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REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON AMERICAN SECURITY IN A CHANGING WORLD
George Washington University
Washington, D. C.
August 5, 1996

Thank you very much. President Trachtenberg, I was in the neighborhood so I thought I'd drop by. Dean Harding, members of the George Washington University community, Congressman Cardin, Congressman King, Congressman Matsui. Senator McGovern, thank you for coming, sir. And by the way, thank you for writing your brave book about your daughter and for going around the country and talking about her. Thank you so much.

I want to thank the family members of the victims of Pan Am flight 103 who are here with me to day, as well as two of those who were held hostage in Iran back in 1980 who are here today -- and '79. Thank you for coming.

I'm pleased to be back here at George Washington, especially as you celebrate your 175th anniversary. President James Monroe signed the congressional charter establishing GW. I can only applaud his wisdom and hope that 175 years from now our administration will be associated with a similarly proud legacy. I think he would be very proud if he could see what GW has become.

Last night the Centennial Olympics came to an end. It was a great Olympics for America not only because of the triumphs of our athletes, but also because of the magnificent job done by the city of Atlanta and all the other hosts. But, in a larger sense, it was a great event not just for Americans, but for people everywhere who believe in peace and freedom, who believe in individual achievement and common effort.

I believe we love the Olympics because they work the way we think the world ought to work. They are possible because all different kinds of people come together in mutual respect and mutual acceptance of the rules of the games. No one wins by breaking their opponents legs or by bad-mouthing their opponents in a public forum. Instead, victory comes from doing well in a good way. And all who strive are honored, as we saw when our volunteers cleared the track for the brave, injured marathon runner who was the very last finisher in the race.

Most individuals and teams from the 197 competing nations did not win any medal, but they all had their chance, did their best and were better for their efforts. That is what we want for our country and the world at the edge of a new century and a new millennium.

In the world of the 21st century, the Olympic way will become possible in the lives of more people than ever before. More people than ever before will have the chance to live their

dreams. The explosion of knowledge, communication, travel and trade will bring us all closer together in the global village. But as we saw in that terrible moment of terror in Centennial Park, this new openness also makes us more vulnerable to the forces of destruction that know no national boundaries.

The pipe bomb reminded us, as did the murder of 19 fine American service men in Saudi Arabia and the still unresolved crash of TWA 800, that if we want the benefits of this new world we must defeat the forces who would destroy it by killing the innocent, to strike fear and burn hatred into the hearts of the rest of us. This is a lesson and a responsibility every American must accept. As the Mayor of Montoursville, a town of just 5,000 people in Pennsylvania that lost 21 of its brightest hopes of the future on TWA Flight 800, said, "No matter how secluded and how innocent we are, once we leave our community we're subject to the troubles of the outside world."

America faces three great challenges as we enter the 21st century: keeping the America Dream alive for all who are willing to work for it; bringing our own country together, not dividing it; and making sure America remains the strongest force in the world for peace and freedom, security and prosperity.

I come to this place of learning and reason, a place so focused on the future, to explain why we cannot meet our own challenges of opportunity and responsibility and community unless we also maintain our indispensable role of leadership for peace and freedom in the world.

The worldwide changes in how people work, live and relate to each other are the fastest and perhaps the most profound in history. Most of these changes are good: The Cold War is over; our country is at peace. Our economy is strong. Democracy and free markets are taking root on every continent. The blocks, the barriers, the borders that defined the world for our parents and grandparents are giving way, with the help of a new generation of extraordinary technology. Every day millions of people use laptops, modems, CD ROMs and satellites to send ideas and products and money all across the planet in seconds. The opportunities to build a safer world and a more prosperous future are enormous.

But for all the promise of our time, we are not free from peril. Fascism and communism may be dead or discredited, but the forces of destruction live on. We see them in the sudden explosions of ethnic, racial, religious and tribal hatred. We see them in the reckless acts of rogue states. We see them especially in the dangerous webs of new threats of terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking, and the continuing threat that weapons of mass destruction might spread across the globe. These forces of destruction find opportunity in the very openness, freedom and progress we cherish.

We must recognize that modern technologies by themselves will not make for us a new world of peace and freedom. Technology can be used for good or evil. American leadership is necessary to assure that the consequences are good. That is why we have worked so hard to seize the opportunities created by change and to move swiftly and strongly against the new threats that change has produced.

To seize the opportunities, we are strengthening our alliances, dramatically reducing the danger of weapons of mass destruction, leading the march for peace and democracy throughout the world, and creating much greater prosperity at home by opening markets to American products abroad.

Our alliances are the bedrock of American leadership. As we saw in the Gulf War, in Haiti, and now in Bosnia, many other nations who share our goals will also share our burdens. In Europe we have supported the forces of democracy and reform in the former Soviet Union, the removal of Russian troops from the Baltics, and led the way to opening NATO's doors to Europe's new democracies through the Partnership for Peace, as Europe, the main battleground for the bloodiest century in history, is finally coming together peacefully.

In Asia we have revitalized our security alliance with Japan, joined with South Korea to promote lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, and worked steadily to encourage the emergence of a strong, stable, open China. The end of the Cold War has also allowed us to lift the dark cloud of nuclear fear that had hung over our heads for 50 years. Today not a single Russian missile is pointed at our citizens or cities. We are cutting Russian and American arsenals by two-thirds from their Cold War height. We helped Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to give up their nuclear weapons which were left on their land when the Soviet Russian dissolved.

We are working with Japan and Korea, and we have persuaded North Korea to freeze the dangerous nuclear program it had been developing for over a decade. We have advanced the struggle for peace and freedom. When people live free and at peace, we are more secure because they are less likely to resort to violence or to abuse human rights, and more likely to be better trading partners and partners in our common struggle against terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking, environmental degradation.

Because America is taking those risks for peace and democracy, the dictators are gone from Haiti. Democracy is back and the flow of desperate refugees has stopped. In Bosnia the snipers' killing fields have become children's playing fields once again. In Northern Ireland and the Middle East, though difficulties remain, conflicts that once seemed unsolvable are moving closer to resolution.

None of these struggles is easy. There is no guarantee of success. But we will continue to work for success and we will make a difference.

Finally, we have seized the opportunity to better our people's lives at home by opening markets abroad. The true measure of our security includes not only physical safety, but economic well-being as well. Decades from now people will look back on this period and see the most far-reaching changes in the world trading system in generations. Changes that are good for the American people. Changes that include 200 new trade agreements, including GATT and NAFTA, the Summit of the Americas, the Asian Pacific leaders' commitment to bring down trade barriers. Because of these changes America is the world's number one exporter again, and we have a million new high-paid jobs as a result.

Now, none of these achievements just happened. They came about because we work with others to share the risk and cost of engagement, because we use the power of our example and, where necessary, the example of our power. They happened because we were willing to make tough choices today knowing they would pay off for you tomorrow. Above all, they happen because we refuse to listen to those who said that with the Cold War over America could choose escapism over engagement. Had we done so we would have weakened the world's reach for freedom and tolerance and prosperity and undermined our own security and prosperity.

The fact is America remains the indispensable nation. There are times when America, and only America, can make a difference between war and peace, between freedom and repression, between hope and fear. Of course, we can't take on all the world's burden. We cannot become its policemen. But where our interests and values demand it and where we can make a difference, America must act and lead.

Nowhere is that responsibility more clear or more urgent than in the struggle against terrorism. No one is immune, whether you're riding a subway in Tokyo or a bus in Tel Aviv, whether you're window shopping in London or walking the streets in Moscow, whether you're doing your duty in Saudi Arabia or going to work in Oklahoma City. Terrorism has become an equal opportunity destroyer, with no respect for borders.

Whether we like it or not, in ways both good and bad we are living in an interdependent world. That's why we must break down the walls in our mind between foreign and domestic policy. And I might say, Mr. President, on this 175th anniversary, that is one of the intellectual objectives that I hope our great universities will commit themselves to.

The reality is our personal, community and national prosperity depend upon our policies on economics in trade at home and abroad. Our personal, community and national well-being depends upon our policies on the environment at home and abroad. Most dramatically, our personal, community and national security depend upon our policies on terrorism at home and abroad. We cannot advance the common good at home without also advancing the common good around the world. We cannot reduce the threats to our people without reducing threats to the world beyond our borders. That's why the fight against terrorism must be both a national priority and a national security priority.

We have pursued a concerted national and international strategy against terrorism on three fronts: First, beyond our borders, by working more closely than ever with our friends and allies; second, here at home, by giving law enforcement the most powerful counterterrorism tools available; and, third, in our airports and airplanes by increasing aviation security.

This will be a long, hard struggle. There will be setbacks along the way. But just as no enemy could drive us from the fight to meet our challenges and protect our values in World War II and the Cold War, we will not be driven from the tough fight against terrorism today. Terrorism is the enemy of our generation, and we must prevail.

First, on the international front, stopping the spread of terrorism clearly requires common action. The United States has a special responsibility to lead in this effort. Over the past four years, our intelligence services have been sharing more information than ever with other nations. We've opened up a law enforcement academy in Budapest which is training people from 23 nations, an FBI office in Moscow, and just last Friday, Congress gave us the funding for FBI offices in Cairo, Islamabad, Tel Aviv and Beijing.

We've requested more money for intelligence in 1997. This focus is making a difference. As the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded in its 1996 report on the Intelligence Authorization bill, the work of U.S. intelligence agencies against terrorism has been an example of effective coordination and information sharing.

I've also worked to rally other nations to the fight against terrorism -- last year at the U.N. General Assembly; this spring at the historic Summit of Peacemakers at Sharm el-Sheikh, where 29 nations, including 13 Arab nations for the first time condemned terrorism in Israel and anywhere else it occurs in the Middle East and throughout the world; at the G-7 Summit in Lyon and the recently held follow-on conference we called for in Paris, where we were represented ably by the Attorney General.

Now, the point of all these efforts with other countries is not to talk, but to act. More countries are acting with us. More countries are taking the "no sanctuary" pledge and living up to their extradition laws so that terrorists have no place to run or hide. More countries are helping us to shut down the gray markets that outfit terrorists with weapons and false documents.

Last week in Paris, the G-7 nations and Russia agreed to pursue a sweeping set of measures to prevent terrorists from acting, and to catch them if they do. And we set timetables with specific dates by which progress must be made. We're also working with Saudi Arabia to improve the security of our forces stationed there, so that we can continue to deter aggression by rogue states and stand against terrorism in the Middle East.

After Khobar Towers I immediately ordered investigation by the FBI and a commission headed by General Wayne Downing, which is to report to me later this month. While it's too early to reach conclusions, these investigations are moving aggressively in cooperation with our host. And we are working with the Saudi government to move almost all our troops to other bases to better protect them from terrorist attacks.

Even though we're working more closely with our allies than ever, and there is more agreement on what needs to be done than ever, we do not always agree. Where we don't agree, the United States cannot and will not refuse to do what we believe is right. That's why we have maintained or strengthened sanctions against states that sponsor terrorism: Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan. You cannot do business with countries that practice commerce with you by day while funding or protecting the terrorists who kill you and your innocent civilians by night. That is wrong. I hope, and expect, that before long our allies will come around to accepting this fundamental truth.

This morning I signed into law the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. It builds on what we've already done to isolate those regimes by imposing tough penalties on foreign companies that go forward with new investments in key sectors. The act will help to deny them the money they need to finance international terrorism or to acquire weapons of mass destruction. It will increase the pressure on Libya to extradite the suspects in the bombing of Pan Am 103.

With us today, as I said before, are some of those families and the loved ones of other victims of terrorism sponsored by Iran and Libya. Let me repeat the pledge I made to them earlier. We will not rest in our efforts to track down, prosecute and punish terrorists, and to keep the heat on those who support them. And we must not rest in that effort.

The second part of our strategy is to give American law enforcement officials the most powerful tools available to fight terrorism without undermining our civil liberties. In the wake of Oklahoma City, I strengthened the terrorism bill I had previously sent to Congress, but which had not then been passed. Despite the vow of Congress to act quickly, it took a year before that bill came to my desk to be signed.

The bill had some very good points. It made terrorism a federal offense, expanded the role of the FBI, imposed the death penalty for terrorism. As strong as it was, however, it did not give our law enforcement officials other tools they needed and that they had asked for, including increased wiretap authority for terrorists to parallel that which we have for people involved in organized crime now, and chemical markers for the most common explosives so that we can more easily track down bomb makers.

After the bombing in Atlanta, Congress said it would reconsider these and other measures. I immediately called the congressional leadership to the White House and urged them to put together a package and vote it into law before they left for the August recess last Friday. I am disappointed and, more importantly, the America people are disappointed that that job was not done. These additional measures would save lives. They would make us all more secure. When the Congress returns from the August recess, we will take them up again and we must get the job done.

There is more I will ask Congress to do. Next month I will submit to Congress the international crime control act that our Justice, State and Treasury Departments drafted at my request, because more and more, terrorism, international organized crime and drug trafficking are going hand in hand. This bill expands our fight against money laundering, so criminals and terrorists will have a tougher time financing their activities. It strengthens our extradition powers and border controls to keep more criminals and terrorists out of America. It increases the ability of American law enforcement to prosecute those who commit violent crimes against Americans abroad. Congress should pass it.

And, once again, I urge the Senate to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention, so that we can eliminate chemical weapons stockpiles and give our law enforcement new powers to investigate and prosecute people planning attacks with such weapons. We have seen the terrible, destructive impact of sarin gas in the Tokyo subway. Within a month of that attack, Japan's Diet ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, but we still have not done so. If the Chemical Weapons Convention were in force today, it would be much more difficult for terrorists to acquire chemical weapons. They are not waiting, and we shouldn't either.

Finally, the third front of our struggle against terrorism at the airports and airplanes that bring us all closer together. Air travel remains the safest form of transportation. And our airlines have the best safety record and security record in the business. But that's a small consolation when a single attack can take so many lives.

Last year we began field testing new high-tech explosive detection machines in Atlanta and San Francisco. We significantly increased security at our airports, and the FAA created a new government and industry panel to review airline security.

After the TWA crash, I ordered new measures to increase the security of air travel. As any of you who have flown in recent days will have noticed, we're doing more hand searches and machine screening of luggage. We're requiring preflight inspections for every plane flying to or from the United States - every plane, every cabin, every cargo hold, every time. The Vice President is leading a commission on aviation security that is to report back to me within 45 days with an action plan to deploy machines that can detect the most sophisticated explosives and other needed changes.

Now, I know all this has led to some extra inconvenience for air travelers, and it may lead eventually to a modest increase in the cost of air travel. But the increased safety and peace of mind will be worth it.

So, greater international cooperation, stronger American law enforcement, safer air travel -- these are the fronts of our concerted strategy against terrorism. Much of this work by law enforcement, intelligence and military professionals goes unheralded, but we are getting results. For example, we prevented attacks on the United Nations and the Holland Tunnel in New York. We thwarted an attempt to bomb American passenger planes from the skies over the Pacific. We convicted those responsible for the World Trade Center bombing and arrested suspects in the Oklahoma City and Unabomber cases. We've tracked down terrorists around the world and extradited more terrorists in four years than in the previous 12.

But I want to make it clear to the American people that while we can defeat terrorists, it will be a long time before we defeat terrorism. America will remain a target because we are uniquely present in the world, because we act to advance peace and democracy, because we have taken a tougher stand against terrorism, and because we are the most open society on Earth. But to change any of that, to pull our troops from the world's trouble spots, to turn our backs on those taking risks for peace, to weaken our opposition against terrorism, to curtail the freedom that is our birth right would be to give terrorism a victory it must not and will not have.

In this fight, as in so many other challenges around the world, American leadership is indispensable. In assuming our leadership in the struggle against terrorism we must be neither reluctant nor arrogant, but realistic, determined, and confident. And we must understand that in this battle we must deploy more than police and military resources. Every one of you counts; every American counts.

Our greatest strength is our confidence. And that is the target of the terrorists. Make no mistake about it: The bombs that kill and maim innocent people are not really aimed at them, but at the spirit of our whole country and the spirit of freedom. Therefore, the struggle against terrorism involves more than the new security measures I have ordered and the others I am seeking. Ultimately, it requires the confident will of the American people to retain our convictions for freedom and peace and to remain the indispensable force in creating a better world at the dawn of a new century.

Everywhere I travel on behalf of our country I encounter people who look up to us because of what we stand for and what we're willing to stand against. I have said this before, but when Hillary and I visited the Olympic Village I was so moved by the athletes who came up to me and talked about what America had meant to their country: a young Croatian athlete who thanked me for our efforts there, not long after Secretary Brown's plane crashed and Secretary Kantor had finished the mission; an Irish athlete who thanked me for our efforts to bring peace in Northern Ireland; a Palestinian athlete who said that he had -- he came from a very old people, but they never had an Olympic team until they made peace with Israel, and that many people wanted to keep that peace.

This responsibility is great, and I know it weighs heavily on many Americans. But we should embrace this responsibility because at this point in time no one else can do what we can do to advance peace and freedom and democracy -- and because it is necessary at this point in time for our own peace and freedom and prosperity.

As we remember the Centennial Olympics the weeks of courage and triumph, the wonder of the world's youth bound together by the rules of the game in genuine mutual respect, let us resolve to work for a world that looks more like that in the 21st century, to stand strong against the moments of terror that would destroy our spirit, to stand for the values that have brought us so many blessings, values that have made us at this pivotal moment the indispensable nation.

Thank you very much.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
AT SIGNING OF ANTITERRORISM BILL
The South Lawn
April 24, 1996

Thank you very much, Mary Jo White, for the work you do every day. Thank you, Attorney General Reno. Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

To Senator Dole and Chairman Hatch and Chairman Hyde, the other members of Congress who are here; Governor Keating and the Attorneys General who are here and the others in law enforcement; to the members of the administration, and especially to the victims' families who are here.

I thank the families for coming today. I thank their advocates for coming. But I think we should all acknowledge that the importance of this event is embodied in no small measure by the fact that the families were willing to come here, knowing that it would in some measure force them to relive the pain that they have endured because of acts of terror. It took a lot of courage for them to endure that pain. So while this is a good day for America, we can't really say it is a happy day. Not all good days can be happy days, but every American is in debt to these families for standing up for the need for the changes that we have experienced. And I ask the rest of us to acknowledge that. And we thank you.

I also would point out that Presidents can advocate and the Executive Branch can enforce the laws, but this would not have happened but for the remarkable convergence of Republicans and Democrats in the Congress. The Vice President introduced those who were especially active in the leadership who are over here to my left who will come up in a moment when we sign the bill. But there are so many more members of Congress here, for the benefit of all of you, I would like to ask every member who is here and who worked so hard on this legislation to please stand and be recognized. Would the members of Congress please stand? Thank you very much.

This is a good day because our police officers are now going to be better prepared to stop terrorists, our prosecutors better prepared to punish them, our people being better protected from their designs. This legislation is more important today because of the very forces which have unlocked so much potential for progress -- the new technologies, the instant communications, the open borders. These things have done so much good. But they have also made it easier for the organized forces of hatred and division to endanger the lives of innocent people. We have seen terrorism take its horrible toll all around the world, from Tokyo to London to Jerusalem, and, of course, in our own country.

When a terrorist car bomb took the lives of 241 American Marines in Beirut, we felt the shock waves here at home. When savage killers took the life of Leon Klinghoffer, countless Americans wept for him and for his family. When Pan Am 103 went down over Lockerbie,

Scotland, killing 270 people including 189 Americans, we saw again that there are no borders or bounds on the forces of hatred. When the bomb exploded at the World Trade Center, as Mary Jo said, by the grace of God killing only six but injuring over 1000 people, we knew again that we had no place to hide. And, of course, five days ago we marked the first anniversary of the most terrible terrorist attack upon these shores in our history, reminding us that even the very young and the most innocent are not immune.

We also have to remember as we remember those who were lost that as painful as that loss is, their deaths and their destructions are not the terrorists' only goals, for each and every act of terrorism is also a means to another end. The unbelievable idea that it is all right to kill an innocent person to achieve a political goal, to stop us from living our lives in the light of liberty, to force us to cower in the dark grip of fear, to terrify us as targets into submission.

So let us honor those who lost their lives by resolving to hold fast against the forces of violence and division, by never allowing them to shake our resolve or break our spirit, to frighten us into sacrificing our sacred freedoms or surrendering a drop of precious American liberty. Rather we must guard against them, speak against them, and fight against them.

Fighting terrorism is and will for a long time to come be one of the top security priorities of the United States. On our own and with our allies, we have implemented strong sanctions against states that harbor terrorists and encourage them. We have intensified partnerships with other countries to stand together against terrorists around the world. We have increased our investment, our personnel, and our training for law enforcement efforts here at home.

I sent Congress antiterrorism legislation over a year ago, and after the Oklahoma City bombing I asked for additional measures. I applaud the great majority of Congress who stood up for the safety of the American people, worked through the policy debates, and made sure that in the end politics faltered and common sense prevailed. Democrats and Republicans, Republicans and Democrats, people who love their country as patriots came together, worked together, and got the job done.

The antiterrorism bill is grounded in common sense and steeled with force. Because of this bill, law enforcement will be better prepared than ever to stop terrorists before they strike and to bring them to justice when they do. From now on we can quickly expel foreigners who dare to come to America and support terrorist activities. From now on American prosecutors can wield new tools and expanded penalties against those who terrorize Americans at home or abroad. From now on we can stop terrorists from raising money in the United States to pay for their horrible crimes.

From now on criminals sentenced to death for their vicious crimes will no longer be able to use endless appeals to delay their sentences, and families of victims will no longer have to endure years of anguish and suffering.

We have new laws and better controls against chemical and biological weapons. We have agreed to put chemical markers in plastic explosives that will help us to detect explosives like those used to bring down Pan Am 103. We will be able to require chemical taggets in some other explosive materials as well. They will make it easier for police to trace bombs to the criminals who made them and bring those criminals to justice.

This legislation is a strong step forward for our security, but we mustn't stop there. I am directing the Secretary of the Treasury to complete the study of taggets required by Congress and propose appropriate regulations as quickly as possible. We must also address the problem of black and smokeless powders routinely used to make illegal smokeless devices like pipe bombs. I'm directing Secretary Rubin to consult with industry representatives and the law enforcement community to report back with appropriate recommendations.

Finally, I believe we have to take additional steps. I believe we must do more to help police keep terrorists who are suspected terrorists under surveillance. I believe we should give law enforcement more time to investigate and prosecute terrorists who use machine guns, sawed-off shotguns and explosive devices. I agree with police officers that instead of creating a commission to study them, in the end we must ban cop-killer bullets.

Nonetheless, make no mistake about it: This bill strikes a mighty blow against terrorism, and it is fitting that this bill becomes law during National Crime Victims Rights Week, because it stands up for victims in so many important ways. There are a lot of victims' advocates and victims here, and I thank them for their presence today. This bill recognizes that victims have a compelling interest in the trials of those accused of committing crimes against them and requires closed-circuit television coverage when federal trials are moved far away, a provision we owe to the vigilance of the members of Congress from Oklahoma. And we thank you for it.

I'd like to close with a word to all of the family members of Americans slain by terrorists, and to the survivors of terrorism, to the children who lost their parents in Pan Am 103 and parents who lost their children in Israel, to all of you from Oklahoma City, to Andrew Kerr on my staff of the National Security Council whose father was murdered in Beirut, to each and every one of you with us today and those who are watching all across this great land of ours. Your endurance and your courage is a lesson to us all. Your vigilance has sharpened our vigilance.

And so I sign my name to this bill in your names. We renew our fight against those who seek to terrorize us in your names. We send a loud, clear message today all over the world in your names. America will never surrender to terror. America will never tolerate terrorism. America will never abide terrorists. Wherever they come from, wherever they go, we will go after them. We will not rest until we have brought them all to justice, and secured a future for our people, safe from the harm they would do -- in your names.

Thank you. God bless you. And God bless America.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
TO THE 87TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NAACP
Charlotte Convention Center
Charlotte, North Carolina
July 10, 1996

Thank you. Thank you very much. President Mfume, I hope you do get your four more years. And I hope I get to hang around to work with you.

Madam Chair, Bishop Graves, Hazel and other distinguished members. Hey, she met me outside and kissed me. Brother Williams, thank you for singing for us. Reverend Hooks, you're looking young and handsome, I'm glad to see.

Ladies and gentlemen, last year I know the First Lady came to visit with you, and she had a wonderful time. And she is completing a trip that she made on behalf of our country after the meeting of the G-7 industrial countries in France. She went to a lot of the nations that used to be part of the Soviet Empire that were once communist and are now free. And she's had a wonderful trip. Last night I talked to her; she was in Finland, and so far north the sun never really goes down at this time of year. So I knew she wouldn't be mad when I woke her up at two o'clock in the morning to talk. And she asked me to give you her best.

I also want you to know what I did -- the last thing I did before I got on the helicopter at the White House to come here today was to meet with Mickey Kantor, our Secretary of Commerce, and Michael Brown, Ron Brown's son, and the delegation who are leaving today to finish the mission Ron Brown started in Bosnia and Croatia.

And I was especially proud that almost all the companies who lost executives on that terrible day sent replacements to go on this mission to finish the work of advancing the cause of peace. And I want to thank you, Mr. President, and all of you, for the tribute that you gave to Secretary Brown yesterday.

I am honored to be here today because of what the NAACP has meant to America. As a young boy growing up in the segregated South, it was the NAACP that gave all of us hope that there could be a better day. I told Myrlie -- I don't think she quite believed it -- that in early 1974, when I started my political career, I actually purchased a membership at the Malaloo (phonetic) AME Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. I came to a meeting one Sunday afternoon and bought myself a membership card. I hate to say that because I'll get a letter from Kweisi next week pointing out that I have not kept up my renewals over the last 20 years.

What a difference a year makes. Last year you announced your new leadership, a new sense of partnership, a new spirit of commitment to go into the 21st century. You elected Myrlie Evers as your chairman -- you elected this great former member of Congress -- that's right, give her a hand. You elected this great member of Congress as your new president and CEO, Kweisi Mfume. As you might imagine, given the way things are around here in Washington, I miss him more than ever. I was riding in with Congressman Mel Watt, from Charlotte today, from the airport and we were talking about -- where's Mel? He's here somewhere I think, Congressman Watt. And we were talking about what a great voice Kweisi was in the Congress. But I think we gained a greater leader in the struggle for equality and progress in America when he changed jobs.

I want to thank you for making your voice heard again, for economic justice, for the empowerment of all voters, for educational excellence for our children. And I want to thank you especially for your effort to bring young people back into this organization and into the spirit of citizenship in America. We need these young people -- after all, they have more tomorrows than yesterdays. There are some days when I resent that, but it's true.

And we can't remake our yesterdays, we can only make tomorrows. And we can't afford to have young people saying, well, oh, this doesn't matter. It doesn't matter whether I am involved in the NAACP. It doesn't matter whether I vote. It doesn't matter whether I'm in a community group to try to help save my peers from drugs and gangs and give them a bright future and a better life. It does matter. It matters.

And because of the dedication of Mr. Mfume to the young people of his congressional district and to the young men in his own family, he brought that conviction that he could inspire young people to his work here. And in a way, it may be the lasting legacy of this period of reform of the NAACP that you brought the young blood of America back into this organization, fighting for the future and working together. And I hope he will stay with us. I'm glad that us gray-haired people still have a role in it, however.

My fellow Americans, our nation, as you all know, is at a crossroads. We are only four years away now from a new century in a new millennium. Anytime you change the calendar in that way, people start to think in bigger ways. They start to imagine the great significance of the moment. But it happens to be true now, for we are undergoing a sweeping change in the way we work, the way we live, the way we relate to the rest of the world.

We are leaving the Cold War that dominated most of our lives behind and moving into a new global village, if I can use my wife's term, with lots of opportunity and a lot of troubles -- some of them new and some of them very old. We are moving away from the Industrial Age into a new era dominated by information and technology, where more people will have more opportunities ever before, but unless they have the capacity to seize those opportunities, they'll be left behind faster than ever before.

So, when I sought this office, I did so because I wanted to get our country ready for the 21st century, because I thought there were three simple things that we had to do. One is to make sure we enter the next century with the American Dream alive for everybody who is willing to work for it, without regard to their race, their gender, their region or where they start out in life -- high, low or somewhere in the middle.

Secondly, I thought we had to find a way to resist these destructive winds that are blowing in so many other countries to divide people by race and religion and ethnicity and, instead, come together in a greater sense of community -- to bridge our divisions, respect our diversity, extol our shared values and make America stronger because of our diversity, not weaker because of it.

And the third thing I wanted to do is to make sure that in this new world our country continues to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity. It matters in Haiti. It matters in South Africa. It matters in Northern Ireland. It matters in the Middle East. It matters in all these countries, but it matters to us here at home, when we can work with the Russians to reduce our nuclear arsenals; when we can work with other countries to stop the proliferation of dangerous weapons; when we can cooperate with other countries to prevent terrorist incidents before they occur -- it matters that America is a force for peace and freedom and prosperity. It matters to every single one of you.

My strategy to achieve that vision was remarkably simple. I thought we had to reassert the basic bargain in American citizenship -- more opportunity for everyone, and responsibility from all. And the understanding that that responsibility includes our common responsibility not just to make the most of our own lives and our family's lives, but to be good citizens for our communities and for our country.

At this time of decision, that's what I hope the discussion will be about in this election year. We've come a long way in the last four years, but we've got a long way to go. When I -- four years ago, when I became President, the economy was stagnant, we had the slowest job growth since the Great Depression, the deficit was spiraling, we had quadrupled our national debt in only 12 years from what we'd done in the previous 200.

We put in place an economic plan designed to cut the deficit, expand trade for American products on free and fair terms, and invest more in the people of this country, wherever they lived and wherever they were starting out in life. And four years later, it's made a difference.

I said four years ago that if the Congress would adopt my plan I thought it would cut the deficit in half and produce 8 million jobs. Well, in three and a half years, we know it's cut the deficit by more than half and produced over 10 million jobs. That is a good beginning for the American people.

For much of the last four years the African American unemployment rate has been in single digits for the first time in 20 years. There are 100,000 new African American-owned businesses. After falling by \$2,000 in the previous four years, median income for African American families has increased by \$2,400, or 11 percent, in just the first two years of this administration. Average wages are going up now for the first time in a decade. Home ownership is the highest in 15 years -- there are 3.7 million new American home owners. The growth of home ownership among African Americans is higher than the national average. And one reason is we have a Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in Henry Cisneros that has worked to cut the closing costs on those homes by \$1,000 for first-time home buyers.

So we're moving in the right direction. But we have to keep working until all of our people can reap the rewards of this time for change, including those that have not been reached by the recovery, those that have been downsized in competition, those that are stuck in place because they don't have the education and the skills to move up. So we have to keep working on balancing this budget because that keeps the interest rates down, the investments coming, and takes the burden off these young people you're trying to get interested in their own future.

But we have to do it in a way that recognizes our obligations to each other, that keeps the community together. Yes, reform Medicare, but don't create a two-class system and make the oldest, the poorest and the sickest seniors more vulnerable. Yes, slow the inflation rate in Medicaid, but don't give up the guarantee that we have a national responsibility to take care of poor pregnant women, poor infant children, people with disabilities in families all over this country, and elderly people who have to go into nursing homes. I think that's our common responsibility. We don't have to give that up.

Neither should we reduce our commitment to excellence in education and to the environment in the name of balancing the budget, because that's not necessary to be done. We have to go on with the cause of health care reform. There's still too many people in this country that don't have health insurance or that lose it. That's what the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill is all about. It simply says you don't lose your health insurance if you lose your job, you're moving from job to job, or if someone in your family has been sick. A simple little guarantee that could immediately benefit over 8 million Americans who are working in this country trying to support their kids and hold their families together. And I hope the Congress will pass it without delay.

I was very happy that yesterday the Senate voted to pass a 90-cent increase in the minimum wage, something we need very much. Ten million of our hardest-pressed workers will get a raise. And I urge Congress to go on and pass it now. It's passed the House and passed the Senate. Let's go on and pass it just as soon as possible. Get it on up here so I can sign that bill and we can give people a raise.

In addition to the minimum wage, there's some other provisions in that bill that I'm very proud of that have, to be fair, bipartisan support. One is -- and for all of you in small businesses, it will matter a lot -- we're going to increase the expensing provision of small businesses, their write-off capacity from \$17,500 to \$25,000 a year. That's important for a lot of you here in this room. It was only \$10,000 when I took office, and the small business community said it ought to be \$25,000. If that bill gets to my desk, it will be \$25,000.

The other thing that I think is very important is that this bill contains a package of pension reforms which will make it easier for people who work for small businesses and people who are self-employed, and especially for people who have to change jobs a lot -- people who are out there selling computer software or otherwise have to move from job to job -- to take out a pension, to keep it when they're unemployed and to keep it when they move from job to job without being interrupted. People ought to be able to save for their family and save for their own retirement even if they're working in little businesses, even if they're self-employed, even if they have to move across the country, even if they have to change jobs. That is in there with the minimum wage bill, too.

Four years ago we had a lot of rhetoric on crime, but not a lot of action, and the crime rate was at unbelievably high levels. But there was a quiet change going on in many of our communities, who recognized that we had to have more police on the street, trying to prevent crime, not just catch criminals;

relating to people in the communities, working with the parents, working with the children. They recognized that in addition to tougher punishment for serious offenders, we needed more prevention programs for community activists who wanted to help save these kids.

And when I became President I asked the Congress to pass that kind of crime bill, and they did. And now we're putting 100,000 police back on the street. We're taking guns off the street with the assault weapons ban and the Brady Bill. We're increasing penalties for people who should be punished more, but also giving our young people something to say yes to.

Under the direction of General McCaffrey, who this week is chairing a conference in El Paso, Texas, on how to stop drugs at the border, we are targeting a drug strategy to help young people. We cannot let another generation of our young people fall into the trap of drugs and gangs and crime.

We're working with communities all over this country with innovative strategies -- not telling people what to do, but saying, if you want to do this, we'll help you. School uniform policies in places like Long Beach, California, or Las Cruces, New Mexico. We're working on enforcing the truancy laws. Kids ought to be in school, not on the street during school hours, I think. And helping people do that. We're working on community-based curfews. And I'm holding up to this country especially the example of New Orleans, where they had a huge drop in juvenile crime not only because they imposed a curfew system, but because when they caught a young person out after curfew, instead of just punishing the person, they took these young people to a curfew center and said, tell me about your life, what's going on in your life, what are your problems, what can we do to help? It was a positive as well as a disciplinary move. And the juvenile crime rate is going down dramatically.

These things are working all across America. We set up a framework in Washington, but all we're really trying to do is help people at the community level come together and take responsibility for their own kids and their own future. And we are now seeing the fourth year in a row where the crime rate is going down. And that's something to be proud of.

Now, having said that, you'd be cheering from the rafters but for two things. Instead of polite applause, we'd get a roaring cheer, but there's two things that keep you from giving a roaring cheer. What are they? Number one, the crime rate's still too high. So what if it's lower, it's still way too high. And that means it's important. We dare not turn back on a strategy that's working. We've got to keep strengthening our community efforts -- putting more of these people out on the street who can be community police officers.

I won't be satisfied with this crime problem until we can meet this test -- we will never purge the country completely of crime because you can't -- at least the President doesn't have the power to alter human nature. The preachers here can call on a higher power, but I can't. So we'll always have some crime. What will be the test for you -- when you know that the crime rate is at a manageable, acceptable level in a civilized country? When you go home at night after a long day at work and you flip on the evening news, and the lead story is not a crime story, or if it is, you're surprised instead of deadened by it. You're really surprised. Then you will know that we got the crime rate going in the right direction for good.

The other thing that bothers people is that even though the crime rate's going down in the country as a whole, the rate of crime and violence by people under 18 is going up. We've still got too many innocent kids being killed in crossfires by drive-by shootings. We still have too many kids that are out there raising themselves in the streets, so they wind up in gangs, because everybody wants to be part of something. Most people can't just live wandering around as hermits all alone. So if you put people out there on the street and they have to raise themselves, they wind up in gangs because people don't want to be alone. There's not another compelling alternative. We have to fill that gap. And we have to do the things that are responsible, those of us who are responsible for the future. We cannot lose another generation to gangs and guns and drugs. We cannot waiver on it.

We cannot show weakness, and we dare not cater to special interest groups on this. We are determined to stand by the ban on 19 deadly assault weapons. It was the right thing to do. We are determined to stand by the Brady Bill's requirement of waiting periods.

Let me just tell you, I know when we passed the Brady Bill and when we passed the assault weapons ban in 1994 -- and Mr. Mfume will tell you this -- we lost some members of Congress who actually lost their seats in Congress because they voted for these bills. People went into their districts, called voters on the telephone, sent them letters, ran ads saying these people are trying to take your guns away from you; they're trying to end your ability to go out in the country and hunt. That's what they said. And, you know, most people who work hard don't have time to keep up with what's going on every day. A lot of people didn't know, and they went right in and dutifully voted against these members of Congress. And some of them gave up their seats.

But you know what? It's been two years now -- two deer seasons -- two ducks seasons, two turkey seasons, two quail seasons, two squirrel seasons -- and everybody in this whole

country that likes to do that is still shooting at those animals with the same gun they had before we passed the Brady Bill and the assault weapons ban. Every single soul. So they didn't tell the truth.

But I'll tell you who doesn't have guns. Because of that Brady Bill, 60,000 felons, fugitives and stalkers have not been able to get handguns and pull the trigger on innocent American citizens. We were right and they were wrong about that, and we've got to stand tough on it.

Now, this year, we've gone through a great debate about whether or not to repeal the assault weapons ban. I couldn't believe it. Just four months ago the House of Representatives actually voted to repeal the assault weapons ban. They want to take Uzis out there and shoot at the deer. Wild turkey fly fast; you need lots of bullets -- I'm kind of laughing to keep from crying about this.

And let me say, there's now a lot of talk about you know where the major candidates will stand on this repeal of the assault weapons ban, who will push for it, and won't, and whatever. But I will say one thing that the Republican candidate for president has not said, and probably will not and cannot say. I will veto any attempt to repeal the assault weapons ban or the Brady Bill. I will veto it.

We should stand with law enforcement; we should stand with the victims of crime. You can't tell me it doesn't make any difference. I'll never forget a handsome young businessman from northern California I met a couple of years ago when we were fighting this battle. He had a beautiful young daughter, but his beautiful young daughter no longer had her beautiful young mother, because the beautiful young mother just happened to be in a high-risk one day when a madman happened to walk in and cut loose with an assault weapon.

Now, people go crazy; these things happen. But if he'd had a revolver instead of an assault weapon, there wouldn't be so many people dead in that building. And this is important. This is an important issue.

So I ask you all to think about this and talk about this. And let me just tell you something that makes, again, Kweisi's attempt to bring all the young people in here so important. Just starting in grade school now, we have the largest group of young

Americans more diverse than ever before in terms of their racial and ethnic backgrounds -- the largest group of young Americans entering our school system since the baby boomers entered right after World War II.

It was thought for a long time we would never have a group of youngsters that large again. This group is larger. They are more likely to be people of color. They are quite likely to come from families with difficult situations, or at least difficult economic situations. We must turn this problem of juvenile violence and gangs around before they reach their adolescent years if we don't want to reap the whirlwind of this.

One way we have to do it is with the right kind of welfare reform. Three-quarters of the people in America on welfare are already under welfare reform experiments because of the action our government has taken to encourage strategies to move people from welfare to work.

My criteria is simple. I don't mind being tough on requiring people to work, but we ought to want for people on welfare what we want for ourselves. What do we want? We want to succeed at home and at work. We want to be good parents and we want to be good from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We want to feel good about ourselves when we come home from work, but we want to feel good about ourselves when we leave home with our kids behind. That is the simple test. So I say, tough on work, yes; tough on kids, no way. Be good to the kids. Invest in child care.

And we've had time enough now to see who is right. We have 1.3 million people less on the welfare rolls today than the day I took the oath of office as President of the United States. That's the way to move people from welfare to work -- support them with child care and then require those work requirements.

And the most important thing we can do is make a wholesale commitment to educational excellence and educational opportunity in this country. We have got to do more. People say we've done a lot on that in the last 15 years. Not nearly enough. We've expanded Head Start, but not enough. We've worked to shrink class sizes and help teachers be retrained. We've worked to encourage states to set high standards and to give them the flexibility they need to meet the standards. We've worked to open the doors of college wider than ever, increasing the Pell grants, changing the student loan program so that people could borrow the money at lower costs with less hassle and then have the option to pay it back as a percentage of their income, so that no young person should ever drop out of school because of the burden of a student loan.

But we have to do more. I am determined to see every classroom and every library in every school in the United States of America hooked up to the Internet by the year 2000 so the poorest kids can get the richest education and have access to all the information that any student anywhere in the world had.

I believe that the best tax cut we could give the American people is a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition up to \$10,000 a year. I believe that we ought to make at least two years of college after high school just as universal as a high school education is today.

I think everybody out to have access to it. That's why I have proposed a \$1,500 refundable tax credit -- enough to pay the entire tuition cost at the typical community college in the United States, so that everybody of any age can at least go back and get two years of college, so they can do well in the world toward which we're going.

If you want to inspire young people of the future, you at least ought to be able to tell them -- you at least ought to be able to tell them -- you ought to be able to look them right in the eye and say, you will go to college if you do this. That's the least that we can do in Washington to help those of you who are out there in our neighborhoods help to rescue this generation of young people and give them something to say yes to and a bright future to embrace.

So these are the things that I think we ought to be focusing on. Things that help people make the most of their own lives -- not a guarantee, but an opportunity. Things that help build strong families. Things that help build strong communities. They'll build a strong country. And it's one thing to preach to people that they ought to be responsible -- and I'm for that -- but if they are responsible, they ought to be rewarded with opportunity. The two things should go together as a bargain.

Let me say one other thing. Now that the Cold War is over, we have, unfortunately, not a world free of danger, we've got a lot of security problems. You know it as well as I do. We just dealt with it with a terrible, terrible loss of our Air Force personnel in Saudi Arabia.

What is leading to all this terrorism around the world? What does it have in common, when the Hutus and the Tutsis just slaughter each other in Rwanda or Burundi? What does that have to do with people rioting in Northern Ireland? What does it have to do with the Bosnians, the Muslims, the Croats and the Serbs and what they did to each other for four years after living together in peace for decades? What does it have to do with the continuing tensions in the Middle East?

Well, I think it has to do with human nature being vulnerable every day to taking the easy way of defining ourselves in terms of who we're not, instead of who we are; defining ourselves in terms of who we can look down on, instead of what we can look up to. What leads to an Oklahoma City bombing? What were those people thinking in that group in Arizona where our federal officials broke it up the other day before -- when they had that massive weapons cash and all those -- at least they have been charged with plans to blow up all kinds of federal facilities? What are they thinking about when they burn all those churches and synagogues -- or, in a few cases, mosques and Islamic centers? What are they thinking about?

I'm telling you, it's something endemic to human nature, something you have to teach your kids about all the time -- something we all have to fight. It's almost like, every day you wake up and the scales are going inside you -- you know, hope and fear, hatred and reconciliation. But there are people all over the world that look like they just can't exist unless they go out and kill somebody who is different from them -- or at least keep them at arm's length.

And nobody has ever perfectly solved this problem. There are no perfect answers because, again, it deals with the human spirit and the things that are endemic to human nature. But that's why I know that even though we desegregated our schools and threw racism out of public facilities and elected African Americans and Hispanics and Asian Americans to Congress, passed civil rights laws, this job is a never-ending job -- here and around the world. It's a never-ending job.

That's why, notwithstanding the political movement of the moment, after I studied it for several months, I thought we could and should make some changes in the affirmative action laws, but that we should mend them and not end them. I thought it would be a mistake to end them and walk away.

I think it's a mistake not to try to keep working for voting rights and greater impact of voting rights. And, notwithstanding the recent Supreme Court decisions which, of course, we will all honor, we still have to be on a mission of making sure that the Congress of the United States represents the American people in a fair way.

And it's why we have to keep standing against this rash of church burnings. You know, it's hard to think of anything an American could do that didn't kill a lot of people that would offend our sense of decency more than burning a house of worship. This whole country got started in part by people coming here so they could build their own churches and worship God in any way they pleased, and they wouldn't be oppressed here. That's how we got started.

In the darkest hours of our country, when we lived with the awful curse of slavery, and then later with the problems associated with the attempt to escape it, if it had not been for the African American church -- if it had not been for the African American church what would have happened? We might have plunged this country into an orgy of violence and killing, and lost tens of thousands more people, and hardened our hearts against one another in ways that it would have taken a century or more to overcome.

An attack on a house of worship, whether it's a big old Southern Baptist church, or a big old black Baptist church, or a tiny synagogue, or a Muslim mosque that only a few people ever frequent, is an attack on the whole idea of America. And it represents our problem in dealing with this curse of hatred based on race and religion and ethnicity that is sweeping the world and fueling so much of this terrorism.

I want to thank you for what you have done. The NAACP has worked with law enforcement and government and business and religious leaders to help us catch and prosecute people, and to help us rebuild, and to help us prevent these burnings. You know that my administration stands behind you. We created a national task force on these church burnings, headed, I might add, very ably by two of the finest African Americans in our administration -- Deval Patrick, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil rights; and Jim Johnson, the Assistant Secretary of Treasury for enforcement.

We've got over 200 FBI and ATF agents working to solve these crimes, going through the evidence, doing the investigations. And we're making arrests. In just the last three weeks, arrests have been made in connection with fires in Missouri, North and South Carolina, Texas, Virginia and Washington. And just this past Monday, while you were here, two members of the KKK were charged with the burning of the Mt. Zion AME church in Greeleyville, South Carolina, where I visited just last month.

This morning before I left the White House, I met with a bipartisan group of congressional leaders to thank them for quickly and unanimously passing bipartisan legislation to make it easier to prosecute arson attacks against houses of worship. Also, that legislation authorizes a \$10-million Department of Housing and Urban Development loan guarantee program to be used for church rebuilding -- to work with the money that's been raised by the National Council of Churches, the guarantees of volunteers that have been given by Habitat for Humanity and others.

But we must do more. Two weeks ago, I began to convene religious leaders and governors and others in the White House to talk about what else we can do. I asked the head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, James Lee Witt, who's used to working with local community groups when we have natural disasters, to work with the Justice and Treasury Departments, with the governors to frame a national prevention initiative. One of the big problems here in preventing these crimes is that you've got so many of these little churches that are out on country roads, and they're old wooden structures, and they don't even have a full-time staff, so they can't afford to have full-time people there as night watchmen.

Keep in mind, so far there's no evidence of a national conspiracy. Most of these people are not armed when they sneak in in the middle of the night to do this. If you just had bright lights and somebody hanging around most of the time it wouldn't happen.

Last week I transferred \$6 million to local communities in 13 states across the South -- that's enough to pay for one new police officer in a county to drive around on these back roads to patrol the churches at night, or for lighting, or for whatever else they want to use it for to try to prevent, prevent the fires from occurring in the first place.

And tomorrow the Vice President is meeting with leaders of the insurance industry at the White House to build on their pledge to work in partnership with all of us to prevent these crimes, and to make sure that we can still get insurance for these churches. I've heard a lot about that from people, and it's important.

So we're going to do everything we can to stop these fires, to catch who is doing it, to rebuild. But I say again, this work we're doing here is dealing with a flaw in the human spirit that all of us have to fight always. We cannot -- we cannot -- let significant numbers of the American people turn into cowards, acting in the dark of night, on racial, ethnic or religious bigotry. We cannot do that. We cannot let people in this country develop terrorists cells to manifest their hatred of their own government in the greatest experiment in self-government in human history.

If we are going to continue to be a force against terrorism and against hatred in the rest of the world, we have to continue to purge ourselves of it. That's why earlier this month I signed a proclamation designating July as the national month of unity for Americans. I asked religious leaders of all faiths and citizens from all walks of life to reach out to one another, to strengthen the ideals that light our way and keep this country strong.

We have not always lived up to our promise. We're people, we're human, we make mistakes, we're imperfect. But we have never stopped trying. And we have never stopped moving. And as we enter this great new century, we have got to say that we're going to stamp out the fires of hatred and bigotry. We have got to say we are going to find a way to reject intolerance and heal our divisions. We have got to find a way to say, as your president has said, this is the new day begun.

I just want to leave you with this thought. A couple of nights ago I met with a group of businesspeople to talk about a number of issues, and one of them said to me -- he said, Mr. President, I've been in business for over 30 years, I've built facilities in more than 25 nations; I have seen this world changed a lot. He said, there is no country in the world today in better shape for the next century than the United States. And he said, our diversity, the fact that we are all so different is an enormous asset in a global economy where information and ideas have to be exchanged at a rapid rate and people have to understand each other and deal with each other. He said, that's why it's so important that we learn how to work together and be together, because if we do, there is no stopping this country.

I've said several times in the last few weeks -- I'll just close with this -- it seems like my life as your President has been dominated by fires in the last couple of weeks -- arguably, for longer than that. But, I mean, literally. On the one hand there's the church fires, which are the symbol of everything that is wrong, that we want to reject when it occurs in our country. And on the other hand, there is the fire that burns in the Olympic flame that's making it's way to Atlanta.

And I'm sure every one of you has read as this flame has moved through your states of all these community heroes who are picked to carry the torch for a kilometer. Some of them were in wheelchairs and had to roll along. Some of them were very old and had to walk along. Some of them were great athletes and could fly along so fast the flame almost went out. But every one of them had one thing in common -- they were picked to carry that torch because they were, first and foremost, great citizens.

There was a 74-year-old woman in Nevada that had taken 100 kids in who had been abandoned, so she took them in. There was a man who came in in Washington, one of the torchbearers at the White House, probably about 60, African American man, who had devoted his life to rescuing the lives of children. And he walked up with 12 of his kids, and they were white, black, brown, and Asian Americans. He had given his life to them.

There was a Catholic nun who had devoted her whole life to fulfilling the Catholic social ministry in her community. There was the deaf president of Galludet University, our nation's deaf

university, who is in his late 50s. And when he left what he was doing with us, he was going that week to run a 100-mile race. There was a young woman who played basketball at the University of Tennessee whose body was crushed in an accident and she thought her whole -- her life was nearly over, her athletic career was certainly over. But by sheer force of will, she got herself back into shape, resumed her basketball career, helped them win a national championship, and is one of the leaders on our basketball team.

All of these people shared one thing in common -- they're all different races, all different religions, all different backgrounds -- they lived their citizenship. They bridged the differences between us. They were looking for the future. They saw themselves in terms of who they were, not in terms of what they weren't. In terms of what they could become, not who they were supposed to hate. In terms of what kind of partnerships and teamwork they could build, not how they could be divided.

That is the mission that the NAACP will carry, with great success and energy and commitment and conviction, to the hearts and minds of these young people into the 21st century. That is the mission we must be on. And that is what I hope and pray we will be discussing in this election season: How can we give to our children the kind of America they deserve to have.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT,
THE FIRST LADY,
THE VICE PRESIDENT AND MRS. GORE
IN OPENING AND CLOSING STATEMENTS AT
THE CHILDREN'S TELEVISION CONFERENCE
East Room
July 29, 1996

Good morning. Thank you. Good morning. We're delighted to see all of you here for this historic meeting. A lot of you have come a long way, some of you on the red-eye, and I appreciate the efforts you've made to be here.

We're here for a clear purpose: to improve and expand educational television for our children. The ability of the United States to make the 21st century the age of greatest possibility in our nation's history depends in no small measure on our ability to build strong families today; to help our parents to succeed not only in the workplace, but in their most important job, raising good, well-educated, well-balanced, successful children.

That is why we have worked so hard to give our families more control over one of the most influential forces in our nation, television. As all of you know better than I, it is now a major part of our national landscape. A typical child watches 25,000 hours of television before his or her 18th birthday. Preschoolers watch 28 hours of television a week, and at least during the Olympics, so do Presidents.

We have dedicated ourselves to giving parents the power to screen out television they believe their children should not see. That's what the V-chip was all about. I was proud to sign the telecommunications law with the V-chip requirement to give parents the ability to stop programming that they think is inappropriate for their young children to see.

You in the entertainment industry have certainly been doing your part. Meeting here in the White House five months ago, you volunteered to rate shows for content. You came together as responsible, corporate citizens to give America's families an early-warning system. Parents who use the V-chip will now be able to block objectionable shows before it's too late.

Together these initiatives constitute an invaluable arsenal for America's parents. And I'd also like to point out that this is a challenge being met in the appropriate way by people working together and coming together, not fighting and drifting apart.

But that is only half the battle. As Americans we have to define ourselves not simply by what we stand against, but more importantly by what we stand for. Now, we have the opportunity to use the airwaves for something positive -- educational

programming as great as our kids. Television can be a strong and positive force. It can help children to learn. It can reinforce rather than undermine the values we work so hard to teach our children, showing children every day what it means to share, to respect themselves and others, to take responsibility for their actions, to have sympathy with others who have difficulties, even to recognize that "it's not easy being green."

This morning I would like to hear from you about what we can do to broaden the range of quality educational programming for children. I hope we can focus on three specific issues. First, I'd like to talk about the new research that shows how kids can learn valuable lessons from TV over the course of their young lifetimes. Second, I'd like to find out more about what good shows look like. Third, I'd like us to talk about how we can break down the barriers to the development and production of quality educational programming for children.

Before we begin, I would like to make an announcement. For the past year I've been calling upon the Federal Communications Commission to require broadcasters to air a minimum of three hours of genuine educational programming a week -- three hours a week, 180 minutes a week, about 2.5 percent of the entire schedule. Such a requirement would halt a steep and troubling decline.

As recently as the early '80s, the three major networks aired several hours more than that of children's educational and informational shows. But by 1990, they were down to two hours a week or less than two hours a week. The number is inching up now, but we must do more. The airwaves that broadcasters use, after all, belong to all of us. And in exchange for their use, broadcasters are required to serve the public interest. I cannot imagine anything that serves the public interest more than seeing to it that we give our children at least three hours of educational television a week.

That's why it gives me great pleasure to announce that the four major networks, the National Association of Broadcasters, and some of the leading advocates for educational television have come together to join me in supporting a new proposal to require broadcasters to air three hours of quality educational programming a week.

This proposal fulfills the promise of the Children's Television Act -- that television should serve the educational and informational needs of our young people. It gives broadcasters flexibility in how to meet those needs. And it says to America's parents, you are not alone; we are all committed to working with you to see that educational programming for your children makes the grade.

I urge the FCC to adopt this proposal, to make the three-hour rule the law of the land. Television can build up young lives rather than tear them down.

I'd like to say a particular word of thanks to Congressman Ed Markey for his work on this issue, and a very special word of appreciation to the Vice President for his tireless efforts, along with Greg Simon, to bring about this agreement. I thank them very, very much. Today we can work to imagine television as a force for good, to imagine what television for children would look like if it resembled what we imagined it was when we were children or when you first got started in this business.

In recent days, as families have gathered to watch the Olympics, we have all been reminded about the good that television can bring into our homes, how it can bring us together, how it can inspire and educate us. This should be our standard. I'm anxious now to get to work.

And I'd like to invite three people to come up here for some comments of their own about the agreement that has been reached: Eddie Fritts, the president of the National Association of Broadcasters; Les Moonves, the president of CBS Entertainment; Peggy Charren, the founder of Action for Children's Television.

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THE PRESIDENT: The first subject we're going to talk about is the influence of television on children. We have some good presentations here. I would like to call on the First Lady to begin.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. What a great way to begin this meeting with that announcement. And now we turn to talking about what we mean by quality television.

As the President has pointed out, the technology of television is not intrinsically good or bad. But it does have the potential to do both, particularly to be a powerful force for good in our children's lives. But it depends so much on the decisions made by people in control of that technology, and what their values are and whether or not they know how to produce and then enlist audiences for quality television.

Thanks to a growing body of research, we know what quality television can do for children and what a compelling impact it can have on the educational and intellectual development of children.

I would like to turn to someone who has spent quite a bit of time studying this issue. Along with her husband, Professor John Wright, Professor Aletha Huston are co-directors for the Center for Research on the Influence on Television on Children at the

University of Kansas. They've been to the White House before to talk with us about their important work. They're among the researchers who understand the positive effects that television can have on children.

Dr. Huston, you have been studying television and children for years and your early studies confirmed what many of us experience in our own homes, that educational programs help prepare preschool children for school. Could you share with us the findings from your most recent study that you think would be of the greatest interest to parents?

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MRS. CLINTON: Many of the advertisers, such as your company and the others who are here today, do your own research. And you're targeting a certain audience and you're targeting the parents of children as well as children themselves, so you would bring to the table, to this kind of advisory role, some very good information. And so getting the advertisers involved at an early stage, as you're suggesting, might be very helpful in terms of the quality of programming and then eliciting the sort of support from advertisers that is needed.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very much. I think, to stay on schedule, we need to move to the next topic. It's clear that there's a consensus here and that the evidence supports the fact that television can be, has been, and is in many cases a positive force in children's lives. So I think we ought to discuss a little bit about what makes a successful children's television program. And I'd like to ask Mrs. Gore to lead the discussion, and I'll turn it over to her now.

MRS. GORE: Well, thank you, Mr. President. And again, thank you so much for your extraordinary leadership on this issue, or we would not be where we are.

As I listened to Dr. Huston and Dr. Jamieson speak earlier, as well as the other experts, I began thinking about what Al and I did with our children when they were younger. And one thing we did was we recognized that our guidance was an opportunity to establish critical viewing at an early age. And the children -- I asked them, I said, do you remember the shows that you really enjoyed that were on educational television. And they said, of course, "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood," "Sesame Street," at that time "3-2-1 Contact," and "Picture Page," that Bill Cosby did, and "Bill Nye, The Science Guy." Basically, other than these programs, the TV set was "supposed to be" -- and we all know what that means -- off-limits to them.

Given the study results that were mentioned earlier, Al, I guess you and I are going to have to share some of the credit with Big Bird for our children's later educational talents and the grades that they got in school.

Of course, as children get older and as our children got older, the dynamics changed dramatically. And while their viewing remained limited, the shows they watched were determined more by negotiations between the children and the parents than by parental edict. I think probably most people would relate to that. And I don't have to tell all of you that are parents that the television battles were only one of the many battles that are fought in the home.

Now when our children began to be at that age where they were engaged in critical viewing, I became more aware, as did Al, of what was really on television, what was out there and available to them, whether it was programming or whether it was frightening previews for movies, or no matter what. I mean, they brought that to my attention.

I began working with other people -- many of whom are here today -- years ago to raise awareness about the potential harmful influence of increasingly explicit sexual violence and violence in the media. And I guess because people identify me with this issue somewhat, I hear from parents all across the country and I can tell you just anecdotically, they are still very, very concerned. And they see for the first time a real glimmer of hope that the industry itself is listening to them, is hearing their concerns. And they are agonizing over their children's quality of life and the popular culture in which we all must navigate and which we must guide our children.

I can relate as a parent to the feelings of powerlessness that so many people feel. And everybody in this room is in a position to make them feel more powerful in their own home, given the tools that are going to be given to them.

We are here to talk about a real gift to the American parent, and that is the V-chip. The V-chip, in my view, and I think in most people's view, will help protect children. But they also should -- we also should think of the V-chip as a way to direct children to programs that reflect their values and their desires for entertainment, their priorities and their definition of what is good entertainment.

And I know that there are parents all around this country that are just as excited as I am about this extraordinary group of people gathered today with the goal of making television more positive, a richer medium, one that can help bring our children out of the crisis that we all know is gripping America in terms of their relation to the popular culture and their relation to their education.

So I want to congratulate each and every one of you for making this a priority in America. I think it's extremely important.

I would now like to turn to a person who is well-known for making television programming entertaining as well as, as Dr. Poussant said, value-laden, and a show that taught kids about life experiences. And that, of course, is Bill Cosby. And I'd like to ask you what are the ingredients, how did you succeed. We want more of what made us love you so much.

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MRS. GORE: Now, Mr. President, we've finished with this particular part of the program, and would like your comments.

THE PRESIDENT: First of all, I love this. I wish we had all day to listen to you all talk about this.

We want to talk now about whether there are barriers to more and better children's programs, and if so, what they are. And I guess I would like to begin by welcoming the advertisers that are here and thanking them for their commitment to this announcement we've made today and to this cause generally. I thought what Ms. Laybourne said about being a worrier -- a lot of the things she said I thought were quite on point. And I think that the role of advertisers in sort of changing the whole look of how we approach this issue could be quite critical. So I'm delighted that you're here.

And we're now going on to a section about how we should define and recognize and then deliver quality on these programs, and what barriers there are and how we would go about taking them down. And so I'm going to call on the Vice President to take over the last section.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: Well, thank you very much, Mr. President.

Let's spend a little time in this segment talking about the barriers to more and better children's programming. In many ways, today's session is a counterpart to the White House summit on television that the President hosted several months back. With the V-chip, as others have pointed out, families will have an opportunity to block programming they feel is inappropriate for their young children. And as Tipper pointed out, they will also have the opportunity to select good programming, quality programming that they believe is beneficial for their children.

How will the industry respond to this new reality -- advertisers, programmers, broadcasters, network executives, the cable industry, et cetera? In order to answer that question, we have to understand or take a little time to better understand why it didn't happen before, what the barriers are and how we can overcome them. If with the V-chip some programmers and advertisers for the first time have to worry that inappropriate

programming is going to lead them to lose some of the audience that would otherwise be hypnotically transfixed by the programming, but because parents will have more tools at their disposal, now they're going to have to look at the possibility of the certain percentage of the audience being lost, that will begin to change some of the dynamics.

But there are other aspects to this, and it's critically important to focus on the positive as well as just the negative. We know from the research that the First Lady and her panel discussed earlier that not only is negative imagery bad for children, but more importantly, in keeping with today's summit, positive programming, educational programming can really help children learn. It has many positive benefits.

And we know from the panel that Tipper has just conducted here that there are a lot of successes, and we know good children's programming when we see it. LeVar Burton brought up the concern about what is the definition. It may well be that when the FCC acts they will be able to make reference to good, private sector efforts like that of the Annenberg School, and say, well, this program or that program is cited as good quality children's programming. But according to a lot of these private sector groups that spend full-time looking at this, it doesn't really pass muster. So it may be that a uniquely American solution for that problem can be found.

Gerri Laybourne expressed concern about regulation, and, indeed, that's why the agreement that the President announced at the beginning of this session is so important -- because the industry is now on board. And Peggy Charren and these network executives and programmers and the others are all together saying, yes, this is now a national goal and we're all going to play our part. So it's got to go far beyond regulation.

But with the industry on board and with everybody moving in the same direction it's good to talk about why this hasn't happened before, without the President's leadership, without everybody getting together. The fact is, there are a lot of barriers and people in the industry know -- producers who have made great programming and for economic and structural reasons it hasn't gotten on.

Linda Ellerbee has built a career taking on hard issues, sort of like this one. Her show, Nick News, provides youth with a different view of the world. And I'm sure if it were easy to do, she wouldn't be doing it. But I'd like to ask Linda Ellerbee to start off the discussion of what these barriers are and why it hasn't happened before and what direction do we need to move in now.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: We've run out of time. There are others who would want to speak, but, Mr. President, I think it's obvious from the three panels that we've just heard that this is the beginning of a new era for children's television in America. And coupled with the V-chip and the ratings announcement several months ago, I think this is really revolutionizing children's television.

So that's the end of this panel, and we'll turn it back to you.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me thank all of you, first of all, for coming. And those of you who participated in this historic agreement, I'm very grateful to you. You have done a good thing for your country today.

I do not want to leave us on a down note, but I want to put this in the context of what I think the real stakes are of what we're discussing here. And I leave you with this thought, a challenge to think about another barrier that has nothing to do with the production of the programs or even getting advertising, which is: How are you going to get these programs to the kids that need to see them the most, the kids that are most at risk in our society, and how are you going to reach their parents?

And I want to just ask you to think about these two facts. One is, while we are, at least inside our administration we are very happy that the crime rate has gone down for four years in a row in America -- it's a wonderful thing, four years in a row of a drop in crime rate -- the rate of random violence among people between the ages of 12 and 17 is going up. Cocaine use has dropped by a third, but the rate of random drug use among people between the ages of 12 and 17 has been going up since 1991. Fact one.

Second thing. When school starts this fall, 51.7 million children will enroll in schools. And it's the first time since I, the oldest of the baby boomers, since the baby boomers will fully in school that there has been a class of schoolchildren bigger than the baby boom generation, which means we have a few years to turn these trends around or reap a whirlwind from it.

Basically, if you look at all the aggregate statistics in our country, it seems that most things are moving in the right direction after years of being troubled. But there are just so many of these kids out here that are either virtually raising themselves or their parents -- almost all of whom, I believe, would like to do a good job -- they want to do a good job, but they're not sure how they should do it. So one huge barrier here that we have not discussed beyond it's sort of beyond our purview, but that a lot you who are brilliant at marketing things to people and reaching people is how do you reach the parents?

You know, I had a pretty good education, but I learned a lot because Chelsea was into Sesame Street and Where in the World is Carmen San Diego? When I met the co-leaders of San Marino at the Olympics, I knew where it was because Chelsea got me into Where in the World is not because I had a degree from the Foreign Service School at Georgetown. I'm just saying, how do we reach the parents? This is a serious issue.

And secondly, if you cannot reach the parents, is there some way to reach the kids anyway? We're trying to give schools more funds, for example, to open early and stay open late. Is there some way to redirect the programs in there so that -- and work with the schools so that they will show the programs to the kids in the after school area. You really need to think about this because the kids that need what we're doing the most may have barriers that we haven't even discussed today.

I want to make one last point. I think it would be very good for the adults of this country, including all of us who work in the White House, if Mr. Rogers' poem could be read once a week on prime time television.

Thank you and God bless you all.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT
The Briefing Room
July 31, 1996

Good afternoon. When I ran for President four years ago, I pledged to end welfare as we know it. I have worked very hard for four years to do just that. Today, the Congress will vote on legislation that gives us a chance to live up to that promise -- to transform a broken system that traps too many people in a cycle of dependence to one that emphasizes work and independence; to give people on welfare a chance to draw a paycheck, not a welfare check.

It gives us a better chance to give those on welfare what we want for all families in America, the opportunity to succeed at home and at work. For those reasons I will sign it into law. The legislation is, however, far from perfect. There are parts of it that are wrong, and I will address those parts in a moment.

But, on balance, this bill is a real step forward for our country, our values and for people who are on welfare. For 15 years I have worked on this problem, as governor and as a President. I've spent time in welfare offices, I have talked to mothers on welfare who desperately want the chance to work and support their families independently. A long time ago I concluded that the current welfare system undermines the basic values of work, responsibility and family, trapping generation after generation in dependency and hurting the very people it was designed to help.

Today we have an historic opportunity to make welfare what it was meant to be -- a second chance, not a way of life. And even though the bill has serious flaws that are unrelated to welfare reform, I believe we have a duty to seize the opportunity it gives us to end welfare as we know it. Over the past three and a half years I have done everything in my power as President to promote work and responsibility, working with 41 states to give them 69 welfare reform experiments. We have also required teen mothers to stay in school, required federal employees to pay their child support, cracked down on people who owe child support and crossed state lines.

As a result, child support collections are up 40 percent, to \$11 billion, and there are 1.3 million fewer people on welfare today than there were when I took office. From the outset, however, I have also worked with members of both parties in Congress to achieve a national welfare reform bill that will make work and responsibility the law of the land. I made my principles for real welfare reform very clear from the beginning. First and foremost, it should be about moving people from welfare to work. It should impose time limits on welfare. It should give people the child care and the health care they need to move from welfare to work without hurting their children. It should crack down on child support enforcement and it should protect our children.

This legislation meets these principles. It gives us a chance we haven't had before -- to break the cycle of dependency that has existed for millions and millions of our fellow citizens, exiling them from the world of work that gives structure, meaning, and dignity to most of our lives.

We've come a long way in this debate. It's important to remember that not so very long ago, at the beginning of this very Congress, some wanted to put poor children in orphanages and take away all help for mothers simply because they were poor, young and unmarried. Last year the Republican majority in Congress sent me legislation that had its priorities backward. It was soft on work and tough on children. It failed to provide child care and health care. It imposed deep and unacceptable cuts in school lunches, child welfare and help for disabled children. The bill came to me twice and I vetoed it twice.

The bipartisan legislation before the Congress today is significantly better than the bills I vetoed. Many of the worst elements I objected to are out of it. And many of the improvements I asked for are included. First, the new bill is strong on work. It provides \$4 billion more for child care so that mothers can move from welfare to work, and protects their children by maintaining health and safety standards for day care. These things are very important. You cannot ask somebody on welfare to go to work if they're going to neglect their children in doing it.

It gives states powerful performance incentives to place people in jobs. It requires states to hold up their end of the bargain by maintaining their own spending on welfare. And it gives states the capacity to create jobs by taking money now used for welfare checks and giving it to employers as income subsidies as an incentive to hire people, or being used to create community service jobs.

Second, this new bill is better for children than the two I vetoed. It keeps the national nutritional safety net intact by eliminating the food stamp cap and the optional block grant. It drops the deep cuts and devastating changes in school lunch, child welfare and help for disabled children. It allows states to use federal money to provide vouchers for children whose parents can't find work after the time limits expire. And it preserves the national guarantee of health care for poor children, the disabled, pregnant women, the elderly and people on welfare.

Just as important, this bill continues to include the child support enforcement measures I proposed two years ago, the most sweeping crackdown on deadbeat parents in history. If every parent paid the child support they should, we could move 800,000 women and children off welfare immediately. With this bill we

say to parents, if you don't pay the child support you owe, we will garnish your wages, take away your drivers license, track you across state lines and, as necessary, make you work off what you owe. It is a very important advance that could only be achieved in legislation. I did not have the executive authority to do this without a bill.

So I will sign this bill. First and foremost because the current system is broken. Second, because Congress has made many of the changes I sought. And, third, because even though serious problems remain in the non-welfare reform provisions of the bill, this is the best chance we will have for a long, long time to complete the work of ending welfare as we know it by moving people from welfare to work, demanding responsibility and doing better by children.

However, I want to be very clear. Some parts of this bill still go too far. And I am determined to see that those areas are corrected. First, I am concerned that although we have made great strides to maintain the national nutritional safety net, this bill still cuts deeper than it should in nutritional assistance, mostly for working families with children. In the budget talks, we reached a tentative agreement on \$21 billion in food stamp savings over the next several years. They are included in this bill.

However, the congressional majority insisted on another cut we did not agree to, repealing a reform adopted four years ago in Congress, which was to go into effect next year. It's called the Excess Shelter Reduction, which helps some of our hardest pressed working families. Finally, we were going to treat working families with children the same way we treat senior citizens who draw food stamps today. Now, blocking this change, I believe -- I know -- will make it harder for some of our hardest pressed working families with children. This provision is a mistake, and I will work to correct it.

Second, I am deeply disappointed that the congressional leadership insisted on attaching to this extraordinarily important bill a provision that will hurt legal immigrants in America, people who work hard for their families, pay taxes, serve in our military. This provision has nothing to do with welfare reform. It is simply a budget-saving measure, and it is not right.

These immigrant families with children who fall on hard times through no fault of their own -- for example because they face the same risks the rest of us do from accidents, from criminal assaults, from serious illnesses -- they should be eligible for medical and other help when they need it. The

Republican majority could never have passed such a provision standing alone. You see that in the debate in the immigration bill, for example, over the Gallegly amendment and the question of education of undocumented and illegal immigrant children.

This provision will cause great stress for states, for localities, for medical facilities that have to serve large numbers of legal immigrants. It is just wrong to say to people, we'll let you work here, you're helping our country, you'll pay taxes, you serve in our military, you may get killed defending America -- but if somebody mugs you on a street corner or you get cancer or you get hit by a car or the same thing happens to your children, we're not going to give you assistance any more. I am convinced this would never have passed alone and I am convinced when we send legislation to Congress to correct it, it will be corrected.

In the meantime, let me also say that I intend to take further executive action directing the INS to continue to work to remove the bureaucratic roadblocks to citizenship to all eligible, legal immigrants. I will do everything in my power, in other words, to make sure that this bill lifts people up and does not become an excuse for anyone to turn their backs on this problem or on people who are generally in need through no fault of their own. This bill must also not let anyone off the hook. The states asked for this responsibility, now they have to shoulder it and not run away from it. We have to make sure that in the coming years reform and change actually result in moving people from welfare to work.

The business community must provide greater private sector jobs that people on welfare need to build good lives and strong families. I challenge every state to adopt the reforms that Wisconsin, Oregon, Missouri and other states are proposing to do, to take the money that used to be available for welfare checks and offer it to the private sector as wage subsidies to begin to hire these people, to give them a chance to build their families and build their lives. All of us have to rise to this challenge and see that -- this reform not as a chance to demonize or demean anyone, but instead as an opportunity to bring everyone fully into the mainstream of American life, to give them a chance to share in the prosperity and the promise that most of our people are enjoying today.

And we here in Washington must continue to do everything in our power to reward work and to expand opportunity for all people. The Earned Income Tax Credit which we expanded in 1993 dramatically, is now rewarding the work of 15 million working families. I am pleased that congressional efforts to gut this tax cut for the hardest pressed working people have been blocked. This legislation preserves the EITC and its benefits for working families. Now we must increase the minimum wage, which also will benefit millions of working people with families and help them to offset the impact of some of the nutritional cuts in this bill.

Through these efforts, we all have to recognize, as I said in 1992, the best anti-poverty program is still a job. I want to congratulate the members of Congress in both parties who worked together on this welfare reform legislation. I want to challenge them to put politics aside and continue to work together to meet our other challenges and to correct the problems that are still there with this legislation. I am convinced that it does present an historic opportunity to finish the work of ending welfare as we know it, and that is why I have decided to sign it.

Q Mr. President, some civil rights groups and children's advocacy groups still say that they believe that this is going to hurt children. I wonder what your response is to that. And, also, it took you a little while to decide whether you would go along with this bill or not. Can you give us some sense of what you and your advisers kind of talked about and the mood in the White House over this?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. Well, first of all, the conference was not completed until late last evening, and there were changes being made in the bill right up to the very end. So when I went to bed last night, I didn't know what the bill said. And this was supposed to be a day off for me, and when I got up and I realized that the conference had completed its work late last night and that the bill was scheduled for a vote late this afternoon, after I did a little work around the house this morning, I came in and we went to work I think about 11:00.

And we simply -- we got everybody in who had an interest in this and we went through every provision of the bill, line by line, so that I made sure that I understood exactly what had come out of the conference. And then I gave everybody in the administration who was there a chance to voice their opinion on it and to explore what their views were and what our options were. And as soon as we finished the meeting, I went in and had a brief talk with the Vice President and with Mr. Panetta, and I told them that I had decided that, on balance, I should sign the bill. And then we called this press conference.

Q And what about the civil rights groups --

THE PRESIDENT: I would say to them that there are some groups who basically have never agreed with me on this, who never agreed that we should do anything to give the states much greater flexibility on this if it meant doing away with the individual entitlement to the welfare check. And that is still, I think, the central objection to most of the groups.

My view about that is that for a very long time it's hard to say that we've had anything that approaches a uniform AFDC system when the benefits range from a low of \$187 a month to a high of \$655 a month for a family of three or four. And I think that the

system we have is not working. It works for half the people who just use it for a little while and get off. It will continue to work for them. I think the states will continue to provide for them.

For the other half of the people who are trapped on it, it is not working. And I believe that the child support provisions here, the child care provisions here, the protection of the medical benefits -- indeed, the expansion of the medical guarantee now from 1998 to 2002, mean that on balance these families will be better off. I think the problems in this bill are in the non-welfare reform provisions, in the nutritional provisions that I mentioned and especially in the legal immigrant provisions that I mentioned.

Q Mr. President, it seems likely there will be a kind of political contest to see who gets the credit or the blame on this measure. Senator Dole is out with a statement calling -- saying that you've been brought along to sign his bill. Are you concerned at all that you will be seen as having been kind of dragged into going along with something that you originally promised to do and that this will look like you signing onto a Republican initiative?

THE PRESIDENT: No. First of all, because I don't -- you know, if we're doing the right thing there will be enough credit to go around. And if we're doing the wrong thing there will be enough blame to go around. I'm not worried about that. I've always wanted to work with Senator Dole and others. And before he left the Senate, I asked him not to leave the budget negotiations. So I'm not worried about that.

But that's a pretty hard case to make, since I vetoed their previous bills twice and since while they were talking about it we were doing it. It's now generally accepted by everybody who has looked at the evidence that we effected what the New York Times called a quiet revolution in welfare. There are 1.3 million fewer people on welfare today than there were when I took office.

But there are limits to what we can do with these waivers. We couldn't get the child support enforcement. We couldn't get the extra child care. Those are two things that we had to have legislation to do. And the third thing is we needed to put all the states in a position where they had to move right now to try to create more jobs. So far -- I know that we had Wisconsin and earlier, Oregon, and I believe Missouri. And I think those are the only three states, for example, that had taken up the challenge that I gave to the governors in Vermont a couple of years ago to start taking the welfare payments and use it for wage subsidies to the private sector to actually create jobs. You can't tell people to go to work if there is no job out there.

So now they all have the power and they have financial incentives to create jobs, plus we've got the child care locked in and the medical care locked in and the child support enforcement locked in. None of this could have happened without legislation. That's why I thought this legislation was important.

Q Mr. President, some of the critics of this bill say that the flaws will be very hard to fix because that will involve adding to the budget and in the current political climate adding to the expenditures is politically impossible. How would you respond to that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it just depends on what your priorities are. For one thing, it will be somewhat easier to balance the budget now in the time period because the deficit this year is \$23 billion less than it was the last time we did our budget calculations. So we've lowered that base \$23 billion this year. Now, in the out years it still comes up, but there's some savings there that we could turn around and put back into this.

Next, if you look at -- my budget corrects it right now. I had \$42 billion in savings, this bill has about \$57 billion in savings. You could correct all these problems that I mentioned with money to spare in the gap there. So when we get down to the budget negotiations either at the end of this year or at the beginning of next year, I think the American people will say we can stand marginally smaller tax cuts, for example, or cut somewhere else to cure this problem of immigrants and children, to cure the nutritional problems. We're not talking about vast amounts of money over a six year period. It's not a big budget number and I think it can easily be fixed given where we are in the budget negotiations.

Q The last couple days in these meetings among your staff and this morning, would you say there was no disagreement among people in the administration about what you should do? Some disagreement? A lot of disagreement?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I would say that there was -- first of all, I have rarely been as impressed with the people who work in this administration on any issue as I have been on this. There was significant disagreement among my advisers about whether this bill should be signed or vetoed, but 100 percent of them recognized the power of the arguments on the other side. It was a very moving thing. Today the conversation was almost 100 percent about the merits of the bill and not the political implications of it. Because I think those things are very hard to calculate anyway. I think they're virtually impossible.

I have tried to thank all of them personally, including those who are here in the room and those who are not here, because they did have differences of opinion about whether we should sign or veto, but each side recognized the power of the arguments on the other side. And 100 percent of them, just like 100 percent of the Congress, recognized that we needed to change fundamentally the framework within which welfare operates in this country. The only question was whether the problems in the non-welfare reform provisions were so great that they would justify a veto and giving up what might be what I'm convinced is our last best chance to fundamentally change the system.

Q Mr. President, even in spite of all the details of this, you as a Democrat are actually helping to dismantle something that was put in place by Democrats 60 years ago. Did that give you pause, that overarching question?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, because it was put in place 60 years ago when the poverty population of America was fundamentally different than it is now. As Senator Moynihan -- you know, Senator Moynihan strongly disagrees with me on this -- but as he has pointed out repeatedly, when welfare was created the typical welfare recipient was a miner's widow with no education, small children, husband dies in the mine, no expectation that there was a job for the widow to do or that she ever could do it, very few out-of-wedlock pregnancies and births. The whole dynamics were different then.

So I have always thought that the Democratic party should be on the side of creating opportunity and promoting empowerment and responsibility for people, and a system that was in place 60 years ago that worked for the poverty population then is not the one we need now. But that's why I have worked so hard too to veto previous bills. That does not mean I think we can walk away from the guarantee that our party gave on Medicaid, the guarantee our party gave on nutrition, the guarantee our party gave in school lunches, because that has not changed. But the nature of the poverty population is so different now that I am convinced we have got to be willing to experiment, to try to work to find ways to break the cycle of dependency that keeps dragging folks down.

And I think the states are going to find out pretty quickly that they're going to have to be willing to invest something in these people to make sure that they can go to work in the ways that I suggested.

Yes, one last question.

Q Mr. President, you have mentioned Senator Moynihan. Have you spoken to him or other congressional leaders, especially congressional Democrats? And what was the conversation and reaction to your indication?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I talked to him as recently, I think, as about a week ago. When we went up to meet with the TWA families, we talked about it again. And, you know, I have an enormous amount of respect for him. And he has been a powerful and cogent critic of this whole move. I'll just have to hope that in this one case I'm right and he's wrong -- because I have an enormous regard for him. And I've spoken to a number of other Democrats, and some think I'm right and some don't.

This is a case where, you know, I have been working with this issue for such a long time -- a long time before it became -- to go back to Mr. Hume's question -- a long time before it became a cause celeb in Washington or anyone tried to make it a partisan political issue. It wasn't much of a political hot potato when I first started working on it. I just was concerned that the system didn't seem to be working. And I was most concerned about those who were trapped on it and their children and the prospect that their children would be trapped on it.

I think we all have to admit here -- we all need a certain level of humility today. We are trying to continue a process that I've been pushing for three and a half years. We're trying to get the legal changes we need in federal law that will work to move these folks to a position of independence where they can support their children and their lives as workers and in families will be stronger.

But if this were an easy question, we wouldn't have had the two and a half hour discussion with my advisers today and we'd all have a lot more answers than we do. But I'm convinced that we're moving in the right direction. I'm convinced it's an opportunity we should seize. I'm convinced that we have to change the two problems in this bill that are not related to welfare reform, that were just sort of put under the big shade of the tree here, that are part of this budget strategy with which I disagree. And I'm convinced when we bring those things out into the light of day we will be able to do it. And I think some Republicans will agree with us and we'll be able to get what we need to do to change it.

Thank you.

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON AMERICAN SECURITY IN A CHANGING WORLD
George Washington University
Washington, D. C.
August 5, 1996

Thank you very much. President Trachtenberg, I was in the neighborhood so I thought I'd drop by. Dean Harding, members of the George Washington University community, Congressman Cardin, Congressman King, Congressman Matsui. Senator McGovern, thank you for coming, sir. And by the way, thank you for writing your brave book about your daughter and for going around the country and talking about her. Thank you so much.

I want to thank the family members of the victims of Pan Am flight 103 who are here with me to day, as well as two of those who were held hostage in Iran back in 1980 who are here today -- and '79. Thank you for coming.

I'm pleased to be back here at George Washington, especially as you celebrate your 175th anniversary. President James Monroe signed the congressional charter establishing GW. I can only applaud his wisdom and hope that 175 years from now our administration will be associated with a similarly proud legacy. I think he would be very proud if he could see what GW has become.

Last night the Centennial Olympics came to an end. It was a great Olympics for America not only because of the triumphs of our athletes, but also because of the magnificent job done by the city of Atlanta and all the other hosts. But, in a larger sense, it was a great event not just for Americans, but for people everywhere who believe in peace and freedom, who believe in individual achievement and common effort.

I believe we love the Olympics because they work the way we think the world ought to work. They are possible because all different kinds of people come together in mutual respect and mutual acceptance of the rules of the games. No one wins by breaking their opponents legs or by bad-mouthing their opponents in a public forum. Instead, victory comes from doing well in a good way. And all who strive are honored, as we saw when our volunteers cleared the track for the brave, injured marathon runner who was the very last finisher in the race.

Most individuals and teams from the 197 competing nations did not win any medal, but they all had their chance, did their best and were better for their efforts. That is what we want for our country and the world at the edge of a new century and a new millennium.

In the world of the 21st century, the Olympic way will become possible in the lives of more people than ever before. More people than ever before will have the chance to live their

dreams. The explosion of knowledge, communication, travel and trade will bring us all closer together in the global village. But as we saw in that terrible moment of terror in Centennial Park, this new openness also makes us more vulnerable to the forces of destruction that know no national boundaries.

The pipe bomb reminded us, as did the murder of 19 fine American service men in Saudi Arabia and the still unresolved crash of TWA 800, that if we want the benefits of this new world we must defeat the forces who would destroy it by killing the innocent, to strike fear and burn hatred into the hearts of the rest of us. This is a lesson and a responsibility every American must accept. As the Mayor of Montoursville, a town of just 5,000 people in Pennsylvania that lost 21 of its brightest hopes of the future on TWA Flight 800, said, "No matter how secluded and how innocent we are, once we leave our community we're subject to the troubles of the outside world."

America faces three great challenges as we enter the 21st century: keeping the America Dream alive for all who are willing to work for it; bringing our own country together, not dividing it; and making sure America remains the strongest force in the world for peace and freedom, security and prosperity.

I come to this place of learning and reason, a place so focused on the future, to explain why we cannot meet our own challenges of opportunity and responsibility and community unless we also maintain our indispensable role of leadership for peace and freedom in the world.

The worldwide changes in how people work, live and relate to each other are the fastest and perhaps the most profound in history. Most of these changes are good: The Cold War is over; our country is at peace. Our economy is strong. Democracy and free markets are taking root on every continent. The blocks, the barriers, the borders that defined the world for our parents and grandparents are giving way, with the help of a new generation of extraordinary technology. Every day millions of people use laptops, modems, CD ROMs and satellites to send ideas and products and money all across the planet in seconds. The opportunities to build a safer world and a more prosperous future are enormous.

But for all the promise of our time, we are not free from peril. Fascism and Communism may be dead or discredited, but the forces of destruction live on. We see them in the sudden explosions of ethnic, racial, religious and tribal hatred. We see them in the reckless acts of rogue states. We see them especially in the dangerous webs of new threats of terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking, and the continuing threat that weapons of mass destruction might spread across the globe. These forces of destruction find opportunity in the very openness, freedom and progress we cherish.

We must recognize that modern technologies by themselves will not make for us a new world of peace and freedom. Technology can be used for good or evil. American leadership is necessary to assure that the consequences are good. That is why we have worked so hard to seize the opportunities created by change and to move swiftly and strongly against the new threats that change has produced.

To seize the opportunities, we are strengthening our alliances, dramatically reducing the danger of weapons of mass destruction, leading the march for peace and democracy throughout the world, and creating much greater prosperity at home by opening markets to American products abroad.

Our alliances are the bedrock of American leadership. As we saw in the Gulf War, in Haiti, and now in Bosnia, many other nations who share our goals will also share our burdens. In Europe we have supported the forces of democracy and reform in the former Soviet Union, the removal of Russian troops from the Baltics, and led the way to opening NATO's doors to Europe's new democracies through the Partnership for Peace, as Europe, the main battleground for the bloodiest century in history, is finally coming together peacefully.

In Asia we have revitalized our security alliance with Japan, joined with South Korea to promote lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula, and worked steadily to encourage the emergence of a strong, stable, open China. The end of the Cold War has also allowed us to lift the dark cloud of nuclear fear that had hung over our heads for 50 years. Today not a single Russian missile is pointed at our citizens or cities. We are cutting Russian and American arsenals by two-thirds from their Cold War height. We helped Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan to give up their nuclear weapons which were left on their land when the Soviet Russian dissolved.

We are working with Japan and Korea, and we have persuaded North Korea to freeze the dangerous nuclear program it had been developing for over a decade. We have advanced the struggle for peace and freedom. When people live free and at peace, we are more secure because they are less likely to resort to violence or to abuse human rights, and more likely to be better trading partners and partners in our common struggle against terrorism, international crime and drug trafficking, environmental degradation.

Because America is taking those risks for peace and democracy, the dictators are gone from Haiti. Democracy is back and the flow of desperate refugees has stopped. In Bosnia the snipers' killing fields have become children's playing fields once again. In Northern Ireland and the Middle East, though difficulties remain, conflicts that once seemed unsolvable are moving closer to resolution.

None of these struggles is easy. There is no guarantee of success. But we will continue to work for success and we will make a difference.

Finally, we have seized the opportunity to better our people's lives at home by opening markets abroad. The true measure of our security includes not only physical safety, but economic well-being as well. Decades from now people will look back on this period and see the most far-reaching changes in the world trading system in generations. Changes that are good for the American people. Changes that include 200 new trade agreements, including GATT and NAFTA, the Summit of the Americas, the Asian Pacific leaders' commitment to bring down trade barriers. Because of these changes America is the world's number one exporter again, and we have a million new high-paid jobs as a result.

Now, none of these achievements just happened. They came about because we work with others to share the risk and cost of engagement, because we use the power of our example and, where necessary, the example of our power. They happened because we were willing to make tough choices today knowing they would pay off for you tomorrow. Above all, they happen because we refuse to listen to those who said that with the Cold War over America could choose escapism over engagement. Had we done so we would have weakened the world's reach for freedom and tolerance and prosperity and undermined our own security and prosperity.

The fact is America remains the indispensable nation. There are times when America, and only America, can make a difference between war and peace, between freedom and repression, between hope and fear. Of course, we can't take on all the world's burden. We cannot become its policemen. But where our interests and values demand it and where we can make a difference, America must act and lead.

Nowhere is that responsibility more clear or more urgent than in the struggle against terrorism. No one is immune, whether you're riding a subway in Tokyo or a bus in Tel Aviv, whether you're window shopping in London or walking the streets in Moscow, whether you're doing your duty in Saudi Arabia or going to work in Oklahoma City. Terrorism has become an equal opportunity destroyer, with no respect for borders.

Whether we like it or not, in ways both good and bad we are living in an interdependent world. That's why we must break down the walls in our mind between foreign and domestic policy. And I might say, Mr. President, on this 175th anniversary, that is one of the intellectual objectives that I hope our great universities will commit themselves to.

The reality is our personal, community and national prosperity depend upon our policies on economics in trade at home and abroad. Our personal, community and national well-being depends upon our policies on the environment at home and abroad. Most dramatically, our personal, community and national security depend upon our policies on terrorism at home and abroad. We cannot advance the common good at home without also advancing the common good around the world. We cannot reduce the threats to our people without reducing threats to the world beyond our borders. That's why the fight against terrorism must be both a national priority and a national security priority.

We have pursued a concerted national and international strategy against terrorism on three fronts: First, beyond our borders, by working more closely than ever with our friends and allies; second, here at home, by giving law enforcement the most powerful counterterrorism tools available; and, third, in our airports and airplanes by increasing aviation security.

This will be a long, hard struggle. There will be setbacks along the way. But just as no enemy could drive us from the fight to meet our challenges and protect our values in World War II and the Cold War, we will not be driven from the tough fight against terrorism today. Terrorism is the enemy of our generation, and we must prevail.

First, on the international front, stopping the spread of terrorism clearly requires common action. The United States has a special responsibility to lead in this effort. Over the past four years, our intelligence services have been sharing more information than ever with other nations. We've opened up a law enforcement academy in Budapest which is training people from 23 nations, an FBI office in Moscow, and just last Friday, Congress gave us the funding for FBI offices in Cairo, Islamabad, Tel Aviv and Beijing.

We've requested more money for intelligence in 1997. This focus is making a difference. As the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded in its 1996 report on the Intelligence Authorization bill, the work of U.S. intelligence agencies against terrorism has been an example of effective coordination and information sharing.

I've also worked to rally other nations to the fight against terrorism -- last year at the U.N. General Assembly; this spring at the historic Summit of Peacemakers at Sharm el-Sheikh, where 29 nations, including 13 Arab nations for the first time condemned terrorism in Israel and anywhere else it occurs in the Middle East and throughout the world; at the G-7 Summit in Lyon and the recently held follow-on conference we called for in Paris, where we were represented ably by the Attorney General.

Now, the point of all these efforts with other countries is not to talk, but to act. More countries are acting with us. More countries are taking the "no sanctuary" pledge and living up to their extradition laws so that terrorists have no place to run or hide. More countries are helping us to shut down the gray markets that outfit terrorists with weapons and false documents.

Last week in Paris, the G-7 nations and Russia agreed to pursue a sweeping set of measures to prevent terrorists from acting, and to catch them if they do. And we set timetables with specific dates by which progress must be made. We're also working with Saudi Arabia to improve the security of our forces stationed there, so that we can continue to deter aggression by rogue states and stand against terrorism in the Middle East.

After Khobar Towers I immediately ordered investigation by the FBI and a commission headed by General Wayne Downing, which is to report to me later this month. While it's too early to reach conclusions, these investigations are moving aggressively in cooperation with our host. And we are working with the Saudi government to move almost all our troops to other bases to better protect them from terrorist attacks.

Even though we're working more closely with our allies than ever, and there is more agreement on what needs to be done than ever, we do not always agree. Where we don't agree, the United States cannot and will not refuse to do what we believe is right. That's why we have maintained or strengthened sanctions against states that sponsor terrorism: Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Sudan. You cannot do business with countries that practice commerce with you by day while funding or protecting the terrorists who kill you and your innocent civilians by night. That is wrong. I hope, and expect, that before long our allies will come around to accepting this fundamental truth.

This morning I signed into law the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act. It builds on what we've already done to isolate those regimes by imposing tough penalties on foreign companies that go forward with new investments in key sectors. The act will help to deny them the money they need to finance international terrorism or to acquire weapons of mass destruction. It will increase the pressure on Libya to extradite the suspects in the bombing of Pan Am 103.

With us today, as I said before, are some of those families and the loved ones of other victims of terrorism sponsored by Iran and Libya. Let me repeat the pledge I made to them earlier. We will not rest in our efforts to track down, prosecute and punish terrorists, and to keep the heat on those who support them. And we must not rest in that effort.

The second part of our strategy is to give American law enforcement officials the most powerful tools available to fight terrorism without undermining our civil liberties. In the wake of Oklahoma City, I strengthened the terrorism bill I had previously sent to Congress, but which had not then been passed. Despite the vow of Congress to act quickly, it took a year before that bill came to my desk to be signed.

The bill had some very good points. It made terrorism a federal offense, expanded the role of the FBI, imposed the death penalty for terrorism. As strong as it was, however, it did not give our law enforcement officials other tools they needed and that they had asked for, including increased wiretap authority for terrorists to parallel that which we have for people involved in organized crime now, and chemical markers for the most common explosives so that we can more easily track down bomb makers.

After the bombing in Atlanta, Congress said it would reconsider these and other measures. I immediately called the congressional leadership to the White House and urged them to put together a package and vote it into law before they left for the August recess last Friday. I am disappointed and, more importantly, the America people are disappointed that that job was not done. These additional measures would save lives. They would make us all more secure. When the Congress returns from the August recess, we will take them up again and we must get the job done.

There is more I will ask Congress to do. Next month I will submit to Congress the international crime control act that our Justice, State and Treasury Departments drafted at my request, because more and more, terrorism, international organized crime and drug trafficking are going hand in hand. This bill expands our fight against money laundering, so criminals and terrorists will have a tougher time financing their activities. It strengthens our extradition powers and border controls to keep more criminals and terrorists out of America. It increases the ability of American law enforcement to prosecute those who commit violent crimes against Americans abroad. Congress should pass it.

And, once again, I urge the Senate to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention, so that we can eliminate chemical weapons stockpiles and give our law enforcement new powers to investigate and prosecute people planning attacks with such weapons. We have seen the terrible, destructive impact of sarin gas in the Tokyo subway. Within a month of that attack, Japan's Diet ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention, but we still have not done so. If the Chemical Weapons Convention were in force today, it would be much more difficult for terrorists to acquire chemical weapons. They are not waiting, and we shouldn't either.

Finally, the third front of our struggle against terrorism at the airports and airplanes that bring us all closer together. Air travel remains the safest form of transportation. And our airlines have the best safety record and security record in the business. But that's a small consolation when a single attack can take so many lives.

Last year we began field testing new high-tech explosive detection machines in Atlanta and San Francisco. We significantly increased security at our airports, and the FAA created a new government and industry panel to review airline security.

After the TWA crash, I ordered new measures to increase the security of air travel. As any of you who have flown in recent days will have noticed, we're doing more hand searches and machine screening of luggage. We're requiring preflight inspections for every plane flying to or from the United States - every plane, every cabin, every cargo hold, every time. The Vice President is leading a commission on aviation security that is to report back to me within 45 days with an action plan to deploy machines that can detect the most sophisticated explosives and other needed changes.

Now, I know all this has led to some extra inconvenience for air travelers, and it may lead eventually to a modest increase in the cost of air travel. But the increased safety and peace of mind will be worth it.

So, greater international cooperation, stronger American law enforcement, safer air travel -- these are the fronts of our concerted strategy against terrorism. Much of this work by law enforcement, intelligence and military professionals goes unheralded, but we are getting results. For example, we prevented attacks on the United Nations and the Holland Tunnel in New York. We thwarted an attempt to bomb American passenger planes from the skies over the Pacific. We convicted those responsible for the World Trade Center bombing and arrested suspects in the Oklahoma City and Unabomber cases. We've tracked down terrorists around the world and extradited more terrorists in four years than in the previous 12.

But I want to make it clear to the American people that while we can defeat terrorists, it will be a long time before we defeat terrorism. America will remain a target because we are uniquely present in the world, because we act to advance peace and democracy, because we have taken a tougher stand against terrorism, and because we are the most open society on Earth. But to change any of that, to pull our troops from the world's trouble spots, to turn our backs on those taking risks for peace, to weaken our opposition against terrorism, to curtail the freedom that is our birth right would be to give terrorism a victory it must not and will not have.

In this fight, as in so many other challenges around the world, American leadership is indispensable. In assuming our leadership in the struggle against terrorism we must be neither reluctant nor arrogant, but realistic, determined, and confident. And we must understand that in this battle we must deploy more than police and military resources. Every one of you counts; every American counts.

Our greatest strength is our confidence. And that is the target of the terrorists. Make no mistake about it: The bombs that kill and maim innocent people are not really aimed at them, but at the spirit of our whole country and the spirit of freedom. Therefore, the struggle against terrorism involves more than the new security measures I have ordered and the others I am seeking. Ultimately, it requires the confident will of the American people to retain our convictions for freedom and peace and to remain the indispensable force in creating a better world at the dawn of a new century.

Everywhere I travel on behalf of our country I encounter people who look up to us because of what we stand for and what we're willing to stand against. I have said this before, but when Hillary and I visited the Olympic Village I was so moved by the athletes who came up to me and talked about what America had meant to their country: a young Croatian athlete who thanked me for our efforts there, not long after Secretary Brown's plane crashed and Secretary Kantor had finished the mission; an Irish athlete who thanked me for our efforts to bring peace in Northern Ireland; a Palestinian athlete who said that he had -- he came from a very old people, but they never had an Olympic team until they made peace with Israel, and that many people wanted to keep that peace.

This responsibility is great, and I know it weighs heavily on many Americans. But we should embrace this responsibility because at this point in time no one else can do what we can do to advance peace and freedom and democracy -- and because it is necessary at this point in time for our own peace and freedom and prosperity.

As we remember the Centennial Olympics the weeks of courage and triumph, the wonder of the world's youth bound together by the rules of the game in genuine mutual respect, let us resolve to work for a world that looks more like that in the 21st century, to stand strong against the moments of terror that would destroy our spirit, to stand for the values that have brought us so many blessings, values that have made us at this pivotal moment the indispensable nation.

Thank you very much.