger bond between mother and child and increased the chances of family stability.

And in countries where governments and NGOs have made voluntary, safe and effective family planning available and have provided related health services, we have seen an improvement not only in the lives of individuals but in the economic well-being of their countries.

Now, no one person, as we know so well, can be freed from the bondage of poverty or fully integrated into society without the means to earn a living. And the task of nations, and NGOs, is to promote policies that lift up the poorest in society, and to insist on core labor standards that help stop the exploitation of workers, many of whom are children.

Governments must be responsible for promoting disciplined economic policies. And in the United States the President is working to renew the American economy through fiscal policies that do assist those who are poor in such ways as providing tax credits and attempting to raise the minimum wage.

Investing in education goes hand-in-hand with providing economic opportunity. As capital and technology become more mobile, differences in the quality of labor forces will become that much more apparent.

And again, we can learn from each other as to how we can reduce illiteracy and increase prospects for employment and economic security.

Opportunity should be the reward for taking responsibility in life. That philosophy is a good guide when we consider strategies -- governmental and non-governmental -- to promote greater self-reliance and economic independence among all our citizens, including especially the poor and disenfranchised.

We have an example of that which will be discussed at this summit, when we look at the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Dr. Mohammed Yunus, whom many of you in this room know, as I do, believes that if you give people access to credit -- and ask them to take responsibility in return -- they will achieve greater economic and social independence.

Through its small loans to the poorest women in rural areas of Bangladesh, the Grameen bank not only has improved the immediate circumstances of thousands of families, it has also fostered a greater sense of purpose and spirit of community among the people.

I only wish every nation shared Dr. Yunus's and the Grameen Bank's appreciation of the vital role that girls and women play in the economic, social, and political life of our societies.

Although women comprise 52 percent of the world population,

although they are the primary caretakers for children and the aged and are a significant presence in the work force, they continue to be marginalized in many countries.

Worldwide, more than two-thirds of the children who never attended school or have dropped out are girls. Of the one billion people who remain illiterate, two-thirds are women. And a disproportionate number of those we call living in absolute poverty are women.

Investing in the health and education of women and girls is essential to improving global prosperity, and I am glad that this Summit has endorsed the principle of equal rights and opportunities for women.

In parts of Asia and South America we have seen the education of girls help lift whole populations out of poverty. We have seen the education of women enhance their roles as mothers and increase their participation in civic life. So we must do more to ensure equal rights for women, along with equal pay and equal access to health care and education.

Tomorrow, as part of International Women's Day, it will be my pleasure to announce a major new United States commitment to expand educational opportunities for poor girls on three continents.

I'd like to end by saying that we must all take responsibility and do our part. Too often we engage in a false debate that says on the one hand, only governments, or on the other, only individuals, are responsible for solving their own problems and those of the world. In fact, we all know that we need a partnership that is going to bring us all together. Governments can either support or undermine people as they face the moral, social and economic challenges of our time. Individuals can either take initiative and responsibility or fall into hopelessness and despair. Simply put, no government, no NGO, no person can remain idle given the magnitude of the challenges we face and the uncertainties of the world in which we live.

For those who are skeptical about our capacity for progress, I suggest that we all reflect on the life of one extraordinary man, James Grant, who recently passed away. Jim may have been more responsible for saving more lives over the past 15 years than any other person in the world. Millions of children are alive today because Jim Grant challenged us, set goals for us, and devised simple, efficient, and affordable methods of intervening on behalf of children and their families.

His legacy is not only found in the wonderful work that goes on every day at UNICEF, or in the success of his infant formula

campaign, or in the packages labeled "Oral Rehydration Therapy" that he would carry around in his pocket and pull out on any occasion. His legacy is in the jobs that each of us in this room, each of the people around the world and private voluntary organizations and other NGOS and government organizations do day in and day out, throughout the world.

It is our duty to continue to live up to Jim Grant's challenge and to do our part to fulfill the goals of this Summit. In closing, I would ask that as we go about our business in the months and years ahead, whether we are in government or the private sector or just acting on our own, that we draw strength and courage from Jim Grant's example and do justice to his memory. If we do that, then this Summit and all that follows will be a success.

Thank you very much.

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RAJIV GANDHI
3/29/95

The White House
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For Immediate Release

March 29, 1995

**Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation
New Delhi, India**

(Applause) Thank you so much Mrs. Gandhi, Ambassador Wisner, Ambassador Hussain. I have not seen Mrs. Gandhi's introduction, but I must say after hearing it, she and I have been thinking very much alike as you will notice. (Applause)

It is a great honor for me to join you here today, to be in New Delhi, in the company of men and women who keep alive the high ideals for India and the world that Rajiv Gandhi helped to sustain. (Applause)

I would like to thank the people of India for extending a warm and gracious welcome to me and my daughter who is here with me. To President Sharma and Prime Minister Rao, I owe special thanks for their warm hospitality. The Prime Minister's visit to Washington 10 months ago opened a new chapter in Indian-American relations, one that promised to build on the many values and aspirations our peoples share. We greatly appreciate the energy and wisdom he has lent to strengthening the friendship between our nations.

Although my journey here is far too brief, it is the culmination of a life long desire to visit India. I hope these days will be the first of many I spend in this country, learning about your extraordinary past and your vibrant and exciting future; and exploring the shared dreams we hold to the future of the human family.

I can think of no more fitting setting in which to reflect upon these shared dreams than here at the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation-an institution dedicated to the realization of Rajiv Gandhi's dream of a better life for all people of India.

Programs of this foundation such as assisting children orphaned by terrorism, or promoting literacy and health among women and children in rural areas or providing fellowships for women entrepreneurs are inspiring examples of how to translate dreams into reality.

Our meeting today occurs at an historic moment. As we

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approach a new century, we are also on the frontier of a new world. It is different from the one we have known for the past 50 years. It is a world in which many old divisions have diminished or disappeared. The long reign of dictators and controlled economies has given way to democracy and free markets in country after country.

The opportunities for peace and prosperity are greater now than every before. But this is also a world of profound change that exacerbated old challenges and creates new ones: the challenge of deep poverty still confronts us. The challenge of living together in peace and harmony in the face of ethnic, religious and other tensions among peoples has never been greater. The challenge of putting people first--of including all of our citizens as full participants in our economic and political lives--men and women, rich and poor, people of all races and creeds--remains fundamental to all of us.

These ancient challenges are compounded by the stresses inherent in a time of rapid change. The so-called Information Age holds great potential that the virtual reality created by the media and computers can not only help us communicate more quickly but understand each other better; yet we also know technology poses difficult problem: a vast majority of our world's people are not prepared with the skills needed for the new global economy. And, if consumerism is the primary message being transmitted, the explosion in material expectations will put additional demands on institutions ranging from the family to the government that are unlikely to be met quickly or fully. The alienation spawned by disappointment with the promise of change is likely to increase.

So, together we must address both the opportunities and difficulties that confront us today--for ourselves, our families, and the future of our children.

I want to talk with you today about what I consider central to a good common future that we can create together and that is--the importance of ensuring that women are invested in their own lives and able to participate fully in our national lives. Women represent over half the world's population. And yet in country after country, they lack access to education, to health services, to jobs, to political and civil rights. Where women lack access to education, health care and economic opportunity, children tend to be less educated, less well nourished and families tend to be both larger and poorer. Where women are illiterate, experience has shown that the environment is often poorly managed and democracy remains fragile. One lesson the experience of the last several decades teaches us is that where women prosper, countries prosper.

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But the education of women has even greater benefits for societies. Education helps us understand and tolerate differences and so holds out the promise that we can live together more harmoniously. Education helps us comprehend the unsettling changes in our lives today and helps us better manage those changes. Education is as important to peace as it is to prosperity.

But what is it that we must do to bring women fully into our national lives, among other things, we must be able to attend school and learn, not just to be literate but to acquire the knowledge and skills--of medicine, of engineering, of management, of computers and so forth--that will contribute to the prosperity of their families and nations. Women must have access to health care, especially the care they need as expecting or new mothers. Wives, together with their husbands, must have access to family planning services to enable them to make voluntary, responsible and informed choices about the size of their families. And, children--girls as well as boys--must have access to preventive and curative medical care that will enable them to grow into healthy adults.

I recognize that discussion of such problems as education and health care for girls and women is viewed by some as "soft," labeled dismissively as a women's issues belonging, at best, on the edge of serious debate about all the problems we confront on the cusp of the 21st century. I want to argue strongly, however, that the questions surrounding social development, especially of women, as discussed at the recent social summit in Copenhagen, are at the center of our political and economic challenges. Governments, business and citizens must recognize and act upon the truth for the betterment of nations and our global family. But even assuming you would agree with my argument, what is to be done to bring about strategies for such development? That is a question that deserves far more analysis and discussion than I can offer here today, but let me suggest there are five key commitments needed to achieve this worthy goal of social development for women.

First, governments must continue to expand the general conditions required for democracy and market economies that we know can unleash the creative energies of millions of people if they are prepared to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

The Indian government has recently undertaken major economic reforms and these reforms have already helped stimulate investment and more rapid growth.

Such reforms are essential. But they are rarely sufficient

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to achieve sustainable development in any country. Where social services and women's access to those services remain limited, growth will prove uneven and unsustainable. My own country is debating vigorously the role of government in supplying social services because of the recognition that a significant number of our own citizens are not equipped to share in the rewards of the newly emerging economy.

In addition, every government should invest more resources in the education and health care of children, especially girls. This should be a priority that takes precedence over competing budgetary demands. For some countries like those in South Asia, it means providing schools and clinics where they are needed and incentives for persuading families to educate and provide health care for all their children. For a country like the United States, it means delivering existing services more efficiently with greater accountability for outcomes.

Second, although governments have primary responsibility for creating environments that encourage economic growth and social development, businesses also have a role to play. But at a time when businesses are increasingly pressured to perform on the basis of quarterly results, they have to recognize that the social costs of doing business often have medium and long term economic consequences. Depleting natural or human resources destroys markets and undermines people's confidence in them. The world needs socially responsible business leadership now more than ever.

Third, although the role of commitment of government and business is key to development, they alone cannot achieve these social goals. Citizens, cooperating together in non-governmental organizations, like this foundation, must also take the initiative and even provide the lead.

NGOs are often created by individuals with a dream--like Mother Teresa whose renowned compassion--even tenacity--on behalf of the world's most unfortunate moved us deeply when we visited her home for children here in New Delhi yesterday.

NGO leadership--often volunteer--is typically highly motivated and energetic in pursuing a vision of a better world. Tomorrow I will visit with Ela Bhatt, that soft-spoken visionary whose work is infused with the ideals of Gandhi. From her, I hope to learn more about SEWA--the Self Employed Women's Association-- and how it has empowered poor women to take control of their futures and make better lives for themselves and their families.

NGOs can give voice to the aspirations of people who are left out of the modern economy and whose influence on government may otherwise be small. The Prayas School which I visited yesterday embodies the idea that health, education, and economic development go hand in hand, and that learning must begin at the earliest stages of life and progress throughout it.

NGOs, where their members must debate and implement programs and elect their officials, are among the most effective training grounds for democracy. Their activism strengthens democracy by holding governments accountable for the way their policies and practices affect people.

As Alexis de Tocqueville observed in the last century, voluntary citizen associations are one of the vital foundations of American society and democracy. That is equally true of India where the long experience and success of NGOs inspires us.

America recognizes in our partnership with India, our NGOs and yours must play a central role. Our bilateral aid program relies on NGOs to implement programs and projects, and we are committed to increasing that partnership.

We recognize, that in no area are NGOs more important than in efforts to educate and empower women. At the Social Summit in Copenhagen two weeks ago, I announced a new ten year, \$100 million USAID Girls and Women's Education Initiative. I am happy to announce today that India will be the first country to benefit from this program. (Applause) We will soon provide an initial grant to support NGOs--US and Indian--to expand girls' education in this country.

The fourth area for concern is that of the family, for it is the family that determines primarily how daughters are treated. Deeply rooted attitudes about the value of girls are hard to change, but we must try to persuade mother and father to invest love, attention and resources in their girls, starting with education and health care. The success of that persuasion will rest on a new vision of a world in which the distinctions between men and women are not viewed as reasons to demean each other, but as complementary parts of a greater whole.

In this new world, both boys and girls are loved and cared for, first by the family they are born into--by parents who want them and invest in them; then by their extended family; then by the families they build as adults and by the children whom they, in turn, invest with love; and finally by societies that value every child as a gift to be nurtured and remember, in the words

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of Rabindranath Tagore: "Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man."

Finally, women have to be responsible for our own lives and our own futures and work together to provide opportunities for themselves and other.

All of us must participate in a conversation about how to shape the changes we seek in the world we share. It is particularly important that women find their own voice and become participants and decision-makers in the home, the work place, community, and nation. We must develop a new language to replace the deafening silence that still sounds too often when women's concerns are raised.

I have never seen a better description of the reason why women's silence must end than in a poem I received yesterday. This was not how my speech was to end, but when I was handed it by Meenakshi Gopinath, the principal of Lady Sri Ram College in New Delhi. (Applause) A poem entitled, "Silence" written by a student, Anasuya Sengupta of the Class of 1995. I wanted to share the words of this young woman who speaks for countless other young women here in India and throughout the world. Because if we listen to the voices of women and pay particular heed to the voices of young women, the goals we have for women will be more likely achieved. And this is the poem I received, it is entitled "Silence":

"Too many women in too many countries speak the same language-of silence. My grandmother was always silent--always aggrieved--only her husband had the cosmic right (or so it was said) to speak and to be heard.

"They say it is different now. (After all, I am always vocal and my grandmother thinks I talk too much) But sometimes, I wonder.

"When a women gives her love, as most do, generously--it is accepted. When a woman shares her thoughts, as some women do, graciously--It is allowed. When a woman fights for power, as all women would like to, quietly or loudly, it is questioned.

"And yet, there must be freedom--if we are to speak. And yes, there must be power--if we are to be heard. And when we have both (freedom and power) let us not be misunderstood.

"We seek only to give words to those who cannot speak (too many women in too many countries) I seek only to forget the

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sorrows of my grandmother's silence." (Applause)

As we work together on behalf of our grandmothers, mothers, sisters, daughters, and ourselves-let us avoid the false debate that says, on the one hand, only powerful institutions like government or business, or on the other, only individuals, are responsible for solving their own problems that we confront. In fact, we all know we need partnerships to achieve social changes. Governments, businesses, NGOs, families, and women themselves can either support or undermine people as they face the moral, social and economic challenges of our time. Individuals can either take initiative and responsibility or fall into hopelessness and despair. Simply put, no government, no businesses, no NGO, no person can remain idle given the magnitude of the challenges we face and the uncertainties of the world we live.

If all of us could take our responsibilities seriously. If we use our voices to seek ways to achieve the goals that really underlie the political and economic aspirations that are now being sought around the world and women and men will create a better world-for boys and girls-and that ultimately is what the point of political and economic activity should be here, in America, and around the world. Thank you all very much.

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Divider Title: WORKING WOMEN
4/10/95

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
WORKING WOMEN COUNT EVENT
THE WHITE HOUSE
APRIL 10, 1995

TRANSCRIPT

Thank you all. I want to welcome you to the White House. This is a particularly important occasion for this Administration. I am sorry that the weather did not cooperate with us staying in the Rose Garden, but the working women of the White House made a decision and moved us indoors. I am grateful for that.

This is the room where we've had two previous events about "Women Count," and I was privileged to participate in both of those. First, the announcement of the survey and introducing some of the people who were going to be involved. The second with the Vice President, receiving the survey results and today, is an especially important moment because now we're going to be looking to the future and what kind of recommendations are coming from this survey.

The survey tells us in no uncertain terms that women are working more than ever -- in the home, outside the home -- balancing two jobs, juggling all of the demands that so many of us know so well. And, that we, as individuals, as family members, as citizens, and certainly those in decision-making positions, have to recognize the challenges and stresses that women are encountering in the workplace and in the balance between work and family. It's not only important for women, it's important for men, children and the larger society.

In a few minutes the President will talk about some of the initiatives that have been put into place over the last two years on behalf of all women, but particularly on behalf of working women. But first let me just mention a few ways in which women count within this Administration.

We know women count because women have had unprecedented access to decision-making positions that are important to the larger society. Appointments of qualified women in the Cabinet and sub-Cabinet and throughout the government really speak for itself as the kind of commitment that this Administration has carried forward on behalf of women.

There has also been a historic commitment to women's health, something that had not been given the attention that it needed in the past. And through the efforts we have taken to coordinate approaches to women's health, we're seeing some breakthroughs in research that is being done in areas such as breast cancer. And we are working on a very large women's health initiative that will make a difference in our lives and in particularly the lives of our daughters.

The President recently announced the creation of an office within the Department of Justice to address the problem of domestic violence. A problem that too often is not given the attention that it needs and even when it receives attention does not lead to remedies.

Under this President also, women who own small businesses have enjoyed greater access to federally guaranteed loans and technical assistance to start and expand their businesses.

It's very important that, when this President became president, he felt absolutely committed to carrying through on putting people first. And putting people first means just that -- and it certainly means putting working women first, and paying attention to their concerns and listening to what we have to say about the challenges we face.

One last thing that I would like to mention is that the "Working Women Count" project, along with all the rest of the Administration, is really just the tip of the iceberg about what our commitment really needs to be on behalf of women and families in our society.

Some of you may know I recently returned from an extraordinary trip to South Asia, where I was privileged to meet women of all different kinds of backgrounds who were working on behalf of themselves and their families. And I recognized, whether I was talking to women academics, business leaders, and civic leaders at the American embassies I visited, or whether I was in villages talking to women there about their dreams and aspirations.

But there is a common thread that runs through the conversations I have, whether I am in Washington or Topeka or Sacramento or Bangladesh or India or Pakistan or Nepal or Sri Lanka. What women are saying in the "Working Women Count" surveys, of the more than two hundred and fifty thousand who responded, is that we are all attempting to make the best possible choices for our own lives, and the lives of those people we hold dear.

We also want to make a contribution to our larger community. It's a wonderful opportunity for us to recognize the contributions that women make every single day, and to stop for a minute, as we hear these recommendations, and recognize that we can do more to enable women to make the best possible choices for themselves and their families.

I hope we will get to a point where we no longer have to do surveys, or we no longer have to talk about women's issues as a separate kind of emphasis. That instead we just look at the huge array of possibilities that human life presents to us and women, and their role will be accepted as being part of that great effort that all of us are engaged in to define ourselves, to make identities for ourselves, to contribute to the next generation.

It's very exciting for us to have a Secretary of Labor that

cares so deeply about working people, and is so intent upon putting people first. And anyone who follows the work that Bob Reich does day in and day out knows that he cares deeply about what happens in the homes and workplaces of America. And that he is absolutely committed to doing what he can to make sure working people, and particularly working women, get the respect they deserve to have for the contributions they make.

And so it is my pleasure to introduce Secretary of Labor, Bob Reich.

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BEIJING
9/5/95

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

September 5, 1995

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE
ON WOMEN
BEIJING, CHINA

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much Gertrude Mongella, for your dedicated work that has brought us to this point.

Distinguished delegates and guests, I would like to thank the Secretary General of the United Nations for inviting me to be part of this important United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. This is truly a celebration -- a celebration of the contributions women make in every aspect of life: in the home, on the job, in the community, as mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, learners, workers, citizens and leaders.

It is also a coming together, much the way women come together every day in every country.

We come together in fields and in factories. In village markets and supermarkets. In living rooms and board rooms.

Whether it is while playing with our children in the park, or washing clothes in a river, or taking a break at the office water cooler, we come together and talk about our aspirations and concerns. And time and again, our talk turns to our children and our families.

However different we may appear, there is far more that unites us than divides us. We share a common future. And we are here to find common ground so that we may help bring new dignity and respect to women and girls all over the world -- and in so doing, bring new strength and stability to families as well.

By gathering in Beijing, we are focusing world attention on issues that matter most in the lives of women and their families: access to education, health care, jobs, and credit, the chance to enjoy basic legal and human rights and to participate fully in the political life of their countries.

There are some who question the reason for this conference.

Let them listen to the voices of women in their homes, neighborhoods, and workplaces.

There are some who wonder whether the lives of women and girls matter to economic and political progress around the globe. . . . Let them look at the women gathered here and at Hairou. . . . the homemakers, nurses, teachers, lawyers, policymakers, and women who run their own businesses.

It is conferences like this that compel governments and peoples everywhere to listen, look and face the world's most pressing problems.

Wasn't it after the women's conference in Nairobi ten years ago that the world focused for the first time on the crisis of domestic violence?

Earlier today, I participated in a World Health Organization forum. In that forum we talked about ways that where government officials, NGOs, and individual citizens are working on ways to address the health problems of women and girls.

Tomorrow, I will attend a gathering of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. There, the discussion will focus on local -- and highly successful -- programs that give hard-working women access to credit so they can improve their own lives and the lives of their families.

What we are learning around the world is that, if women are healthy and educated, their families will flourish. If women are free from violence, their families will flourish. If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society, their families will flourish.

And when families flourish, communities and nations will flourish.

That is why every woman, every man, every child, every family, and every nation on our planet does have a stake in the discussion that takes place here.

Over the past 25 years, I have worked persistently on issues relating to women, children and families. Over the past two-and-a-half years, I have had the opportunity to learn more about the challenges facing women in my own country and around the world.

I have met new mothers in Indonesia, who come together regularly in their village to discuss nutrition, family planning, and baby care.

I have met working parents in Denmark who talk about the comfort they feel in knowing that their children can be cared for

in creative, safe, and nurturing after-school centers.

I have met women in South Africa who helped lead the struggle to end apartheid and are now helping build a new democracy.

I have met with the leading women of my own hemisphere who are working every day to promote literacy and better health care for the children in their countries.

I have met women in India and Bangladesh who are taking out small loans to buy milk cows, rickshaws, thread and other materials to create a livelihood for themselves and their families.

I have met doctors and nurses in Belarus and Ukraine who are trying to keep children alive in the aftermath of Chernobyl.

The great challenge of this conference is to give voice to women everywhere whose experiences go unnoticed, whose words go unheard.

Women comprise more than half the world's population. Women are 70% percent of the world's poor, and two-thirds of those who are not taught to read and write.

Women are the primary caretakers for most of the world's children and elderly. Yet much of the work we do is not valued -- not by economists, not by historians, not by popular culture, not by government leaders.

At this very moment, as we sit here, women around the world are giving birth, raising children, cooking meals, washing clothes, cleaning houses, planting crops, working on assembly lines, running companies, and running countries.

Women also are dying from diseases that should have been prevented or treated; they are watching their children succumb to malnutrition caused by poverty and economic deprivation; they are being denied the right to go to school by their own fathers and brothers; they are being forced into prostitution, and they are being barred from the bank lending office and banned from the ballot box.

Those of us who have the opportunity to be here have the responsibility to speak for those who could not.

As an American, I want to speak up for women in my own country -- women who are raising children on the minimum wage, women who can't afford health care or child care, women whose lives are threatened by violence, including violence in their own homes.

I want to speak up for mothers who are fighting for good schools, safe neighborhoods, clean air and clean airwaves. . .

. . .for older women, some of them widows, who have raised their families and now find that their skills and life experiences are not valued in the workplace. . . for women who are working all night as nurses, hotel clerks, and fast food chefs so that they can be at home during the day with their kids. . . and for women everywhere who simply don't have time to do everything they are called upon to do each day.

Speaking to you today, I speak for them, just as each of us speaks for women around the world who are denied the chance to go to school, or see a doctor, or own property, or have a say about the direction of their lives, simply because they are women.

The truth is that most women around the world work both inside and outside the home, usually by necessity.

We need to understand that there is no one formula for how women should lead their lives.

That is why we must respect the choices that each woman makes for herself and her family. Every woman deserves the chance to realize her God-given potential.

We also must recognize that women will never gain full dignity until their human rights are respected and protected.

Our goals for this conference, to strengthen families and societies by empowering women to take greater control over their own destinies, cannot be fully achieved unless all governments -- here and around the world -- accept their responsibility to protect and promote internationally recognized human rights.

The international community has long acknowledged -- and recently affirmed at Vienna -- that both women and men are entitled to a range of protections and personal freedoms, from the right of personal security to the right to determine freely the number and spacing of the children they bear.

No one should be forced to remain silent for fear of religious or political persecution, arrest, abuse or torture.

Tragically, women are most often the ones whose human rights are violated.

Even in the late 20th century, the rape of women continues to be used as an instrument of armed conflict. Women and children make up a large majority of the world's refugees. And when women are excluded from the political process, they become even more vulnerable to abuse.

I believe that, on the eve of a new millennium, it is time to break our silence. It is time for us to say here in Beijing, and the world to hear, that it is no longer acceptable to discuss women's rights as separate from human rights.

These abuses have continued because, for too long, the history of women has been a history of silence. Even today, there are those who are trying to silence our words.

The voices of this conference and of the women at Hairou must be heard loud and clear:

It is a violation of human rights when babies are denied food, or drowned, or suffocated, or their spines broken, simply because they are born girls.

It is a violation of human rights when women and girls are sold into the slavery of prostitution.

It is a violation of human rights when women are doused with gasoline, set on fire and burned to death because their marriage dowries are deemed too small.

It is a violation of human rights when individual women are raped in their own communities and when thousands of women are subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war.

It is a violation of human rights when a leading cause of death worldwide among women ages 14 to 44 is the violence they are subjected to in their own homes by their own relatives.

It is a violation of human rights when young girls are brutalized by the painful and degrading practice of genital mutilation.

It is a violation of human rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have abortions or being sterilized against their will.

If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights. . . . And women's rights are human rights, once and for all.

Let us not forget that among those rights are the right to speak freely. And the right to be heard.

Women must enjoy the right to participate fully in the social and political lives of their countries if we want freedom and democracy to thrive and endure.

It is indefensible that many women in non-governmental organizations who wished to participate in this conference have not been able to attend -- or have been prohibited from fully taking part.

Let me be clear. Freedom means the right of people to assemble, organize, and debate openly. It means respecting the views of those who may disagree with the views of their governments. It means not taking citizens away from their loved ones and jailing them, mistreating them, or denying them their freedom or dignity because of the peaceful expression of their ideas and opinions.

In my country, we recently celebrated the 75th anniversary of women's suffrage. It took 150 years after the signing of our Declaration of Independence for women to win the right to vote.

It took 72 years of organized struggle on the part of many courageous women and men.

It was one of America's most divisive philosophical wars. But it was also a bloodless war. Suffrage was achieved without a shot fired.

We have also been reminded, in V-J Day observances last weekend, of the good that comes when men and women join together to combat the forces of tyranny and build a better world.

We have seen peace prevail in most places for a half century. We have avoided another world war.

But we have not solved older, deeply-rooted problems that continue to diminish the potential of half the world's population.

Now it is time to act on behalf of women everywhere.

If we take bold steps to better the lives of women, we will be taking bold steps to better the lives of children and families too.

Families rely on mothers and wives for emotional support and care; families rely on women for labor in the home; and increasingly, families rely on women for income needed to raise healthy children and care for other relatives.

As long as discrimination and inequities remain so commonplace around everywhere in the world -- as long as girls and women are valued less, fed less, fed last, overworked, underpaid, not schooled and subjected to violence in and out of their homes -- the potential of the human family to create a

peaceful, prosperous world will not be realized.

Let this conference be our -- and the world's -- call to action.

Let us heed the call so that we can create a world in which every woman is treated with respect and dignity, every boy and girl is loved and cared for equally, and every family has the hope of a strong and stable future.

That is the work before you, that is the work before all of us, who have a vision of the world we want to see for our children and our grandchildren. The time is now. We must move beyond rhetoric, we must move beyond recognition of problems, to working together, to have the common efforts to build that common ground we hope to see.

God's blessings on you, your work and all who will benefit from it. Godspeed and thank you very much.

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PARAGUAY
10/16/95

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

October 16, 1995

**REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AT THE FIFTH CONFERENCE OF WIVES OF HEADS OF STATE AND OF
GOVERNMENTS OF THE AMERICAS
ASUNCION, PARAGUAY**

MRS. CLINTON: I am privileged to have the opportunity to represent my country, the United States, for the first time at this Fifth Conference of First Ladies from the Western Hemisphere. It is also a great honor for me to be here in Paraguay with all of you.

We have gathered together to discuss the futures of women and children in all of our countries. Whether we live in North, Central, or South America or the Caribbean region, we are united in our belief that women everywhere share common aspirations and concerns.

Yet, as we meet here in this beautiful hall this evening, we also know that a vast reservoir of human potential is now being wasted across the Americas.

No nation in our hemisphere can say that all of its children are fed, clothed, housed, schooled, and raised by loving parents. No nation in our hemisphere can say that all of its women are treated with dignity, respect, and given the chance to fulfill their God-given potentials. And no nation can say that each and every family within its borders is healthy, strong, and stable.

Our world, as we know, is far from perfect. But even though enormous challenges remain, we have come here hopeful about our future. Hopeful because, somewhere in our hemisphere right now, a baby in a local health clinic is being immunized against a serious disease. . . a little girl is going to school and is learning to read and write . . . a woman is taking out a small loan from a neighborhood bank that will enable her to start her own business in her home. We know that every problem we face in our hemisphere is being solved somewhere in our region at this very moment.

We are also hopeful because of the progress made at last year's Summit of the Americas in Miami, at the United Nations Conference on Social Development in Copenhagen earlier this year, and more recently at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on

Women in Beijing. I think it is very fitting that we meet after those three historic gatherings, which drew world attention to the plight of women and children and, in so doing, to the plight of families as well.

Since Miami, we have seen cooperation grow among our nations, and our political leaders. The Summit not only recognized every nation's duty to invest in its people, but also the special role that girls and women play in the economic and social development of the Western Hemisphere.

That theme was reiterated again in Copenhagen, which focused on the alleviation of poverty as an essential factor in political, social and economic progress.

Many of us also attended last month's women's conference in Beijing, where it was again made clear that democracy and prosperity cannot be attained or sustained in countries that do not value women as full and equal partners in society.

The conferences in Miami, Copenhagen and Beijing showed the world that issues involving children and women are not secondary issues. They are keys to building democratic institutions, strengthening market economies, and achieving social justice.

They are also among the hardest issues we face.

That is why the agreement reached in Miami last year was an historic first for countries of this hemisphere. For the first time, there was universal recognition that no nation can compete in the global economy if half its population cannot read or write, cannot find a job, or cannot rise out of poverty.

And that is why it is also heartening that, despite assurances from skeptics that nothing would be accomplished in Beijing, more than 180 nations endorsed a platform for action that lays out specific ways to expand the rights and opportunities of women around the world.

This is particularly critical today, given the growing gap between the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the skilled and the unskilled.

Those among us who enjoy the opportunities of education, health care, jobs, credit, legal and political rights are flourishing in the new global economy. Those without such opportunities are lagging farther and farther behind. And more often than not, those lagging behind are women and poor children.

This trend, if it continues, threatens to undermine the very institutions we are seeking to uphold: strong families, strong economies, and strong democracies. All will be in jeopardy if women

continue to be denied the opportunities they need to thrive and compete in the new century.

So, what must change?

First, values and attitudes.

In our everyday lives, we must begin to respect the dignity of each person, no matter where that person lives or what he or she looks like. To do that, we must be willing to overcome many assumptions, presumptions, prejudices and prejudgments.

Because, to truly respect a child means to respect every child in every family, boy or girl. To respect a child means to give that child the love, attention, and discipline he or she needs to grow up with confidence and competence. To respect a child means to nurture that child with the health care and schooling that he or she needs to get the right start in life.

Every time we dismiss the potential of a child because of skin color, parental income, or family background, we betray our own futures.

We must also appreciate the contributions of every woman, instead of pigeon-holing and categorizing women in ways that limit their potential. To truly respect a woman means to respect and protect her human rights; it means to respect the choices she makes for herself and her family; and it means to value the experience she brings to all facets of life.

Second, institutions must change, and so must the ways we go about our everyday business.

If programs and policies have outlived their usefulness, we should admit that they no longer solve the problems they were meant to solve. We must fix programs that don't work with reforms that are efficient and inexpensive. And we must insist that institutions -- whether government, schools, or health care systems -- overcome bureaucratic intransigence and put people first.

We must also take advantage of the many innovative programs that do exist throughout our hemisphere. Prior to arriving in Paraguay today, I was in Brasilia, where President and Mrs. Cardoso told me about Brazil's efforts to improve the quality of primary education.

I then traveled on to Salvador da Bahia, where an extraordinary effort is underway to channel the potential and energy of thousands of street children. One program I saw was a circus in which the performers were children, some as young as eight, who had been recruited off the streets where they lived.

They were not being trained for circus jobs; their performances were merely a vehicle for learning the value of discipline, teamwork, and hard work. Along the way, these children develop confidence, self-esteem, and pride in their accomplishments. Part of a program called Project Axe, they also receive schooling and vocational training, as well as counseling to reunite them with their families.

I asked one 15-year-old boy, who had been with the project since it began five years ago, whether it had made a difference in his life. If not for the project, he said, "I would be dead or in prison now."

Programs like this one, which receive support from the public and private sectors and some international organizations, can be replicated widely. But that requires us to share information, exchange ideas, discuss honestly our successes and failures, and learn as much as we can from each other.

Government has a vital role in all of this. But government is only effective if it listens to the voices of the people it serves, instead of making decisions based on political convenience or whim. And government must be held accountable for meeting human needs.

At the same time, government cannot address every problem alone. We must not look on government as a panacea, but as an able partner of business, non-governmental organizations, and other private institutions committed to investing in the promise of every person, including those who are poor, disadvantaged, and politically powerless. And one of the best things government can do is to make it easier for outside groups, non-governmental groups, to do the work they are willing to do.

Finally, as societies, we must be willing to move beyond inertia to action. And all of us -- individuals and institutions -- must heed that call to action. We must start by taking responsibility within our own families and then spreading that responsibility to the communities in which we live.

Every segment of society has a stake in this issue. And every segment of society can affect positive change.

Schools, for example, can be more flexible in responding to the needs of their students, young and old.

A few days ago, in Santiago, Mrs. Frei took me to a school that embodies the Chilean commitment to building an educational system for the future. I saw boys and girls busy working on computers hooked up to the Internet.

I learned from the Minister of Education that schools may begin to keep their doors open on Saturdays and Sundays to

accommodate the children of working parents who have no alternatives for child care, and for children who wish to acquire new skills for themselves.

I saw that Chile has not been content to stick with old methods that do not work. The government and people of that country are devising new ways of training teachers, involving parents and communities. All of this is happening now in many countries throughout the Americas and more can happen if we are willing to learn from each other's experiences.

Heeding the call to action also means that financial institutions must serve all people, even if they are poor, live in remote areas, or are women. How much more evidence do we need that women are a good credit risk? I have seen the proof myself at the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, where the poorest of the poor in the world have transformed entire villages by taking out small loans for cows, rickshaws, and other items they use to earn an income.

I have even seen it in my own country, where poor women at a project called Mi Casa, in Denver, Colorado, have banded together to take out small loans to help themselves. And they told me very, very directly how difficult it is for women even in the United States to have access to credit. One woman said: "Too many great ideas die in the parking lots of banks."

But all over this hemisphere, women are overcoming these obstacles. In Nicaragua, which I visited at the beginning of my trip, I saw how hard President Chamorro has worked to strengthen democratic institutions and promote a market economy. And I met thirty women from a very poor barrio in Managua who run a bank in their neighborhood, borrowing small sums of money to start their own businesses, to start a bakery, to make mosquito netting, to be a seamstress.

Not only had these women organized themselves to improve their own circumstances, they were also improving the circumstances of their families and communities.

Furthermore, they have, like every bank I have ever visited, a high loan repayment rate. In that particular neighborhood bank, the repayment rate was 100 percent. And from what I know about banking, that would be the envy of many commercial lenders.

Individual men and women need to change attitudes and then act, just as every branch of society.

Businesses can initiate policies, such as flexible work schedules, child care, and the use of modern technology, that enable employees to perform well on the job and continue to fulfill their family obligations. Businesses also can value women by paying women equal salaries for

equal work with their men employees.

The media can assume greater responsibility for the values it transmits by avoiding negative advertising and television programming that sensationalizes violence and glorifies the exploitation and degradation of women and children.

At this conference, we will examine these issues, and we will focus specifically on what can be done to address the pressing health and education of women and children.

We will discuss initiatives to ensure the elimination of diseases that primarily affect women and children, reduce maternal mortality and provide comprehensive health care to women throughout their lifetimes, including family planning. We will talk about what every nation must do to ensure that girls are guaranteed the right to an education and that all citizens acquire the knowledge and skills they will all need in the new global economy.

And we will explore ways to end the problem of domestic violence, which has destroyed the lives of too many women and their families in every country represented here.

I would like to make one final point about our agenda. Because we are talking about the issues that matter most in the lives of women and children does not mean we are not talking about the lives of men and boys.

When I was in Nicaragua, I noticed billboards along the side of the road. They showed the face of a crying child with the caption: "My father has left the home." The problem of the absent father is as tragic as the problem of the undervalued mother and wife. It is a problem that, in the United States, we are urgently trying to address.

If, as a hemisphere, we truly care about strong families, strong communities, and strong societies, we have to recognize that men and women can and must complement each other inside and outside of the home. We should not be at opposite poles; we should be partners in a common enterprise for the good of all of us, and particularly our children.

Because of the roles that the women here and many of you in this hall have, we know we can help initiate the changes that must take place if we ever want to realize the great potential of this hemisphere.

Like the women I have met all over this hemisphere in Canada, in my country, in Mexico, in Nicaragua, in Chile, in Brazil and here in Paraguay, we come together to pool our experiences and

ideas to improve conditions for our individual families as well as our national family and the family of nations.

I was not present at the earlier conferences, but I want to thank and applaud all of the women who took part in those conferences and who have moved this agenda forward. I was privileged to host our meeting in Miami and I look forward to the work ahead of us. It is the most exciting and challenging work any of us can imagine or be engaged in. And it is work in which we can make a difference.

Thank you very much.

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11/8/95

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 8, 1995

REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
FOR "BEYOND BEIJING: ACTING ON COMMITMENTS TO THE WORLD'S WOMEN"
WORLD BANK
WASHINGTON, DC

MR. WOLFENSOHN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. It is a great privilege and an honor for me to introduce this morning to you the First Lady of the United States, Hillary Rodham Clinton.

I know that I speak to you, Mrs. Clinton, on behalf of everybody when I say that we are absolutely thrilled that you are here with us. All of us know that you play a major role in the life of this country and the life of the world. Those of that heard you or read your speech in Beijing had a reaffirmation of your deep concerns for women's rights, for women's education and empowerment, and social justice for all.

As I re-read your speech last night, I was reminded that really no one can forget your statement where you said, "If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, it is that human rights are women's rights, and women's rights are human rights."

And you went on to comment about the role of women and their families, where you said, "If women are healthy and educated, their families will flourish. If women have a chance to work and earn as full and equal partners in society, their families will flourish. And when families flourish, communities and nations will flourish."

I know that you understand the role of the World Bank, and I know that you know that we share your concerns. We cherish your leadership. We cherish your interest. And may I say personally I cherish very much the many references you now make to the World Bank as you speak in terms of giving us support in places where we need it.

We share with you your interest in education for girls, in basic health care, and in access to credit and services. And we know, as you do, that loans as small as \$100 to a woman can help double her family's income over a five-year period.

In fact, in just this last week, Jan Piercy helped us organize here at the Bank the first meeting of our Policy Advisory Group on Microenterprise Lending, including Mohammad Yunus, whom you know well, Nancy Barry of the Women's World Banking, Mario Atara of Action International, and other leaders in the field. And we committed ourselves yet again to move forward in this area of financing which is of such great importance to the development of women's roles in the world.

I would like to say to you that in my Annual Meeting speech, by accident I wrote that we judge our effectiveness and not by a bureaucratic process but the smile on a child's face. Having read your speech and having been to Beijing, I should amend it and say that you judge our success by the smiles on a mother's and a child's face.

Faces, I guess it is. And so I say to you today that we cherish the fact that you're here. You have within this group people who care greatly about the issues about which you care, and I want you to know that we all admire and respect and are grateful for the efforts that you give to the causes that we share.

May I introduce the First Lady of the United States, Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you all. Thank you very much, Jim, for that kind introduction and for inviting me to be part of this significant series of meetings that you will be having about follow-up to the Beijing Conference.

I appreciate the conference organizers for putting this together because I think that the conference itself opened many doors and minds, but now it falls to all of us in our various capacities to determine how we will keep those doors open, to walk through them, and to take the opportunity that those open minds give us to work together to make change on behalf of the issues that you have worked on so hard and that many of us share with you.

As I look at this audience, I am reminded, as I always am when I think about the World Bank, of how representative this institution is of people all over the world and their aspirations. And I want to congratulate all

of you and the Bank on its continuing commitment to the difficult but crucial task of improving lives of people everywhere and to congratulate you on your emphasis on women and children.

I know by your very presence here you need little persuading that investing in women should be at the core of any strategy to alleviate poverty, energize economies, and strengthen our global family. I know that you here at this Bank seek to maximize the return on your loans and investments, and supporting projects that raise the social, economic, political, and legal status of women in their families and communities is one of the soundest investments countries and the World Bank can make.

As Jim said, I believe strongly and I think we are now all recognizing that, if women are healthy and educated, their families do better. If they are free from violence, their families do better. If they have the opportunity to earn and work as full and equal partners in society, their families do better. And when those families do better, then the communities and nations of which they are a part do better as well.

But these simple calculations are ones that many in our world, even after all the work of the World Bank in recent years, even after the U.N. conferences in Copenhagen and Beijing, still fail to understand. There are many who seem to think that so-called women's issues--education and health care, for example--are soft issues, not worthy of addressing in any strategic manner, or in conferences such as these. But that is wrong, and you are helping to prove that it is wrong every day.

Issues that affect the well-being of women and families across the world are just as hard and just as central to our future success and prosperity as figuring out budgets, determining defense strategies, and negotiating trade agreements.

The economic security of every nation hinges in part on the productivity and well-being of its women. This is particularly true in developing nations where so much of your work takes place. Women represent more than half the world's population. They tend to be the primary nurturers and teachers of the world's children and caretakers of our elderly. Women in developing countries grow at least half the world's food. In short, they are the unrecognized backbone of the world economy.

But women are 70 percent of the world's poor, and two-thirds of these are not taught to read and write. To

this day, they continue to die from diseases that should have been prevented or treated. They too often are forced to watch their children succumb to malnutrition caused by poverty. While they often grow and prepare the food their families eat, women in some countries continue to be fed least and fed last. Women are often being denied the right to go to school by their own fathers and brothers. They are being barred from the bank lending office and banned from the ballot box.

Those who enjoy the opportunities of education, health care, jobs, credit, and legal and political rights are flourishing in the new world economy. Those without such opportunities--and most often they are women and children--are lagging farther and farther behind.

So long as those obstacles exist, so long as women are prevented anywhere from realizing their God-given potential, the vicious cycle of poverty that traps not only women, but also their children, husbands, communities, and nations will continue. And this trend threatens the very institutions we are seeking to uphold: strong families, strong economies, and strong democracies.

As Jim Wolfensohn told the delegates in Beijing, not to empower women is a tragically missed opportunity, not only to create a more just but also a more prosperous society.

At the conference in Beijing, women and men from all walks of life and all regions made clear that democracy and prosperity cannot be attained or sustained in countries that do not value women as full and equal partners in society.

It was a historic conference. More than 180 nations agreed to implement a platform that enumerated specific ways to expand the rights and opportunities of women around the world. So the conference was a success, despite many of the naysayers before it began. But it was only a step.

Now it is up to every nation, every non-governmental organization, every concerned individual to make sure that the spirit, energy, and commitments of Beijing are carried forward. And the World Bank is a crucial partner, a vital player in our world's efforts to ensure that the goals and remedies agreed to in Beijing become reality.

The Bank is already supporting several projects that have made a significant difference in the lives of many

poor women. And your participation in international microfinance programs, including the new consultative group to assist the poorest, is already yielding returns.

During visits to South Asia and South America this year, I saw firsthand the transforming effect small loans to women can have on families. In many cases, those loans do double family incomes. They do lift families out of poverty. And, maybe more importantly, they give confidence to women who before had none, confidence to believe their lives are worthy, their children's lives are of value, and confidence in the future which is the first step towards sustaining the kind of prosperity and democracy that future hope relies upon.

Anyone who has visited Ela Bhatt and SEWA in India has seen that look of confidence on the faces of those women. Anyone who has visited the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh has seen that look of confidence.

I know that when I went to the village where I visited the participants in the Grameen Bank, I was told before going that it was a village of Hindu untouchables, that no one goes to that village. And because I was going to that village, a nearby village of Muslims wanted me to come there as well. But, unfortunately, my schedule did not permit. So for the first time, Muslim women came to the Hindu village. They were sitting together in rows on benches. And as I walked toward them, seeing them in their multicolored saris, I could not tell who was a Hindu except for the red dot on the forehead. Then as they talked, I could not tell any difference in their aspirations or their hopes for themselves and their families. And as I talked with them individually about what they had spent their loans for, I heard the same stories from Hindus and Muslims alike: buying a milk cow, buying a second milk cow, buying a rickshaw for a husband to make a living.

All that I heard reinforced my belief that providing this kind of opportunity was not only a bridge to economic prosperity, but at least a hoped-for bridge across many other divisions that keep up apart from one another.

Expanding a woman's access to credit is essential to elevating her status in her own home as well as in her society. Microlending institutions have helped women with that status to become recognized breadwinners. They are responsible for the first time to help improve the living conditions of their families.

At a roundtable discussion in Santiago, Chile, I met a seamstress who compared her new situation, having

received a microcredit loan, to that of a caged bird set free. Without a sewing machine, this woman could barely make a living and compete with other factories and seamstresses. She told me, "I felt like I had all this potential and all this energy, but like I was a bird in a cage." Then she applied for and received a small loan. With it, she bought a modern sewing machine. "I kissed that sewing machine over and over again," she told me.

In the United States, we too are trying to establish microlending networks to help our poorest women and families become independent and self-sufficient. Even here in the United States, women's access to credit is still very difficult. As one woman at a microlending project in Colorado said to me, "Too many great ideas die in the parking lots of banks."

That is a situation we can do something about. At each of these small banks supporting microlending in Chile or Nicaragua or Bangladesh or India, the loan repayment rate is consistently near 100 percent. It is a rate of return the world's most prestigious and powerful banks can only dream of.

The United States believes strongly in international microlending efforts and has pledged through U.S. AID to support such programs abroad. And through the creation of the Community Development Financial Institutions Act, we plan to do so here at home as well. And we have learned a great deal from the experience of microlending abroad.

When my husband was Governor of Arkansas, he called upon Mohammad Yunus in 1985 for advice in creating Arkansas' own group-based borrowing program called "the good-faith fund."

In keeping with one of the commitments the United States made at the Beijing Conference, the Treasury Department is establishing an annual Presidential award for microenterprise excellence. The Department will also coordinate a Federal microenterprise initiative that will help publicize microcredit and microenterprise, set benchmarks for programs to use in assessing their own efforts and better standardize existing efforts.

Women cannot become full participants in the social and political lives of their countries without proficiency in reading and writing. And what we have tried to do here at the Bank and what you have been accomplishing around the country is taking steps to ameliorate the situation many women find themselves in. Jim Wolfensohn and

his predecessor, Lew Preston, have long noted that investments in education are the single most important contributions the Bank can make to strengthening women's role in development. And I welcome the Board and the Bank's creation of the Lewis Preston Fund for the Education of Girls.

Educated women tend to marry later and plan the size of their families. With fewer children, they have more time and resources to care for them. They stress the importance of school to their children and recognize the need for basic health care. Most importantly, education helps women gain self-confidence and encourages them to reject traditional notions of second-class citizenship that condemn them and their children to lives of poverty.

The World Bank is an important guarantor in the effort to make sure the world meets the goal set by the U.N. Summit on Children to increase primary school completion rates for both girls and boys to 80 percent. I encourage you to maintain your commitment to this goal, as well as the new goal of raising secondary school completion to 60 percent, proposed by Jim Wolfensohn in Beijing.

Also fundamental is health care. Girls cannot study and women cannot work well without basic nutrition and protection from disease. Too many women in developing countries still die of unnecessary complications from childbirth, and sick girls are often denied potentially life-saving treatment simply because of their sex. These issues should be at the forefront of any strategy to assist women.

I want also to congratulate the Bank on its latest efforts to ensure equality between the sexes and its lending programs and its own employment practices. As a major source for many developing nations of both funding and example, you are in a unique position to influence their anti-poverty programs. I am heartened to know that through your new gender analysis and policy group, gender issues will be addressed in all country assistance strategies and lending programs sponsored by the Bank. I am also pleased that the World Bank recognizes the unique perspectives women bring to these issues and has actively sought to increase the representation of women in leadership positions within the Bank.

Women sometimes know that others around the world are engaged in the same struggle they are. It has been one of the most heart-warming experiences that I have had to bring women together and to see women in different contexts learning from each other.

When I met with small borrowers at the FINCA Bank in Managua, Nicaragua, I met women who had carved out livelihoods as bakers, seamstresses, makers of mosquito netting, automobile parts saleswomen, and they asked me about women in India who were doing the same thing. Apparently they had seen some television coverage of my trip to South Asia, and they wanted to know what women half a world away were like and what they were doing with the loans they received.

At that moment I felt I had witnessed a profound connection among women around our world, one that transcends borders and reaches from the barrios of Managua to the villages of India and beyond.

So now two months after Beijing, we still have much to do in making the message of that conference live in the minds and hearts of people all over the world, and we have even more work to do in implementing the agenda for action that was adopted. But I believe that we have turned an important corner, that for the first time institutions as significant as the World Bank, governments like that of my own country, and people throughout the world in NGOs and on their own are finally saying and believing that women should be valued and invested in. And if we carry forward on that promise, then I am confident we will see results in the short and medium term that will in many ways reflect that this new commitment is well founded. And your leadership, both in articulating it and implementing it, will be crucial to any hope for progress that we have.

Thank you for what you are doing, but more than that, thank you for what you will be doing now and in the future on behalf of women everywhere. Thank you very much.

MR. WOLFENSOHN: The First Lady has agreed to answer questions and has asked me if I can call on a few of you that I hope will indicate that you want to ask questions.

MRS. CLINTON: But if you don't, that's all right, too.

MR. WOLFENSOHN: Yes, sir?

QUESTION: Mrs. Clinton, I heard you in Beijing, and I also heard here your emphasis on improving access to women and girls in education. It is quite well placed.

The dilemma which we face in the international organizations is that poverty reduction involves keeping the

women who are already below the poverty line come up with education and opportunities for employment. So given our collective role, should we invest in girls' education for the primary schooling, which will take, you know, many generations and many decades, or should we really allocate our resources for literacy of the adult women? And I would very much like your opinion because you have traveled both in South Asia and other parts of the world, where poverty prevails, as to the international organizations such as the World Bank, where should our emphasis be and where our priority should be.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think that's a very important question, and I do not pretend to be an expert about any region of the world, nor of that particular subject. But I do believe that the short answer is you have to do both, and how you allocate those resources is obviously the challenge.

But I think there are some creative ways of leveraging resources and maximizing them that I have seen in action in various parts of the world. Let me just mention a few.

I think providing incentives for families to keep girls in school through direct food aid, even through direct monetary assistance, is a relatively cheaper way of engaging those families in supporting girls' education than some of the other ways we have tried in the past. So I would urge that the World Bank look at some of the food for education programs. I know there is one that I personally visited in Bangladesh that the Prime Minister there has supported where I saw families lined up once a week to get commodities which they were only able to receive because they kept their girls in school.

There was a secondary program also in Bangladesh where the direct payment of compensation to families in relatively, very small amounts was enough of an incentive to keep their daughters in secondary school.

I also think, though, that there has to be some emphasis on what I would call family literacy, and there I think one of the benefits of the possible spread of global technology may be to use some of that technology for enhancing literacy among adult-aged women. And yet one of the best ways for engaging adult-aged women in literacy is through their child's education. I have seen that being very successful, either at the workplace but more successfully within the family unit.

Israel has a program that I imported to Arkansas

called HIPPY, the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters, which it began to implement following waves of refugees primarily from North Africa and Ethiopia in the late 1960s and 1970s who were having a difficult time socializing their children to be successful in the Israeli school system. By working with the mothers to make even illiterate mothers feel like they were their child's first teacher, there was quite a success in both preparing the child and in convincing the mother to increase her own literacy level.

So I think direct grants to families to keep them in school with a commitment to girls' education, family literacy programs, and then I think if you are going to follow through on your secondary program, 60 percent completion rate, there will have to be more schools built. And anything you can do to encourage nations to do that, because one of the great impediments, even if they send their daughters to primary school, is that many families have no access to a secondary school that is within easy commuting distance, and they will not send their daughters off to a strange place, as I probably wouldn't either, for a secondary school under those circumstances.

So those three elements just off the top of my head would be things I would look at, at trying to encourage.

MR. WOLFENSOHN: Yes, ma'am?

QUESTION: I am Zeeshan Fatima, and I have been with the Bank for 14 years, all of it in Pakistan except two in the U.S. I happened to write to you just before your visit to Pakistan, and I am glad to say I got an acknowledgment from you.

I had a question which, in the Bank language, is not necessarily the views of my government. It is my personal view. My personal view is that there is a very fine line between religious beliefs and human rights. And most often than not, religion is viewed as an excuse to suppress human rights.

Firstly, where do you see this line meeting and leaders and preachers being actually influenced for the better by forums like the Beijing Conference?

Thank you.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, my views are not necessarily those of my government either, so I understand that.

MRS. CLINTON: I think you have asked, you know, an incredibly complex and difficult as well as sensitive question, and I think that it is a question all of us are searching for: What is the proper balance between sensitivity and respect for religious beliefs and concern about religious beliefs being used to deny human rights and, even beyond that, justify violence, as we have just seen over this past weekend with the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin? And I think that it is going to be one of the great issues we all have to grapple with, and it is one of the reasons why we have to be willing to stand up against expressions of religion that are filled with hate and intolerance toward other people, because very often those mask political and other agendas. They are not strictly religious in any definition.

And I believe that showing respect for every religion and working to create an atmosphere of tolerance for every religion is an important obligation that we in leadership positions here at the Bank or anywhere have. But being willing to speak out against abuses of human rights and misuses of religion for political and other gains I think is also an obligation.

You know, words of hate can incite deeds of violence. There is a very direct line there. And when one makes political arguments based on one's religious beliefs, there's no discussion possible. How does one have a discussion, whether it is in our country or any country, with people who say, you know, here's what God told me to do?

Well, we have to do more to work with people of good faith across all religious lines to build an atmosphere of religious respect and tolerance, but intolerance for violence, for abuse of human rights that is rationalized by religion. And I would hope that all of us are going to be more willing to speak out against that wherever we see it. And it will take some--it will take some risk to do so, because the forces of negative energy that are often fueled by extremist religious views right now are very strong because they command a lot of media attention, they are dramatic, they are controversial, they are often given attention far beyond what their numbers warrant, and they have a chilling effect on people of good faith and reason who are afraid then to speak out against such intolerance. And I think all of us have an obligation to do more of that.

So I think there is a way to be respectful and at the same time speak out against the extremists.

QUESTION: Hello. As you have described, in your travels you often meet with the leaders of non-governmental organizations and secular women's organizations. I am wondering what your sense is of the capacity of those organizations to tackle the problems the breadth of which you have described, and specifically, if you can give some advice to the World Bank on how we can enhance that capacity and perhaps work more effectively with these organizations.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I believe that there are an enormous number of effective, well-functioning organizations that are devoted to women's issues around the world, and there are many who are not as effective. I think that is always the case.

But I believe there ought to be more attention paid as to how we can replicate through technical assistance and support the effective NGOs and provide more assistance to those who share the same aims for are not as effective in implementing them.

For example, I think it would be hard to argue that--you know, SEWA in India has been a great success. There are many groups that could learn quite a bit, and with technical assistance from the World Bank could be more successful.

Part of our dilemma in all of these non-governmental efforts is that so often they arise from and depend on a charismatic leader who is the person around whom the organization is built and who really holds it accountable. And there is no succession, and there is very little in the way of reasoned replication efforts. And I have for a long time believed that organizations such as the World Bank and others should spend some serious time trying to figure out how you can replicate the successes of these organizations in the absence of a charismatic leader.

There are certain institutional imperatives that we ought to be able to support. One of the reasons why I think Grameen Bank has been successful is that Mohammad Yunus from the very beginning understood it had to be a bank, not just a project or a program or an NGO that was on the margins of the financial delivery system. And I think that made a big difference in the success of that organization because from the very beginning it was seen as an institution, and an institution that looked like other banks.

Well, I believe that there are ways that we can learn better how to replicate the successes of the effective women NGOs. I also think that in many situations a lot of

those NGOs could be more effective if more attention were paid to their relationships with other organizations so that they could leverage their impact. Many NGOs lead very isolated lives. They don't interact with either governmental sources of assistance or other NGOs. Anything that we could do to bring people together in more of a cooperative sense--I think often of what northern Italy could teach us in the way that it brought together small entrepreneurs through organizations that provided bookkeeping assistance to many small businesses, for example, so that each business wouldn't have to go out and worry about that particular aspect of its functioning.

In that work, you can see how the dollars that are available to support these NGOs can be stretched so much further if they could be brought into more of a cooperative mentality.

So those are two things, the replication and the cooperation, that I think would assist already effective NGOs and bring others up to a level of higher functioning.

QUESTION: My name is Sweta Gandhi. I have been with the Bank seven years. I am from India. And next year I am taking leave of the Bank to work on (inaudible) development with a values focus for children back in India with my little organization that I started as a charity organization. It has grown a little bit. And I wanted to know, because education in and of itself, while it leads to a sense of dignity, what happens often in many developing countries is that people don't get jobs after they are educated, and women find increasingly they are frustrated. And I have found that in my work in Morocco. And I was wondering whether you feel that we should be also considering the content, and especially in the context of religious problems that we face, the focus on tolerance and other values that allow us to look at people as people and not as against the context of their religion or their race or whatever.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I hear two different questions, both of which I think are very important. The one is education for what in a global economy and how effective education will be in providing real employment for people. I think that is one of the huge issues that the entire world has to face, because the flip side of this globalization is, I think, an ultimate reduction in employment opportunities for many people already in the labor force, and for many others whose educational levels, despite the promises made to them, will not support adequate employment in the so-called global economy or information age. That is a problem for the private sector as well as

for the not-for-profit and public sectors, and I believe that we are going to have to give some very serious thought to that, because it is not only a worthwhile altruistic matter to consider, but if economies don't flourish because education pays off in rising incomes but instead results in either stagnant or falling incomes, or even the inability to find work, that will increase political instability. It will drive people into all kinds of identification with negative forces, whether ethnic, religious, or whatever. And it will ultimately undermine markets, which is something that business should be concerned about.

So the second part of your question is very timely as well, because at the same time that we are trying to increase levels of education, figure out how in the global economy there will be enough jobs for all these people we are trying to get educated, we also have to put a stress on the values of respect and tolerance and the importance of diversity, both as a way of opening up employment and educational opportunities and as a way of perhaps holding back some of the tide of discontent and disappointment that will be inevitable as we make this economic transition.

So I think anything one can do, and it goes back to the question about the role of religion and the abuse of human rights, anything one can do to create a more open society, to create more ladders of opportunity, to rid societies of the artificial divisions, whether it be caste or religion or race or class or whatever, the more likely it is you will be able to buy some time to try to successfully navigate this transition into this new economy. So I think that both of those questions are very important ones for us to think about.

One of the hardest questions I have been asked in the whole time that I have traveled, I was asked on a Moscow radio station--I was on a call-in in Moscow, which was interesting, and a woman called in and asked me what she was expected to do. She was highly educated, as were all of her friends, and they were all having trouble finding work and keeping work that gave them any decent income or sense of security. And she said, you know, you go around talking, all these leaders go around talking about the need to educate people in the developing world; we are highly educated, and we don't know what our future is.

So this is not just a problem for what we consider the so-called developing world. This is a problem for many, many other countries that are confronting a lot of these social and economic changes at the same time.

QUESTION: I was very happy to hear your emphasis

on microfinance, both here and in Beijing when I was privileged to hear you speak with Professor Yunus and Ela Bhatt. But I do have a worry that is associated with even what I've heard today. The focus is often--the word credit is used a lot, and I think that there's a general tendency to think that if we can just get a lot of credit out there, a lot of things will happen.

I think as you said yourself it is really the systems, the financial systems that get built by people like Ela and Professor Yunus that really leave something in their place when the donors have gone away and the governments get bored, the systems that actually can keep going with the women's own savings once that effort is put in. And I just would like to have your response on what I think is a problem for many of us in the development world, is that we are under an institutional imperative, quite often, to lend, to make a big loan, have a credit line, get that money out there. And there is less of an emphasis than perhaps there should be on the institution building, what I call the social intermediation part, rather than the financial intermediation.

Basically, I think this touches on a contradiction that the Bank faces between being a bank--our product is loans, and we've got to get money out there--and being a development institution where our real product is systems and institutions and people with better capacity. And I as a person in the Bank trying to work in the field of microfinance, I think a lot of our task managers face this over and over again, that the big bosses are looking for a large loan, and the people out there really need institution building.

Thank you.

MRS. CLINTON: Well, I think you're right, and I think it's an inevitable tension, but one that I would hope is going to be resolved more in favor of institution building than it has been in the past, in part because I think now there is more of an awareness of the importance of institution building.

There was an idea--and not just in the World Bank, but in many large institutions, both doing development and governmental programs within countries in the past--that money itself would seed the ground for institution building and the creation of intermediary institutions that would lead to stable structures that could then carry on on their own. And we know that that is much more difficult to do than we had originally thought and that money alone is not the answer. Money, however, is a great incentive, and given

the fact that your business is making loans, using those loans to further institution building I think is not an incompatible mutual objective.

How you do that, I don't pretend to know, but I do know that when one looks at many of the successful institutions that have been built over the past 10 or 15 years, two of which you have named, it was both. It was both lending the money, but also creating an infrastructure so that that money had a context. It wasn't just out there.

And part of the reason Grameen worked and Sewa works and other things like it have worked is because they didn't make it an either/or issue.

It is amazing to me that in many commercial banks, loans that are bad loans get written off and more bad loans get made. It's like inevitable. That's the idea of lending, you know, you make some good loans, you make some bad loans, without a recognition that if commercial banks would spend just a small fraction of their resources supporting microenterprise and microcredit, even as difficult as the start-up costs are, even as difficult as it is to think on that kind of a level, that they would be adding to the financial stability of the entire region. And that is to the good for the big loans they make.

It is all interconnected, and I think understanding that interconnection will begin to open people's minds, perhaps, to some new ways of leveraging assets and resources. So I think that many of the loans should be tied to infrastructure and to development in ways that haven't been done quite in the same way in the past, and I think there is a lot of creativity in this Bank and there are a lot of people around the world who are more open to it than were in the past.

QUESTION: You mentioned your trip to Moscow. There has been a dramatic decline in women's participation in that part of the world. The new democracies have become very male democracies. What role do you see for American women to help women in this part of the world make their voices heard in shaping the transition of their societies and their economies, and what role for international organizations such as the World Bank?

MRS. CLINTON: I think you are right, and certainly friends of mine who are working in the NIS countries and elsewhere have remarked to me about that, and many of the women I have met with, particularly in Moscow, but also in Belarus and in other countries, as well, have remarked on it to me.

I think that you have to do what we are doing, encouraging women NGO's, helping to create such entities in those countries, providing some good role models and technical assistance to give people the confidence about making these decisions on their own. There is a great need for building confidence across the board in a lot of those countries about people's capacity to make these independent decisions, whether it is on behalf of an NGO or in any other arena of the political or economic life.

So I don't think the work is that different than it was anywhere else in the world, but I think that it has to be approached with some real sensitivity, because we are dealing with women who have higher levels of education in general, women who often held positions, both in the government or in other capacities, who no longer hold them. So trying to be sensitive to the conditions that they are living through, while trying to support them, I think is very important.

I have worked to create partnerships between maternal hospitals and children's hospitals in some of these countries and ones here at home, because most of the doctors in those hospitals are women and they have really been left in a very precarious position. The whole health care infrastructure has collapsed around them and they don't get a lot of attention from the government officials who are preoccupied with the big macro issues. So I am trying to create relationships so that these women have support from peers and professionals.

We have one going on between the nursing school at the University of Pennsylvania and nurses in Kiev. And the idea that they are talking to one another as peers, not somebody coming in from the outside to tell these women how they are supposed to do it better, but trying to create a situation of mutual respect. So that kind of effort I think should be pursued and supported as much as possible.

QUESTION: Mrs. Clinton, the success of Beijing, of course, is going to depend to a large degree on the effectiveness of transferring from the rhetoric in Beijing to programs of action, particularly by the government. What are the mechanisms that the U.S. Government has to pressure or encourage these governments to undertake those programs of action? You specifically talk about not the aid-related activities, but other political or official channels.

MRS. CLINTON: I can tell you what we are trying to do here in our own country. The President has created an inter-agency council on women that is tasked with following up on Beijing. It is chaired by the Secretary of Health and

Human Services, Donna Shalala.

It includes both Cabinet officers and other high-ranking officials in our own government in this inter-agency council, and each has been assigned a different aspect of the Beijing platform, so that the Department of Labor works on many of the issues related to pay equity and other working conditions for women, the Health and Human Services Department is working on follow-up to health issues that were raised, the State Department is tasked with keeping track of human rights issues. So there is an effort that we are making to try to house our follow-up in one place, so that it is not disbursed through the government so that it can basically get lost and so that nobody is responsible for it.

I hope that that will be effective in bringing a lot of these issues to the forefront in our own country and making linkages. For example, we have this new law that was passed last year, the Violence Against Women Act, and we have an office now set up in our Justice Department.

If you track the U.N. Women's Conference as one of the great changes that occurred was between Nairobi, where violence against women, particularly in the domestic sphere, was mentioned for the first time as a problem, and the emphasis that was put on it at Beijing. So what we are trying to do is not only better coordinate our own resources to react against domestic violence in the United States, but to reach out to other countries.

For example, when I was in Pakistan, Prime Minister Bhutto was opening up special police stations so that women who are subject to violence in their homes have a place to go and to be heard and get recourse of some kind. So we are attempting, both internally within our own government and externally, reaching out to keep this discussion going and to demonstrate to other countries what the United States is doing to fulfill its commitment, so that it is not just bringing home the rhetoric, it is actually bringing home an action plan.

QUESTION: Mrs. Clinton, I have heard you speak before on the importance of women's political participation and women's role in decision-making. It was a major theme at the Beijing conference, as you know, and the United States Government announced two initiatives, complementary initiatives in women's political rights and women's political participation. I wonder if you could comment on how you see women in decision-making and women's political participation in relation to some of the initiatives to alleviate poverty, to empower women across many different

sectors, and how that might play out for an organization such as the World Bank and other major donors.

MRS. CLINTON: I hope that one of the results of Beijing will be to raise awareness about women's political participation and to catalyze a variety of ways that each of us can promote that. There are small ways of doing it.

When you attend meetings in some countries and you know that there may be a woman buried in the bureaucracy who has been working on this and she is not invited to the meeting, ask that she be there. When you make site visits and you are taken to the male leaders of the village or the project and you know that women are doing at least half the work, ask to see them. Those are small, but significant signals about who is important in the eyes of the World Bank. I think any conversations, Bank-to-government conversations, and certainly government-to-government conversations should do the same, to try to raise the role of women and their participation.

There is a funny phenomenon going on in most parts of the world, probably with the exception of the Scandinavian countries. There really is a noticeable pull-back in the participation of women at the highest levels of decision-making, whether in the public or the private sector.

I think some of that is due to the fact that most women, regardless of their income in the world today, hold down two full-time jobs, one in their home and one outside the home, and the amount of energy that it is taking for women to fulfill all those responsibilities is very draining, and politics has become, if not a disaster in their eyes, certainly of no help to them, and so they have withdrawn from political participation. We noticed that in voting numbers here even in our own country.

So we have to make these issues, whether it is poverty alleviation or ending discrimination against women and the treatment of domestic violence more real in the lives of everyday women, so that they will feel connected to actions that seem abstract and distant from them and feel in some way empowered to take more authority over their own lives.

So I think in both very small ways, each of us can make some points, and then in larger ways we can continue to try to link a lot of the work that is being done to what the changes will be in women's lives if this work is continued or if it is discontinued, so that they feel some stake in it.

Finally, I think everywhere we can work to eliminate the barriers to participation that still exist in many countries, we should speak out again. And I think that goes back to the question about your job is lending and how far can you go in lending in terms of making both financial infrastructure suggestions or even linkages between what you do and political change.

But I certainly think there is a legitimate role, given what we know about how nations flourish if women are active participants, that it is in the long-term interest of the Bank and its rate of return that you do link some of this political participation and decision-making on behalf of women with the projects that you fund, and I think that would begin to open some eyes that might not otherwise be open.

QUESTION: I work in a region which is not traditionally a region where promotion of women has been high on the agenda. Now, those are also very hierarchical societies and it seems to us that the most important thing is to get commitment from the top of the political leadership in those countries to putting women's issues higher on their priorities.

Beijing was a good step in that direction, but I am afraid that quickly people will forget what happened in Beijing. Since you are someone close to the top, what would you recommend as strategy -- a moving target.

What would you recommend as strategies for reaching those traditional political leaders in those countries?

MRS. CLINTON: Oh, goodness, I don't know.

I think that one of the ways that perhaps we all could do more to work with, as you say, hierarchical leadership in many countries, not just in that region of the world, is to share some of this information with them about the effects that investing in women have for the long-term stability and prosperity of their country.

I find it amazing that many people really don't know what you all know. When I was preparing for Beijing, the best information I got were some early studies that had been done at the World Bank correlating investments in women with outcomes for prosperity and democracy.

Some of the large multinational corporations do these ongoing assessments of where they are going to make

investments, and one of the factors they look at is how women are treated. But somehow that information doesn't get conveyed effectively to the leadership in a lot of those countries.

I think it would be very significant if a major executive of a multinational corporation, accompanied by a major executive of the World Bank, paid a call on a lot of these countries' leaders and did a presentation. I know that may sound simplistic, but I am convinced that a lot of that is just not known, it has not been said often enough, it is not yet absorbed.

You cannot imagine how difficult it is to get information like this across to people, and I have seen this in my own country where things that we take for granted, those of us who know how the government works, we are stunned when we go out into the country and people don't know. So that would be one suggestion.

I think some targeted presentations that don't attempt to make political points so much as to inform leaders about what it is that multinational corporations and others look like. I mean if you have a lot of natural resources, they are going to come to you anyway. They are going to want to get it out of the ground and then they are going to want to leave you. But if you have a more complex economy or you are hoping to develop a more complex economy, these factors are important.

Secondly, I think that talking about girls is less threatening than talking about women.

So I would talk a lot about girls and a lot about daughters -- A lot about daughters and daughters' opportunities. I have had several conversations with leaders in very, very conservative countries who have told me how difficult it is to educate girls and to combat the extremists in their own culture who are against educating girls, but how there seems to be kind of an epiphany when it comes to their daughters, and to link that kind of commitment to their daughters with commitment to other girls who have promise I think is an effective way of beginning a conversation. Because if you start with young girls and you educate young girls, then you do have at least an opportunity for people to be less threatened for several years, anyway. We will deal with that later.

I guess finally I think that it goes back to the points that several of you made. You know, this difficulty we find ourselves in in talking about very hard problems and the consequences of all the changes that we are confronting

and what it is doing to people's individual and collective psyche is something we don't have a very good vocabulary for yet.

We are not doing a very good job of articulating a more positive vision. We are not doing a very good job in this country, but frankly nobody is doing a very good job around the world. We are caught in this transition that we are trying to work our way through and we don't have an adequate vocabulary to express what it is we are trying to present as an alternative.

If the alternative is rampant consumerism, materialism, debasement of values and alienation, that is not very attractive. And if people turn on their television sets and they see the advanced world and they look at both men and women who are caught in all of the personal dilemmas that get portrayed endless on television, why would anybody want to change what they have in order to move toward that?

So I think part of the West's and the advanced economies and however we want to describe what it is all of us are trying to communicate need to do is to spend some real time thinking through how do we talk about it and how are we honest about the shortcomings in our own society.

I mean it is a little daunting to visit countries that at least have the feeling that they are able to maintain a network of familial and kinship networks that are very important to them and to see their panic at the idea that they will be broken down because of the intrusion of the electronic media and the relentless pressures for consumption that drives so much of what they see happening elsewhere, or when they see the breakdown of families and the absence of fathers and all of the other social problems.

When we were in Nicaragua, there was a huge billboard on the side of the road with a crying child saying, "Father, why have you abandoned us? Please come home." And they have this huge problem now because of war and earthquakes and everything else, where family structure has just taken a terrible beating in the last decades. You find this litany of social problems that is marching its way through the world connected in the minds of many conservative leaders and many religious people with all that they don't want. You know, they link education with these problems. They link credit or political participation.

We ought to be recognizing that this is a major dilemma for us and there ought to be a way we can better express both honestly the drawbacks we have in our own society and what we intend as individuals and collectively

to do about them, and the vision we have of what individuals who are given a chance to express themselves, but can remain rooted in culture and religion and the larger society, are able to do if given the support to do so.

So these are issues that I would like to see all of us spend some time thinking about, because we don't discuss them very well. And everywhere I travel, political leaders in democracies describe how their countries are divided right down the middle.

Whether it is the separatist vote in Quebec, whether it is Prime Minister Rabin attempting to get the Knesset to ratify his moves toward peace, whether it is election after election where the margins are razor thin and people are very divided one against the other, that should tell us something, that there is a great deal of concern, discontent, confusion about what the future means to all of us. And those who believe in progress and development, which includes everyone in this room or you would not be here, we must do a better job of expressing what we mean by that in today's world, and showing more respect for the moorings that culture and society give, but rejecting the intolerance and the divisiveness that they also lead to.

So until we can better articulate what it is you are doing to achieve, we will continue to encounter skepticism, as well as resistance, and we can only begin to wear that down by trying to present a better vision that is more honest and more inclusive about what it is we are working toward in the 21st Century, and that is a challenge for all of us. None of us, in my view, is doing a very good job of it. All of us are trying to find our way in our words, and any help that the World Bank could give on that front I know many of us would welcome.

Thank you very much.

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Divider Title: _____

DUBLIN
12/1/95

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 1, 1995

**REMARKS BY FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
TO IRISH WOMEN AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART
DUBLIN, IRELAND**

MRS. CLINTON: As we landed here I felt as though I had been here before although this is my very first trip to Ireland. I don't suppose one can grow up in America without knowing many Irish-Americans and without appreciating the many contributions that this culture has made to our own. And we are particularly reminded of our close ties this year because you are observing the 150th anniversary of the Great Famine. We owe something of our own history to this tragedy of yours.

Being here today, having come from Northern Ireland yesterday, I understand even more clearly the ways in which Ireland has influenced American society. And I am learning more every minute about the ways in which Irish women have influenced American society and still are today. Over the past many years, the people of this country who have come to our country, and particularly Irish women, have brought with them values that have served the test of time -- a devotion to family, an inner strength, a courage and spirit of independence that have strengthened the American way of life and our own democracy.

On behalf of the more than 40 million Americans of Irish descent, we are grateful for these close ties and for the relationship that has been built over the years. Not just between countries, but between people and families and communities.

There is so much hope today in the United States that what we saw yesterday in Belfast, a new and peaceful Ireland, will become a reality from one end to the other of this island. As I talked about what it meant to people -- to men, women and children -- to have this cease-fire, I was struck by how grateful they were for normalcy. To walk down the streets, to expect to go Christmas shopping without fear, to let their children play outside -- the blessings that we take for granted which to them are now seen as such markers for the kind of life they want to lead.

The women I spoke with yesterday are not high-level diplomats or professional negotiators; they have not yet been elected to office. They were women, Catholics and Protestants alike, whose lives and families have been affected by the

violence. They didn't wait for someone else to be organized, they didn't wait for other voices to be raised, they themselves took it upon themselves to go door to door through their neighborhoods to say, "Stop the bloodshed, this cannot go on." Their grief became their and our call to action.

These women may not be well-known across the world but they should be, because their courage and spirit is what we have to have more of if we expect to have a peaceful world for all of us. There are women like these women in the Middle East, in Bosnia and South Africa, in all of the trouble-spots around our globe. We must give them courage by reinforcing their own willingness to take risk for peace.

These are the women who every day are getting up and facing realities that we luckily only have to think about or see on the television. But it is this kind of grass-roots commitment that will stand the test of time and will make a difference. Were it not for these women, I do not know whether the cycle of violence would have been broken in Northern Ireland. If it were not for these women working tirelessly, I don't think that we would have seen as many people as we saw yesterday, who are breaking down barriers to overcome suspicions and defy history.

Their efforts remind us that building a peace is a long and difficult task -- but it is a necessary one, not just to end the bloodshed, but to put into place the building blocks that enable individuals to seek fulfillment and to live up to their own God-given potentials.

Irish women who are working for peace have found ways to make their faith a source of strength, not a source of division. By coming together, accepting each other, and creating a new community together, they are discovering what women around the globe are discovering as well: No matter how different we may be superficially, whatever religion we follow, whatever shade of color our skin might be, whatever our ethnic background, there is so much more that unites us than divides us. And if women begin talking with one another, around kitchen tables, in cafes, in the work places, we will discover that sense of shared identity.

That is what I saw at work yesterday. We must together seek a common ground and on that common ground build the kind of society that so many of you in this great hall have both worked for and prayed for.

I had the opportunity recently to read the text of a lecture that President Robinson gave a few years ago, and I was delighted to see her and her husband just a few hours ago. I thought he and I should perhaps start a club for spouses. President Robinson, as you know so well, and as the world is discovering, has offered eloquent insights into the challenges

facing men and women at this point in the history of Ireland and in the world.

Much of what she said has stuck with me but one thing in particular really made an impression. And that is that the participation of women in society requires a re-appraisal of our view of who and what is valuable in our world. As much as policies and legislation are important to women's progress and women's rights, a shifting of attitudes and values is necessary as well.

This is not to suggest that women in Ireland should not become more involved in the existing political process. Indeed, I hope many, many will, both here and particularly in the North. But it is to suggest that the work of peace, that the work of reconciliation is far too important to be left to those who are elected leaders. It is work that has to be done every single day by everyone of us.

President Robinson is an excellent example of what can be accomplished through the political process, but there are many women here and throughout this island who are not elected officials, who themselves are making great contributions. In changing our attitudes and values we have to dare to think differently -- to break through the categories that we once took for granted.

That certainly is a priority to the North, where we visited the Mackie Plant yesterday morning. Protestant and Catholic workers still enter by separate entrances and then work together on the shop floor. It is certainly true in our own country, where we battle against the divide of race and ethnicity, and even sometimes religion, as we struggle every day to make America live up to its ideals.

It is certainly the case in Bosnia, where, when the forces go in to implement the peace that the political leaders have made, real peace will only come because individuals, Croats and Serbs and Muslims, will decide that they have had enough of the bloodshed, and that the games on the military battlefield are not worth the heartbreak and the loss and their children's lives.

Like some of you, I was fortunate enough to attend the United Nations Conference in Beijing. And there I looked out at women from every corner of the world, some of whom are up against odds that I cannot even imagine. They see their little sisters and their daughters being denied food and medical care, and dying before they are five years of age.

They live in places where girls still are not permitted or encouraged to attend school, or if they do, the schooling ends much too early. They come from societies where women still are

not even allowed to vote, or if they are, it is only on paper because there is not encouragement or full participation in the political process.

When I meet women like that, I must confess that I am very humbled. And I'm overwhelmed by my own blessings in the United States, but a little sad that so many of us do not take advantage of all the opportunities that we have -- both for ourselves and for all those around us.

That conference focused attention on the plight of women around the world but it also, I think, has reminded those of us in countries like Ireland and the United States, that we have much work to be done here as well.

Those of us who enjoy the opportunities of health care, or jobs, or credit, or legal and political rights, have to recognize that so many others among us do not, even within our own societies. I can go places in my own country where, because of poverty and lost opportunities, I see the results of lives that have been squandered, families broken and futures destroyed.

I believe, with all my heart, that women are the world's greatest untapped resource. And that resource too often is being wasted today. Each of us in our lives knows that we can begin to unleash the full power and glory of women's potential.

What must change in order for us to do that? First, in our everyday lives, we must begin to respect the dignity of each person and overcome assumptions, presumptions, prejudices and prejudgments about who we are and what we stand for.

And there certainly must be a truce among women. We should no longer be making judgements about one another because of the choices we have made. We should respect and strengthen and support each other; those who choose to be full-time in the home, those who choose to be full-time in the world of work, and those, like me and many of you, who attempt to compose a life that consists of both the responsibilities in the home and the work-place.

It does not do us any good to be pointing fingers or making assumptions about what kind of mother someone is who works outside of the home or what kind of loss someone has experienced because she chose not to.

Let us celebrate the contributions of every woman, instead of pigeon-holing and categorizing women in ways that limit their and our potential. There is no formula that I'm aware of for being a successful or fulfilled woman today. Now perhaps it would be easier if there were. If we could be handed a pattern and cut it out, as our mothers and grandmothers and foremothers

were, that would be, I suppose, easier -- just to make a quilt that looked like everyone else's. But that is not the way it is today and I am glad it is not.

I like and relish diversity in the lives of women today. I am pleased that I am living in this time, as difficult as it is, because I want to know who I fully am, and I want to help other women to make that choice as well. Having choices means having responsibilities, having obligations, as Mrs. Green said, accepting consequences. But if women are to be full and equal partners in the life of society and the life of the family, that's what independence and responsibility needs.

Before coming here today someone told me the story of an incoming group of women members of Parliament who were interviewed by a prominent television talk show host a few years ago. And one of the first questions was: "Who is minding the children?"

I have two responses to that. The first is, I long for the day when men are asked the same question. Women and children need men to be full participants in the raising of children. And men, if only they knew, need the opportunity and joy of being those participants in their own families.

My second response is that I wish that when women are asked questions like that, they would be phrased somewhat differently. So that instead of being asked that way, the question might instead be put, "Do you have child care that is accessible, affordable, safe and dependable, and if not, what can we all do through society, to make sure that children are well cared for and that you are given the sense of security that, as a working mother, you should have?"

To truly respect a woman means to respect the choices she makes for herself and her family. That means all choices, and it means providing the kind of support and respect those choices deserve.

Too often we fall into the trap of thinking that so-called "women's issues" only affect women. But if we truly care about strong families, strong communities, and strong societies, we must recognize that men and women should complement each other inside and outside the home. Men and women must not be consigned to opposite poles; we must be partners in a common enterprise for the good of us all, and particularly our children.

Along with a change in personal attitudes and values, every second in society can affect positive changes that empower and educate women to take this responsibility for themselves and their choices.

Schools, for example, could be more flexible in providing opportunities for women who raise children. Life-long learning is essential in the global economy. So many women in our world did what was expected of them: they had their children early in their late teens and twenties, then wanted to go back to school to further their own educations and contribute to their family's income. Perhaps they became the sole bread-winner in a family. Still, they find it nearly impossible in my country and in many others, to care for their families, make a living and pursue their educations.

Businesses can initiate policies, and I fully hope they will, that will make work more family-friendly. We are making it as difficult as possible for men and women to be both good workers and good parents. Modern technology should mean that more men and women can work at home. That should be encouraged where appropriate. But also, setting schedules and making it easier to find and provide child care should be considered. Businesses, at the very least, can value women by paying them equal salaries for equal work everywhere in the world.

The law enforcement and justice systems can act more efficiently to protect women from violations of their legal rights, particularly from violence in their homes. Violence in the home is a leading cause of death world-wide among women between the ages of 14 and 44.

I recently read an article from one of your newspapers about domestic violence here in Ireland. And I was very pleased to read the comments of Minister Owen, who said that both "violence against women is a crime It cannot be explained away" as some sort of "family difficulty or some other euphemism." Let us call it what it is, it is a crime and it should be treated as a crime and the perpetrators should be prosecuted, whether they are in the United States, Ireland, or anywhere in the world.

So many of the challenges families and particularly women face are rooted in poverty and an absence of economic opportunity. Financial institutions can address this problem by serving all people, even if they are poor, live in remote areas, or are women. I have visited places in the world where women are living in abject poverty but because someone held out a helping hand, with credit, they were able to buy another milk cow, to buy a woodshop for their husband, to sink a well. And all of a sudden, they not only had more income, they had the dignity that comes to someone who is lifting herself out of poverty.

In every one of these cases that I know of, where these kinds of investments are being made, women are proving to be very good credit risks. They repay their loans above ninety-five percent. Many of our large financial institutions should be very happy to have that kind of return on an investment. But instead

they are stuck in old ways of thinking. We need now to act on the evidence that we have that women who are given access to credit through modest loans are starting small businesses, working out of their homes and eventually employing others.

And just yesterday, I saw the same kind of initiative in action at the Women's Information Drop In Center in Belfast. That organization began in opposition to violence but has evolved into an umbrella for many different organizations that promote economic and educational opportunities for women.

These women have seized this moment in history to address the root causes of violence, the lack of economic opportunity and social deprivation; the absence of jobs that have moved elsewhere; industries that are no longer competitive in the global economy; the absence of higher education or lack of child care or credit.

We met in a restaurant called Ye Olde Lamplighter. It was established only five years ago and now provides jobs for seven local people. It is just one of many examples I have heard about where women coming together have made a difference.

We should not be surprised that women are leading the way, not only in putting a stop to violence but in coming up with new and effective ways to achieve their own potential and contribute to the lives of their families, communities and nations.

As the great poet Katharine Tynan, writing about Irish women, observed so keenly in her poem, "Any Woman":

"I am the pillars of the house;
The keystone of the arch am I.
Take me away, and roof and wall
Would fall to ruin utterly."

The strength and support of Irish women is critical to future peace and prosperity across this land. Your struggles are specific, but they reflect the many common struggles that women -- and men -- face around the world.

As you move forward here and to the North, please know that millions and millions of American women and men will be with you in spirit. And we will stand with you as you take risks for peace and reconciliation. We will move together with you for a more just society that we believe will benefit all people and particularly our children.

Thank you for the work you are doing, the inspiration that you give so many of us, and for the hope that has been lit this Christmas Season because of what we have seen these last days.

Thank you and Godspeed.

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3/19/96

UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
MARCH 19, 1996
NEW YORK CITY

Thank you so much. And we live in public housing, of which we are attempting to extend the lease. [laughter] I am delighted to be here.

I want to extend my congratulations to the council and to Lesley Gelb, Pete and Dwayne and all who have not only kept it going, but have kept it vital, and for this invitation to come and speak with you about women and development.

When a friend of mine found out that I would have this opportunity, which struck him as somewhat odd, he asked what my subject was. And I told him that I intended to talk about women and development. And his response was all too typical. He said, "Well, why would the council really care about that?" And I think it's a great tribute to the council and to all of you here that you do care about this issue, which I believe is among the most compelling, yet most overlooked, in the foreign policy arena. I also believe it has direct consequences for how we attempt to develop our own country.

My ideas on this subject are rooted both in personal observations and experiences here at home and overseas, and in the growing body of research and literature about social development.

Some of you may have wondered how I've spent my time lately. Among the areas that I have spent time working on for the past three years are those that effect women's' development and their children, with particular emphasis on what we as a nation can do both alone and through multi-lateral arrangements.

I have been very fortunate to meet with women literally all over the world. I've met with new mothers in Jojakarta, Indonesia, who gather in their village each week to learn about family planning and better nutrition for their children. I have talked with doctors and nurses in Belarus and Ukraine who are trying to keep alive the children of Chernobyl. I have met with women from Tokyo to London to Ottawa to Santiago, to talk about what we have in common, what we can learn from one another and how we can best utilize our resources to assist in the process of development.

On Saturday, I will be heading for Bosnia, Turkey and Greece -- again to highlight both what we are doing alone and with our partners in the reconstruction work in Bosnia, and the many

efforts that are ongoing in Turkey and Greece.

So this is an opportune time for me to share with you a few of my own observations, and I hope you will accept these comments in the spirit in which they are offered. I am not here as a foreign policy spokesman for the White House or the Clinton Administration, or even for my husband, but as a person who cares deeply about our nation's engagement in the world, and who sees investing in women as a realistic, practical and moral approach - a way to fuse both American ideals and interests.

I have long subscribed to the belief that investments in people, particularly women and children, are just as essential to the prosperity and stability of our national family and global community as investments in open markets and trade. I certainly have seen first hand, having had the privilege to travel on behalf of the United States, what that means in practice.

I remember very well the stop that I made last spring, in Ahmedabad, India, a textile center. On the edge of town is a women's bank, founded by a disciple of Gandhi, named Ela Bhatt. The bank has one room. The teller's counter is an old kitchen table. Bank clerks record all the transactions by hand, on yellow sheets of paper bound in volumes that look like worn-out telephone books.

I was there for only a few hours. But in that time I met women who had walked 12 to 15 hours from remote villages to take out their small loans -- some as small as \$1 -- to invest in dairy cows, or plows, or goods they could sell at market.

Women run the bank. Only women are allowed to make deposits and borrow money. And today this bank has assets of more than \$3 million. Its loan repayment rate, which would be the envy of most commercial banks, is nearly 100 percent. It has 60,000 members -- all women, many of whom are among the poorest, least educated and most ostracized in India.

Against enormous political, social and economic odds, these women have joined together in a trade union and cooperative, called the Self-Employed Women's Association, or SEWA, that provides them with job training, microcredit and mutual support. One after another, these women who had gathered together in a tent behind the small building with their bank, stood up to tell me their stories. There was a sea of saris, mostly reds and pinks; there were translators as these women told me what being part of SEWA and taking out these small loans had meant to them and their families. Their lives had been transformed. They had acquired authority over themselves to an extent that they had never dreamed possible. And as a result of their cooperation through SEWA, they were beginning to influence local government, police and commerce, all because they were finally recognizing

they had a contribution to make and had been given the tools of opportunity needed to make that contribution.

That is but one example of grass-roots enterprises targeted at women that are reshaping local and regional landscapes around the world. Many of the projects that I have visited have received some support from the United States Agency for International Development. And after seeing those dollars at work on several continents, I am more convinced than ever that small amounts of American aid can be a catalyst for untangling the web of poverty, illiteracy, inadequate health care and cultural hostility that today still prevents women and girls from becoming full and equal partners in their societies.

I am also pleased that based on these results -- which we can point to and measure -- the Clinton Administration has doubled the investment in social development through the development banks.

These investments that we make with our tax dollars are not a one-way street. In fact, I have also visited projects here in the United States, projects that have borrowed from what works overseas. Not only from a project like SEWA, but other microcredit enterprise projects, most notably one begun by Dr. Mohammed Yunus, the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. I have also visited projects run by FINCA, another microcredit enterprise bank in Latin America.

I wish that all of you could have been with me in Bangladesh, to visit the village that was picked out to show me the way the Grameen bank worked in action. It happened to be a village of Hindu untouchables, and once that village was selected, the village down the road a few miles demanded that they too wanted a visit. It was a Muslim village. Because of my schedule there was no way that I could go to both villages, so for the first time ever the Muslim women came to the Hindu village. They worked together to prepare the village for my visit. I met with all of them in their borrowing groups, and listened to them tell stories about the way their being a borrower of the Grameen Bank had changed the way they looked at sending their daughters to school, working outside their homes, cooperating to sink wells. It was one of the most amazing experiences that I have ever had.

And then half a world away, in a barrio in Managua, Nicaragua, I met with women that had borrowed from the FINCA bank. After they finished telling me about their own enterprises, I asked if they had any questions. And one woman said, "I saw you on television, talking to other women very far away. I think in India. What did you talk to them about? What do we have to learn from them?"

That's the kind of experience that I have also seen beginning to be replicated here at home. We are starting to invest in microcredit efforts. I have visited a program called Mi Casa, in Denver, that helps many women on the model of the Grameen Bank or SEWA, to acquire the same skills and the same access to credit that transformed lives many, many miles away.

I will never forget one woman in Denver who said to me that she had tried for years to borrow enough money to be able to expand a small bakery business because she considered herself the best baker in her neighborhood in Denver. She would go to the bank and the bank would tell her she didn't have enough collateral, she didn't have enough experience. They weren't going to lend even the \$1,000 she asked for, until finally she found this program at Mi Casa. She said, "You know, many great ideas die in the parking lots of banks." I thought that was a telling statement, because in this country, particularly with the way banking has changed, many, many ideas die in the parking lots. And to provide credit to small entrepreneurs, to those who are on the brink of poverty themselves but who have a market in neighborhoods and communities that other businesses shun, is one of the best investments we can make in helping to lift our own people out of poverty.

Certainly, we know that the kind of investments that work in helping people to become self-sufficient -- particularly in an economy as complicated as ours -- will take time and effort, just as it has taken time and effort elsewhere. But we are finally beginning to put into action some of what we have learned. The Small Business Administration is making more loans than ever to women. And through the Treasury Department we are finally seeing the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, recognizing through new Presidential awards, programs to honor outstanding American micro-lending organizations.

Certainly these kinds of cross fertilizing lessons -- that we can learn from because we have helped to seed them elsewhere and to bring them home here -- are a way of demonstrating that our national interest must take root in the values that we profess here and abroad.

There is another example I would like to mention, and that concerns our support for family planning programs to help stabilize populations, to help reverse or ameliorate the environmental degradation and to help reduce abortions in the developing world.

At the moment, roughly 100 million women cannot get or are not using family planning services because they are poor, uneducated or don't have access to care.

Some 20 million women will seek unsafe abortions. Some will

die, some will be disabled for life, some will go through with unintended pregnancies, some will find their lives, their opportunities therefore curtailed. If the United States does not want women here and elsewhere to have abortions, then the United States should do more to support family planning programs, particularly in overpopulated developing nations.

I have visited hospitals where I have seen half of the women admitted being there as a result of the consequences of self-induced abortions. Most recently I visited a hospital in Salvador, Brazil. I saw classrooms throughout that hospital displaying charts and diagrams of information about reproduction and family planning. I also met with the Minister of Health, who told me about what a difference it was beginning to make that USAID was supporting family planning information and services. And he said something that I have long remembered. He said, "The rich women and the middle class women here in Brazil have always had access to family planning. It is only the poor women who have not." And so even there, in a predominantly Catholic country, there is growing recognition that family planning saves lives, and that American aid to such efforts is in our interests as well as those who need help.

Now I'm not suggesting that through microcredit or family planning programs, or through any of the other social investments that I believe make a difference, U.S. foreign aid is a panacea for women or for developing countries. Nor am I starry-eyed enough to believe that every just cause in the world, whether or not it is related to women, is ours to embrace.

But I do believe that as long as discrimination and inequities persist, and are so commonplace around the world -- so long as women are valued less, fed less, fed last, overworked, underpaid, not schooled and subjected to violence in and out of their homes -- the potential of all of us to create a stable, peaceful, and ultimately prosperous world will be far from realized. And that in turn affects stability, peace and growing prosperity that is in our national interest.

If we care, as we do, about opening foreign markets for American goods and services...if we care about making our country secure in the face of new post-Cold War threats...if we care about enlarging the world's community of democracies, then I believe we have to address the conditions and circumstances of the world's women, who after all comprise more than half of the population, but are 70% of the poor and two-thirds of those who are not taught to read and write.

So many of the everyday indignities and tragedies that women around the world face -- seeing a child die of malnutrition, watching a son go off to school, but not a daughter, being forced into prostitution or indentured servitude, being barred from the

bank or the ballot box -- are reversible if enough women have enough education and enough authority over their own lives.

Women remain the primary caretakers of the world's children and elderly, and families throughout the world rely on women for emotional support and increasingly for outside income. In a time when the pressures of consumption and technology place greater burdens on family life in virtually every country on the planet, women will be relied on even more to sustain and protect the family unit. And investing in those women will ensure that they have at least an even chance of being able to do that.

The single most important investment any developing nation can make today is in the education of girls and women. What we are discovering in country after country is that education is not just a means of acquiring knowledge, but that it has positive effect on women's health, nutrition, wages, and level of political participation.

Deputy Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers, who has studied for a number of years and written about the economics of women and development, argues that, "investment in the education of girls may well be the highest return investment available in the developing world."

Today, more than 600 million women worldwide are denied the opportunity for education. I have seen some of the reasons and talked with people about why women fall into that category. It's so clear that for many families, sending a girl to school still makes no economic sense since the girl will be sent away to live with someone else's family. Sending them to school in the face of the daily struggle to survive, planting crops and harvesting them, and fetching water, and doing all of the other domestic chores, makes no sense. Sending a daughter to a doctor when money is scarce, or feeding her when she is hungry but the boys have not yet eaten, makes no sense in the cultures and the reasoning of so many families.

But where we see exceptions to that kind of thinking, we see positive results. Take the very poor state of Kerala, in India. Now, Kerala has the highest literacy rate and life expectancy, as well as the lowest infant mortality rate, in India. "Why?" many people have asked. The answer seems to lie in their tradition of investing in health care and education, and including girls in that investment. We have also seen that a commitment to education is slowly making a difference in countries as far from one another as Jordan, or Pakistan, or Nepal.

In Bangladesh, I saw the struggling efforts of a country to deal with the problem of girls not attending school. I visited a school run by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, a non-governmental organization, that believes education is a pre-

condition for economic development. They also believe that educating girls is essential. Because of that, some of the BRAC schools have been burned, because extremist groups disagreed with educating girls and even with education itself. The schools keep being built.

Also in Bangladesh, I have seen the government working to provide incentives for families in two ways: The food for education program, where very poor families are enticed to send their children, including their daughters, to school in return for food allotments, given out every week. And then, as further encouragement to give girls the chance to go onto secondary school, the government is actually paying families by depositing a small amount of money in a bank account, so long as the girls attend school.

In Sri Lanka, women have had the right to vote for the better part of this century. Not surprisingly, they also demanded and received more education. So again, Sri Lanka, in comparison, has the region's best health care system and lower maternal mortality rates than many wealthier nations.

Outside Lahore, Pakistan, in a very small village, I met with ten women who talked to me about how they view their children's' futures. We were sitting in a dusty courtyard of a school that had been built for girls to receive primary education. One mother of 10 children, 5 boys and 5 girls, said that she had sent her daughters to this school, but now that her daughters had graduated, there was nowhere for them to go. There were no secondary schools nearby, and the family would not send the daughters, unlike the sons, to attend school somewhere else. That woman asked me, and the other mothers echoed her, if I would pass on to the government of Pakistan their interest in having a secondary school for girls built in their village.

Many of the problems that stand in the way of educating girls are ones that will take both government action and the concerted support of non-governmental organizations.

But we can begin to see the results. Chile has made enormous strides thanks to education reform and a return to democracy. I visited a poor area of Santiago where the schools are open on weekends to accommodate parents' work and provide babysitting. I also saw other examples of efforts to involve parents in their children's' education, and to persuade fathers to accept parenting responsibilities.

The United States recognizes the truth of what we are now learning about investing in girls education. And in Copenhagen, last year, I was pleased to announce a new \$100 million USAID initiative for girls' and women's' education in the developing world. The first distribution has been made to India. This

American aid can make a huge difference. And certainly those of us who believe that investing in people, particularly their education, is good for the United States should be supporting such programs.

Sadly, though, there are some in our country today who question the value of our political, economic, military and social engagements abroad. They believe that our commitments to other nations, and even to multilateral arrangements including the United Nations, are undermining our national sovereignty and sacrificing American interests.

I believe that America's global engagement is essential to strengthening our free market interests and spreading our democratic ideals, as well as providing for our security. By contrast, it is isolationism and its corollary, misguided unilateralism, that pose a great threat to our position in the world, as well as to the hopes and dreams of hundreds of millions of women, children and men.

We are at a turning point, as many of you in this audience know far better than I, where we, as a nation, have to decide whether we will remain engaged and then how we will act upon that engagement.

Over time, we have learned that our ideals and interests cannot be divorced from the political, economic and social cross-currents swirling around us. And I hope we have also learned that engagement represents opportunities as well as obligations.

For these reasons, it is troubling to see our bipartisan tradition of engagement and multi-lateralism threatened today. It is troubling to see negative stereotypes fostered purely for narrow political purposes, whether it is the distorted idea that the U.S. military would be under United Nations command, or the public ridiculing of the U.N. Secretary General's name.

This brand of demagoguery is a poor substitute for a forward-looking and forceful foreign policy.

Social development, the investment in people and their potential, is foreign policy, not social work. It is a realistic and moral way for the United States to help expand the global economy, nurture young democracies, and improve our own chances for peace and prosperity.

So as we reconsider today, and as we look forward into the future about what kind of leadership our nation intends to provide to the rest of the world, I hope we will consider as a very practical part of that engagement social investments in women that will create a dynamic a new source of energy for a growing global economy and civil society.

I believe this development policy must become a central priority of our own foreign policy, and also it must be understood as a part of what we need to do here at home. By following through on such an investment approach we have the chance to bring us closer to a world in which distinctions between men and women are viewed ultimately as complementary parts to a greater whole. And we...[end of tape]...really converge to reconsider what is in our best interests both here at home and abroad.

Thank you very much.

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PRAGUE
7/4/96

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Divider Title: ESTONIA

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF ESTONIA
TALLINN, ESTONIA
JULY 9, 1996

President Meri, Prime Minister Vahi [vah-ee], Ambassador Taylor, members of the diplomatic corps, distinguished guests, and all the people of Estonia:

It is a pleasure to be with you today in Tallinn, and especially to join you in this beautiful library, a monument to the enduring culture of the Estonian people.

Ever since I was a teenager I have been interested in this part of the world. Not because I have family roots in Estonia, Latvia or Lithuania, or even any distant cousins here. But because I grew up outside of Chicago, a city that is home to many refugees who fled persecution in other lands.

I remember going to a meeting at our public library one night with men and women who had come to America from the Baltic states. I heard their stories about life under Soviet communism, as well as about the indigenous history, traditions and cultures of people in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

Now I am here, in their ancestral homeland, helping to celebrate the freedom and independence they could only dream of so many years ago.

Estonia is my final stop on a trip that has taken me through Central Europe and to the Baltic region. Words alone cannot convey the excitement, inspiration and hope I have felt as an American visiting countries whose democratic and economic reforms are reshaping the landscape of the European continent.

At every stop I have seen optimism overcoming despair, economic progress overcoming economic inertia, and a spirit of tolerance and civic responsibility overcoming a legacy of tyranny that for decades deprived good men and women of their basic freedoms.

In Romania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and here in Estonia brave people are striving to build on the promise of democracy in the wake of Communism's fall. Against great odds, and under trying circumstances, the people of Central Europe and the Baltic states opened the door to democracy's return, and now are walking through it to a brighter future.

To the men and women of Estonia -- and to the people of Latvia

and Lithuania, whose ambassadors are in the audience today -- I bring a special message from America and the American people: We rejoice in the freedom you have restored here, we admire your courage and tenacity, and we will continue to stand with you as you regain your rightful place in the family of Western democratic nations.

For more than half a century, the blue, black and white flag of Estonia was absent from atop Tall Herman, replaced by a hammer and sickle, just as the flags of Latvia and Lithuania were exiled from their native soil. But throughout the dark years of occupation those three flags flew proudly in the foyer of our State Department in Washington. Americans never lost faith in the sovereignty of the Baltic republics during the Cold War; and Americans will not lose faith in your march to democracy.

Two weeks ago, when President Clinton met in Washington with Presidents Meri, Ulmanis [ool-MON-is], and Brazauskas [Bra-ZOWS-cuss], he reiterated American support for the sovereignty, independence and security of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. He believes you are on the right path: Free market and democratic reforms are working, and your efforts to join together as regional partners will only accelerate the reintegration of the Baltic states into the European community.

It is particularly fitting to celebrate the achievements of this region in Tallinn, a city that for centuries embodied Estonia's diversity, openness and links to the world. After arriving yesterday I had a chance to visit Old Town with President Meri. I saw the old guild houses that nurtured a middle class here and cemented your ties to the rest of Europe; the churches of different faiths, representing the pluralistic character of Estonian history; and here in Central Tallin, the library where we meet now, filled with books that span the breadth of human knowledge and experience.

A decade ago, who could have imagined that we would be here today, in a free city, in a free country, and in a free library? And what better symbol is there of freedom and democracy than the books that line these shelves and the ideas they contain -- all part of the lively, passionate, and noisy debate that is so essential to democratic life.

In my discussions yesterday and today, I have learned more about Estonia's courageous economic reforms and the progress you have made in establishing the foundations of a lasting democracy: a free press, the separation of church and state, respect for the rule of law and for minority rights.

To ensure that democracy continues to thrive, every citizen must be able to participate fully in all aspects of civic life.

Here as elsewhere in Central Europe and the Baltic region, men and women are joining together in voluntary activities, non-governmental organizations and community groups to make democracy work for all citizens by ensuring that women are not relegated to the margins of society; that relations between ethnic groups are strengthened; that the press remains strong and free; that the climate is right for small businesses to prosper, and that children are nurtured and cared for as they should be.

This morning, I visited a clinic that is the first in Estonia to offer a broad range of health services for women. And just a few hours ago I had the chance to meet with representatives of non-governmental organizations, many of whom are involved in promoting civic education -- not just teaching children the values and lessons of democracy, but teaching teachers, business people, elected officials, and ordinary men and women who are the lead actors in any democracy.

As one of the participants said, "Democracy is a mechanism that people must learn to use." Here in Estonia, civic education is critical to building a more engaged, informed and vigilant citizenry.

Today, the greatest threat to democracy is no longer a Communist monolith with imperial designs. It is not a line on a map, or a geographic boundary. It is the volatile economic and social conditions that emerged with the collapse of the old authoritarian regimes, and the discontent and demagoguery that those conditions can generate.

These challenges are not unique to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, or Central Europe. They are challenges shared by democracies new and old. To meet them, the West needs to expand its democratic family by opening up the institutions that have served us for decades. As I said on America's Independence Day when I spoke at the new headquarters of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Prague, democracy is not just about government institutions; it is also about the internalization of democratic values in people's hearts, minds and everyday lives.

Along with broader political, economic and strategic alliances, we must consciously develop "an alliance of values" to guide our democracies as we confront the inevitable challenges of the 21st century: the challenge of keeping peace in a world where ancient hatreds are slow to die and new ones are too easily born; the challenge of giving all citizens the chance to fulfill their God-given potential and participate fully in the life of their country.

These challenges are made more difficult because of the historical moment in which we live. It is a time of rapid economic

change, increasing global competition and scarcer resources -- a time when families in every country are burdened by the pressures of the mass media and consumer culture; when the gap between rich and poor is growing wider; when personal identity and work are inextricably tied to globalization and high technology; when ethnic pride and national citizenship are too often viewed as mutually exclusive.

Democracy gives us the capacity to cope with these challenges. But democracy can only thrive in the post Cold War era if we are able to convey the values underlying it -- the values of opportunity, responsibility, community and respect for human dignity.

And just how do we convey those values to ourselves and, more important, to our children?

We do it by strengthening civil society -- by strengthening the daily associations and actions that weave together the fabric of democratic life.

Before coming to Estonia I was in Hungary, where I visited a center that is helping the minority Roma community overcome obstacles to education, employment, and full participation in Hungarian society.

In Slovakia, I met with caring and involved men and women who are working to overcome obstacles that now hinder the full flowering of citizen groups.

In the Czech Republic, I talked to representatives of NGOs who are involved in local projects to protect the rights of children, safeguard the environment, and install modern medical equipment in Czech hospitals.

I met citizens in Poland working to promote women's rights and and improve health services. And in Romania, I heard from journalists who are working to build an independent press i a country where, for decades, the real news was considered subversive or even dangerous.

In many cases, America and Americans are supporting these local efforts. What we are creating through these partnerships is an ethos of responsibility, caring and initiative that allows people to participate in civic life and shape their own destinies.

In short, we are creating an alliance of democratic values.

And as partners in this alliance we are discovering that we have much to learn from each other. The courageous men and women of Estonia who are erecting a democratic nation from the rubble of a

communist past are reminding a new generation of Americans just how precious freedom is, and what a stake we all have in its success around the world.

America, in turn, offers first a reminder to the young democracies of Central Europe and the Baltic region that democracy is inherently a messy business -- as messy and hard to manage as human nature itself.

Understandably, there are some today who question the pace of progress and the pain of change. To them I say: Look at America. We have been striving to perfect democracy for more than 200 years. And we continue to do so without any assurance that we will ever fully succeed. Why? Because nothing is more precious to us than the freedoms our ancestors struggled to win -- and struggled to preserve.

The second reminder is that democracy asks us to live peacefully as neighbors with people who are different from us, maybe even beside people who in the not-too-distant past have actually done harm to us or to our families.

One hundred and fifty years ago, the United States was torn apart by a great civil war. If you had come to our shores in the 1860s, many Americans would have told you that the wound we sustained would never heal. Yet today, those old divisions have faded into history.

It took America 100 years to abolish slavery. It took America another 100 years to guarantee civil rights for all minorities. Even today we contend with periodic acts of intolerance and hatred.

But for most Americans, old animosities long ago gave way to pride that, no matter what corner of the world our families came from, we are all part of the same family, brothers and sisters rooted in common values and aspirations.

Here in Estonia, diversity has been your strength for centuries. Your nation, with its rich history as a trading center and marketplace for Europe, has thrived on its contacts with other regions of the world. Now, too, your diversity should be a source of strength, not division. As Estonia lives up to the ideals of democracy, all people must be made to feel at home here, proud of their ethnic heritage and confident of their place in Estonia's national life. And all those who live in Estonia must fulfill their responsibilities to the nation of which they are a part.

Vice President Gore said it best when he visited Tallinn last year: "... in this demonstration of tolerance, Estonia is a model for the rest of the world."

Earlier today, I had a chance to hear some famous Estonian folk songs, and also to dance with some Estonian folk dancers. When the music stopped, one woman said that the best way to understand a people is through their art.

In the short time that I have been here, I can say that I have gained a new appreciation of the Estonian people through their songs.

Almost 200 years ago, Kristjan Jaak Peterson [Kris-tee-on Yahk Peterson] wrote:

Why should not my country's tongue
soaring through the gale of song
rising to the heights of heaven
find its own eternity?

Five years ago, a gale of song swept through Estonia, rising into a chorus for national sovereignty and freedom. Five years ago, Estonians sang their way to independence. Today, the power of song that has resonated throughout the centuries is empowering the people of Estonia to raise their own voices, speak their own words, form their own ideas, and dream their own dreams.

Now you know that you are not singing alone.

May the chorus of all free people continue to sing of the values that brought the people of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Central Europe this far. And may those values guide all of our families, communities, nations and our world into the future that lies ahead.

Thank you very much.

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Divider Title: **CONVENTION** _____

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
REMARKS FOR THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
AUGUST 27, 1996

Thank you, Tipper. And thank you for being such a good friend to me and to Americans everywhere.

You know, Chicago really is my kind of town.

I have so many friends here, people who have been important to my life. And it seems like every one of them has given me advice on this speech.

One friend suggested I appear with Binti, the child-saving gorilla from the Brookfield Zoo. As this friend explained it: "Binti is a typical Chicagoan. Tough on the outside, but with a heart of gold underneath."

Another friend advised that I should have my hair cut and colored orange. And then I could change my name to Hillary RODMAN Clinton.

After considering these and countless other suggestions, I decided to do what I've been doing for years -- to talk about what matters most in our lives and in our nation: children and families. I wish we could be sitting around a kitchen table, talking about our hopes and fears about our children's futures.

For Bill and me, family has been the center of our lives. But we also know that our family, like yours, is part of a larger community that can help or hurt our best efforts to raise our child.

Right now, in our biggest cities and our smallest towns, there are boys and girls being tucked gently into bed. And there are boys and girls who have no one to call Mom or Dad -- and no place to call home.

Right now, there are mothers and fathers just finishing a

long day's work. And there are mothers and fathers just going to work, some to their second or third job of the day.

Right now, there are parents worrying: What if the babysitter is sick tomorrow? How are we going to pay for college this fall?

Right now, there are parents despairing about gang members and drug pushers on the corner. There are parents questioning a popular culture that glamorizes sex and violence, smoking and drinking, and teaches children that their clothes are more valued than the generosity in their hearts.

But also right now, there are dedicated teachers preparing lessons for the new school year; volunteers tutoring children and coaching teams; doctors and nurses caring for sick children; police officers risking their lives to help kids stay out of trouble and off drugs.

Of course, parents, first and foremost, are responsible for their children. But we are all responsible for ensuring that children are raised in a nation that doesn't just talk about family values, but acts in ways that value families.

As Christopher Reeve so eloquently reminded us last night, we are all part of one family -- the American family -- and each one of us has value. Each child who comes into this world should feel special. Every boy -- and every girl.

Our daughter Chelsea will graduate from college in 2001, at the dawn of the next century.

Though that's not so far away, it is hard for any of us to know what the world will look like then, much less when Chelsea is my age -- in 2028.

But one thing we know for sure is that change is certain, progress is not. Progress depends on the choices we make today for tomorrow, and on whether we meet our challenges and protect our values.

We can start by doing more to support parents and the job they have to do. Issues affecting children and families are some of the hardest we face -- as parents, as citizens, as a nation.

In October, Bill and I will celebrate our 21st wedding anniversary. Bill was with me when Chelsea was born. In the delivery room. In my hospital room. And when we brought our baby daughter home.

Not only did I have lots of help, I was able to stay in the hospital as long as my doctor thought I needed to be there.

But today too many new mothers are asked to get up and get out of the hospital twenty-four hours after their baby is born. That's just not enough time for many mothers.

That's why the President is right to support a bill that would prohibit the practice of forcing mothers and babies to leave the hospital in less than 48 hours.

That's why more hospitals ought to install 24-hour hotlines to answer questions once new mothers and fathers get home. That's why home nurses can make such a difference to parents who may not have grandparents or aunts and uncles around to help.

We have to do whatever we can to help parents meet their responsibilities at home and at work.

The very first piece of legislation that my husband signed into law had been vetoed twice. The Family and Medical Leave Law.

It allows parents time off for the birth or adoption of a child, or for family emergencies, without fear that they will lose their jobs. Already it has helped 12 million families -- and it hasn't hurt the economy one bit.

Bill and I are fortunate that our jobs have allowed us to take breaks from work, not only when Chelsea was born but to attend her school events and take her to the doctor. But millions of other parents can't get time off.

That's why my husband wants to expand the Family and Medical Leave Law so that parents can take time off for children's doctors appointments and parent-teacher conferences.

Raising kids is a full-time job, and since most parents work, they are -- we are -- stretched thin.

Just think about what many parents are responsible for on any given day: packing lunches, dropping the kids off at school, going to work, checking to make sure the kids get home from school, shopping for groceries, making dinner, doing the laundry, helping with homework, paying the bills -- and I didn't even mention taking the dog to the vet.

That's why my husband wants to pass a flex time law that will give parents the option to take overtime pay, either in extra income or in extra time off, whichever is best for your family.

Our family has been lucky to have a child blessed with good health. Chelsea has spent only one night in the hospital, after she had her tonsils out. And that night Bill and I couldn't sleep at all.

But our experience was nothing like the emotional strain on parents when their child is seriously ill. And often their worry is compounded by the looming question of how they are going to pay the medical bills.

That's why my husband has always felt that all American families should have affordable health insurance.

Just last week the President signed a bill sponsored by Senators Kennedy and Kassebaum -- a Democrat and a Republican -- that will enable 25 million Americans to keep their health insurance even when they switch jobs, lose a job, or have a family member who's been sick.

This law contains some of the key provisions from the President's proposal for health care reform. It was an important step -- achieved only after both parties agreed to build, not block, progress on making health care available to all Americans.

Now the country must take the next step of helping unemployed Americans and their children keep health insurance for six months after losing their jobs. If you lose your job it's bad enough. But your daughter shouldn't have to lose her doctor too.

And our nation still must find a way to offer affordable coverage to the working poor and the 10 million children who lack health insurance today.

The President hasn't forgotten that there are thousands of children languishing in foster care who can't be returned home. That's why he just signed legislation that provides for a \$5,000 tax credit for parents who adopt a child. It also abolishes the barriers to cross-racial adoptions. A racial barrier should never stand in the way of a family's love.

My husband also understands that parents are their children's first teachers. Not only do we need to read to our children and talk to them in ways that encourage learning. We must support our teachers and our schools in deeds as well as words. The President announced today an important initiative called "America Reads" whose aim is to make sure all children can read well by third grade.

For Bill and me, there has been no experience more challenging, more rewarding, and more humbling than raising our daughter.

And we have learned that to raise a happy, healthy and hopeful child:

It takes a family.

It takes teachers.

It takes clergy.

It takes business people.

It takes community leaders.

It takes those who protect our health and safety.

It takes all of us.

Yes, it takes a village.

And . . . it takes a President.

It takes a President who believes not only in the potential of his own child, but of all children; who believes not only in the strength of his own family, but of the American family; who

believes not only in the promise of each of us as individuals, but in our promise together as a nation.

It takes a President who not only holds these beliefs but acts on them.

It takes Bill Clinton.

Sometimes, late at night, when I see Chelsea doing her homework, or watching TV, or talking to a friend on the phone, I think to myself: Her life and the lives of millions of boys and girls will be better because of what all of us are doing together. They will face fewer obstacles and more possibilities. That is something we should all be proud of.

And that is what this election is all about.

Thank you very much.

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