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July 10, 1998

TO: Marcia Berry, Office of the First Lady

THROUGH: Robert Laing, PAO, USIS Hong Kong *h*

FROM: Barbara Zigli, APAO, USIS Hong Kong *B*

SUBJECT: Roundtable transcript

Enclosed is our final draft of the complete transcript of the First Lady's roundtable in Hong Kong July 3. As you may recall, we released an approved transcript of the opening remarks of the First Lady and the Secretary of State while they were still in Hong Kong. However, we regret that we were unable to finish the transcript of the entire roundtable before the Presidential party left the city.

In case you would like to have the transcript for your records, we are enclosing it, along with a version on diskette (WordPerfect 6.1) and the original tape.

Regards.

DRAFT TRANSCRIPT

ROUNDTABLE WITH DISTINGUISHED WOMEN

**Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center
July 3, 1998**

PARTICIPANTS:

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
SECRETARY OF STATE MADELEINE K. ALBRIGHT
BETTY TUNG, WIFE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE C.H. TUNG
ANSON CHAN, CHIEF SECRETARY FOR
ADMINISTRATION
CHEUNG MAN-YEE, DIRECTOR OF BROADCASTING,
RADIO TELEVISION HONG KONG
FANNY CHEUNG, CHAIR, EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
COMMISSION
LENA CHI, DEPUTY LAW OFFICER
CHRISTINE LOH, CITIZENS PARTY LEGISLATOR
ANNA WU, CHAIR, HONG KONG CONSUMER COUNCIL
DENISE YUE, SECRETARY FOR THE TREASURY
AUDREY EU, CHAIR, BAR ASSOCIATION
ROSANNA WONG, CHIEF OF HOUSING AUTHORITY**

BETTY TUNG: Good morning everyone. Since we are sort of pressed for time, shall we get on with it? I didn't realize we do have some gentlemen attending, but we're not going to be intimidated.

First Lady, Secretary Albright: Last night, you came. My husband and I were so impressed by your presence. Particularly you, Mrs. Clinton, you are what I expected you are: a kind, considerate, beautiful person. You are a mother, a wife, just like some of us, me particularly, who are now no longer professional persons working for a living, and I think that is also important, to be good at home. Well, Secretary Albright, you are also a wonderful person, and you are global. (Laughter.) You help the President run such a big country. I'm not a political person and I know very little about politics. But your work in the humanitarian side impressed me greatly.

So here, in Hong Kong, we people of Hong Kong wholeheartedly welcome you both, and all your colleagues. We're delighted and honored that everyone can join us here this morning. All of us have been following President Clinton's historical visit in China. Day after day, we have seen on our television screens compelling images of a new understanding being forged between our two nations. We have also seen and greatly admired your personal commitment, Mrs. Clinton, and also the voices of women are fully heard in this historical dialogue. Mrs. Clinton, in Shanghai, you invoked the old Chinese saying about "women holding up half of the sky." Having seen the contribution that you, Secretary Albright, and other outstanding women have made to the success of this trip, I am tempted to suggest that women can indeed hold up half of a summit. (Laughter.)

You have spent the last few days seeing China's rich past, its dynamic present, and promising future. Here in Hong Kong, you are seeing the cosmopolitan face of China and the fusion of the East and West at their best. Although Hong Kong is going through a testing time now, with Asia's economic crisis, we are invigorated and inspired by the promise of the new century. Here in Hong Kong, women are playing a strong role in shaping that future. To give you an example, and I'll do this very quickly, the Secretary for Health and Welfare, we have a lady, Katherine (sp) Fok, heading that, and I'll read very quickly the role of our other women leaders. In the civil service and the government: Secretary for the Treasury, Commission for Labor, Commissioner of ICAC, Commissioner of Immigration, Director of Home Affairs, Commissioner for Transport, Director of USD, Director of Broadcasting, Director of Health, Director of Administration, and also, of course, our very beautiful Mrs. Anson Chan (laughter) who is our Chief Secretary and in our own words this is the number two in the government and the civil service, and she is — together with my husband, she leads Hong Kong.

On the panel here, I will very, very quickly, if I can find my list of paper, introduce to you Professor Fanny Cheung there. She is the Chairperson for the Equal Opportunities Commission. And Lena Chi over there is — Department of Justice, Deputy Law Officer of the Department of Justice. No, that is Audrey Eu, I'm sorry. (Laughter) Because I only met her for the first time. Audrey, you are the Chairperson of the Law...?

AUDREY EU: Bar Association.

MRS. TONG: Thank you. And Denise Yue. Denise Yue is the Secretary for the Treasury. And why don't you introduce yourself?

LENA CHI: All right, I'll do that. My name is Lena Chi. I'm from the Department of Justice. And in my former life I was a physiotherapist, and I'm still qualified. (Laughter.)

MRS. TONG: Anson, of course, needs no introduction. But I wanted to add, maybe she is the youngest and most glamorous grandmother, too.

ANSON CHAN: Thank you.

MRS. TUNG: And Anna Wu, she is a very accomplished, distinguished lawyer by profession, and she's serving as a volunteer as Chairperson for our Consumer Council. And Miss Man-ye Cheung there looks after our broadcasting. And Christine Loh over there is not just a very brilliant politician, she's also our Legislative Councillor. And Rosanna Wong takes care of our housing, and also she's a Legislative Councillor. Am I right?

ROSANNA WONG: Executive Council.

MRS. TUNG: I was told that time is getting very tight, so I shall by conclude by saying that here we are all Bs and Bs, perhaps with the exception of me. That is not "bed and breakfast," I mean "brains and beauty." (Laughter.)

In Hong Kong, we do things perhaps a little differently, ladies, at home. We do make sure that our voices are heard, and the decisions made perhaps not entirely by us, but yes, we do see that things get done our way. We do not confront, but we do get things done our way. Sometimes it is not unusual when we are gathered together with friends for dinners, perhaps social evenings, to hear some of our husbands raise their voice and say, "Hey, we want equal rights. We don't often have our voice heard, so we are protesting." That may sound — it's supposed to sound funny, nobody's laughing. (Laughter)

It is true in Hong Kong we are, the women's position is a little bit -- not only a little bit but quite a bit -- higher than perhaps some of our neighboring countries, so with that, I conclude what I want to say this morning. And I also apologize to you, Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Albright, that I have to take my leave a little later, not without hearing from you and what you have to say first. Because this morning we have an international humanitarian strategy closing of 14 countries gathered here in Hong Kong for a discussion. So I shall go and attend that a little bit later, and I hope you will excuse me for my absence later. Thank you very much.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you very much, Mrs. Tung, and Anson Chan, I'm very glad to see you here and I would like to thank all the panelists very much for coming. I know that your husband is the head of the town, but it seems to be run by women. (Laughter.) So it's great to see everybody here. It's wonderful to be here to be able to learn about the dramatic changes taking place in Hong Kong from the people who are making things happen. I was here a year ago for the ceremony and it's wonderful to be back and to have a chance to see you. I also would like to thank Mrs. Tung for this beautiful scarf. Women's intuition knew that purple was my color. (Laughter.)

As women in your respective fields, you are pathfinders, and in that we all have something in common. Since President Clinton named me as the first female Secretary of State, I have found some important benefits to working closely with women colleagues. The understanding is there, and we all face the same challenges, and frank and honest talk, and a commitment to take each

other's phone calls. There are now nine women foreign ministers in the world, and I always take their calls first. (Laughter, applause.)

But as leaders in fields from politics and law to finance and journalism, you are showing the way not just for the next generation of women, but for the future of Hong Kong and the region. And those of you that are in the government have managed Hong Kong's reversion to Chinese sovereignty with great aplomb, maintaining the confidence of citizens and business alike. And this is a process we have watched with great interest, and I'm eager, as is the First Lady, to hear all your thoughts about what lies ahead.

Those of you who work as lawyers, advocates, and journalists are helping to ensure that every citizen enjoys full and equal protection under the law. And as you know, the United States strongly supports those efforts to maintain and expand the rule of law. In the United States and Hong Kong and elsewhere, a legal system is always a work in progress, and what you do here has important implications for the future. And I know that those of you working in finance or business find yourselves in truly uncharted territory these days, as Hong Kong copes with the effects of Asia's financial crisis. I want to stress our support and our confidence in what you are doing.

In all these areas, you are accumulating experience that may be of value elsewhere in China, and that will certainly be invaluable to those who follow you. When women and men take on new challenges and try to make themselves agents of change, they usually find that there is no manual on how to do it. And nobody knows that better than our First Lady.

Our First Lady, I think has managed in a most remarkable way to combine her professional life with that of First Lady of the United States. She is someone who has had a career in many of the areas that you all represent in one form or another. She has been a professor, she has been a lawyer, a legal aid advocate, and so when we've visited legal centers she is able to ask the most penetrating questions because she's been there. She also has had a great interest in children, and she is someone that American women look up to. She is also a woman that is I think America's best ambassador abroad. She has traveled widely, representing the United States in an incomparable way, showing the fact that American women are strong and smart and determined, and that our partnership with the men is something that makes things work. It is my great pleasure to introduce to you the First Lady of the United States and my very good friend, Hillary Rodham Clinton

(Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. Thank you Madeleine, thank you Betty, thank you all for taking time out of your very busy schedules to be here. Let me just make a few quick points, because I came to listen more than to talk. I'm very anxious to hear from the extraordinary women gathered on this panel, and as I look at this audience, I see more extraordinary women who have made an accomplished contribution to what has gone on here in Hong Kong.

There are several reasons that Secretary Albright and I are here together at this meeting. The first is that we both believe strongly that the voices of women and the contributions of women have to be recognized at the highest levels of government, of business, and throughout society. One of the commitments that Secretary Albright made and that she and I articulated in a speech together at the State Department shortly after she became the first woman Secretary of State for our country, is that women's concerns and voices had to be part of the calculus of American foreign policy — that there were issues that women had a particular interest in that the United States Government had to pay attention to. And we have worked very hard these last several years to make that apparent, whether it is support for family planning, or an understanding of the economic dislocations that occur around the world that affect women primarily, or continuing to press for literacy and health care and other basic rights that are often denied women in many societies. Secondly, we both feel very strongly that much of what is going on in the world today as we move into the 21st century is being shaped both directly and indirectly by women: in their private lives, at home, as Betty referred, and in the public arena -- in so many different capacities. And that as women, we want to be supportive of these changes and of the women who are putting themselves on the front line to bring these changes about.

As I've traveled, both with my husband and alone, I've always sought out women such as the ones here, both publicly in a setting such as this and often privately, to learn more myself about what is happening in the lives of women in different settings, and also to learn how in either a direct or indirect way I personally or the United States can be supportive of the positive changes that are occurring. That is one of the reasons why I went to Beijing in 1995 to the International Women's Conference that I'm sure some of you also attended, to speak out strongly on behalf of the basic principles that affect women's lives, and to try to do what we could to promote a platform for action that would result in transforming change. Because as we have had these conversations, and as I've seen changes occurring, it is apparent to me that we are making progress, but that the progress is faster in some settings than in others.

Now when I was in Beijing and Shanghai, I had the privilege of meeting with a number of Chinese women who spoke openly and freely about what they were doing to bring about changes in their own particular areas of expertise and interest. So whether it was the panel discussion that I held in Beijing last Saturday, where six women were among the most spirited that I've ever discussed anything with anywhere in the world, or visiting the legal aid center in Beijing that is operated in association with Beijing University, or visiting a women's retraining center in Shanghai where many of the women whose jobs are being lost to economic transformation are seeking help and assistance, I was struck over and over again by the way that women in China are doing all they can to change attitudes that would hold them back and make a very solid contribution to their own personal development and to the building of a new China.

But I was particularly struck by a private comment that a woman made to me, when she said, "Well, now that you have met us, do you think that we are like Hong Kong women?" (Laughter.) And I thought I knew what she meant, but I wasn't quite sure, and I said, "Well, now, exactly what do you mean by that question?" She said, "You know, assertive, forward-looking, standing

on our own.” And I said, “Yes, I think you are like Hong Kong women.” (Laughter and applause.) But I thought that it would be better for me to come to the source of such a comment and to have an opportunity to listen to some, very few, but some of the women who are leaders in Hong Kong in every sector of society.

So I appreciate greatly these women taking time out of their extraordinarily busy schedules to be here to talk about what is happening in Hong Kong, what challenges and opportunities are available certainly for all people, but in particular for women and girls growing up in Hong Kong today facing this new century. So with that, I would like to turn first to a woman I had the privilege of meeting just a few weeks ago in Washington in preparation for this trip, and whom I am greatly admiring of, and the work that she is doing and the leadership that she is providing. So, Anson, if you would start off the conversation, please.

ANSON CHAN:

Anson Chan: Thank you very much Mrs. Clinton, Secretary Albright, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. First of all I'd like to say that I'm delighted to see amongst the audience several gentlemen, and although I had no part in the organization of this gathering today I'm sure you're not here just as token men. I think it is so important for men to be included in a discussion of this sort so that you can hear directly from women who are involved -- whether in the home, in the professions, or in the business world -- our feeling some of the burdens, some of the joy and some of the difficulties that we face.

Because I think that for career women — in a sense we all are career women -- and for those of us that are married, it is very very important in my view and my experience in the civil service that our husband, spouse or our partner support us. Talking about support is easy but in practice it is not easy because I think that for professional women, particularly for those that are reasonably successful in their careers, it takes a very understanding husband, and that degree of support is crucial in my view. I don't whether this view is shared by other married women, but to have that support the husband needs to be confident about himself, at ease with himself and not afraid and not apprehensive that the wife's success, whether it is in the career or what-not, outshines him. And I have been very very fortunate in my own case that I have such an understanding and supportive husband who is 100% confident of his own standing, his own work, but who feels at the same time great pride in my success and in my work. My husband often describes me as the center of gravity in the family, and I think that that is the greatest compliment that I've received. My husband is my greatest fan. I have of course many fans, which I'm very lucky to have, and I want to stress that because for those of you who are married, this is very very important.

I have been very fortunate to have been brought up in Hong Kong, to have been educated in Hong Kong, although Hong Kong is not my birthplace. But I think here in Hong Kong, and I'm sure Fanny in a minute will comment on this whether she agrees or doesn't agree -- I think women in Hong Kong are fortunate in the sense that for many decades now we have had equal

opportunities, equal opportunities at education, at choices of profession, and we have had the support of our family. We have been fortunate also to have assistance in the family, whether it has been from our mother, our grandmother, grandfather or all from domestic service. And that has enabled many more of us in Hong Kong, at the same time as mother and as wife, to also pursue a career, and that is something that we ought not to underestimate.

I often tell my husband, and I think he agrees, that for a woman to combine a career with their responsibilities as a mother and housewife is not an easy thing, and we need the support and understanding of the community and our families. I want to conclude with just one remark. I think democracy means choice, and choice also means that a woman has the right to decide for herself whether she wants to be a professional career woman or whether she wants to be just a homemaker and just a wife and mother. I think all are equally commendable. In some sense I think it is more commendable that some women choose to forego a career that they are perfectly competent to take on in order to concentrate in being a good wife and good mother. And in this fast-changing world, whether it is in Hong Kong or elsewhere, that decision is a courageous decision, and it is a decision we should all support because, as we all know, a great deal of social problems arise because women in their pursuit of careers perhaps do not place equal emphasis and importance on their role as a mother and as a wife. So I'd just like to continue on that. (Applause.)

MRS. CLINTON: I think that the point about choices is an especially significant one because that is truly what we're attempting to create: A world in which women's choices will be as respected as men's choices, and those choices can run the full gamut of human opportunity and development. I'd like now to turn to Fanny, whose name was mentioned by Anson and who has been very much involved in ensuring that what is written on paper about equal opportunities for women is actually put into practice.

FANNY CHEUNG: Thank you. I'd like to react to some of Anson's earlier remarks about the need for support from men. We have changed a lot as women throughout the century as we look at our grandparents. Our grandmothers' roles are very different from our roles now as women. But men's roles have not changed that much, and if they don't change along with women I think that's where the problems lie. And therefore I encourage men to join our women's forum to understand the changing roles of women, and that's where I think equal opportunity should also go, toward changing their attitude. Having the long arm of the law is only one aspect of ensuring that there's a safety net to help women who may be discriminated on the ground of their gender, on the grounds of their marital status, on the grounds of pregnancy, which is still quite common in some sectors of Hong Kong.

I think that we on the podium here may be fortunate. We may serve as role models for women, but I don't think we are a reflection of the typical women in Hong Kong. We have the opportunity because of our access to education. I think that is the asset in Hong Kong. Educational enrollment has been quite equal since '70 because of forced mandatory and free

education. That has given women a lot of opportunities to advance, whereas previously with limited resources and without free education women usually had to go out to work to support their brothers to go to school. But that has been changed since the '70s, and that's why you see more professional women coming out. And also as Anson said, we have support from the family to deal with housework. We have domestic helpers; that's fortunate, but even when the women go back home, oftentimes she is still the person responsible for most of the household chores and responsibilities -- taking the children to the doctor, taking them to piano lessons, and to do all the other chores. So if women are the only ones who are responsible for the household responsibilities, they are still the bearers, and we have to make men participate in the family as well as to participate in public life as women are taking on the dual role.

So these are areas I think we need to push on. And we have to start from childhood, and that is one area that the Equal Opportunity Commission is taking on, and that is long-term education from childhood. We have to go to preschool, and to primary and to secondary school to change the concept. The older generation would probably inhibit the politically incorrect attitudes with the long arm of the law, but they probably would only give us lip service. Just like everyone we says, "We believe in equality, we believe in freedom, equal opportunity," but when it get to personal decision oftentimes prejudices would come out. So we believe with long-term education, hopefully with the next few generations we will build up a truly equal society. Thank you.

MRS. CLINTON: I know that Anna Wu has some work that she has been doing and involved in for some time that bears on this issue of human rights, and of course I define that very broadly to include the ability to make the choices that are right for one's life. So Anna, would you please comment.

ANNA WU: Thank you very much Mrs. Clinton, Secretary Albright. Good morning to you and welcome Mrs. Tung and Mrs. Chan. Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. One of the areas of work that I do is in the area of consumer promotion. I'm a consumer advocate. Women buy, and that is where our bargaining power lies. Women make the choices. This is called consumer power, and this is called bargaining power. Now we can choose to buy green, we can teach our children to respect equal opportunities. We are agents of and for change, and women act and react to society constantly, and thus we shape it and thus are being shaped by it. Women's issues of course are global issues. These include economic standing of women, the career roads, other roads, and where the balance lies, and we constantly try to fight for equal partnership with men. Now women have more choices today, and for the more fortunate in today's community we can exercise those choices. But for the less fortunate however, our job is to help create those opportunities for them. Looking ahead and down the road, I fear that we will have to look at what science does for women and how it has impacted on our lives. One of the most controversial issues today is the role played by reproductive technology on women. As we are all aware, given today's nature of human beings, the reproductive role is confined to women. However, we have those choices to be able to set our time and future, and we will have to think about the ethical issues that evolve from there. As society changes we of course have to look at

the allocation of responsibilities and rights between men and women, and those are the many aspects that will affect the future of the role of women. I tend to think that discussing the issues relating to women are not only universal needs but also discussion required to the benefit of human kind, not just womanhood. I cannot say more emphatically that there is nothing worse than women who are grouchy, feeling non-positive, feeling confined, feeling completely dependent on another person. And I'm sure divorce lawyers will tell you the same thing, and that's where we have to stop. Thank you very much.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you, Anna. You know, I appreciate very much your quick survey of some of the issues that are going to be coming up with respect to women and men in the future. Because certainly a lot of the ethical issues that we will confront with the advances in biomedicine as Anna said, as the reproductive technology, will be very clear challenges to how we define ourselves as women and men, as human beings, and I think that that is something we will have to contend with.

Now I know that you mentioned the consumer area, and I think that is an especially important one for people to develop more confidence in themselves and to stand up for their rights under the most fundamental level of buying products that are worthwhile products. But that is part of the larger issue of the rule of law, and I'd like to ask Audrey, who is the current chair of the Bar Association, to speak about the role lawyers are playing in helping to enforce rights that enable people to make the choices because it is clear that those of us sitting on this panel are privileged, fortunate people and through good fortune and hard work and families and all the other ingredients that have given us the opportunity, we are in positions where our voices can be heard, but that is not true for the vast majority of women and men in any society. So the rule of law is particularly critical to enable people to have their rights protected, and could you in particular talk about the role of lawyers?

AUDREY EU: Yes, perhaps I'll just give you, Mrs. Clinton, some information on numbers. We have divided the profession, so we have solicitors and barristers. And the Hong Kong Bar Association is the organization that all practicing barristers who are in private practice will have to join. It is compulsory membership, and we have about 617 members, and in all that about 100 are women. And we have what we call Senior Counsel that used to be called Queen's Counsel and now called Senior Counsel since the changeover. We have about 50 altogether, but four are women.

So you can see that there used to be less women of the senior profession in law because one of the reasons is historical — because we didn't have a university offering a law degree until 1969. Therefore people who did their university education earlier than that basically had to go to England basically to qualify as a lawyer, and that was not an opportunity open to many women. But now we have more and more women lawyers, and in that I include solicitors because in the last year the Hong Kong University, which is one of two universities offering a law degree, had their intake last year and out of that 70% were women. So you can see that it is a very attractive profession for women.

And I noticed that when you said earlier that the lady in Shanghai or Beijing asking this question if she is like Hong Kong women, and she said that meant assertive. So that of course is a good adjective. Another term is aggressive, and that is the feeling that people had when I did the law degree in Hong Kong. I remember that in the early '70s, people were horrified to learn that you did learn. They act shocked. I don't want to talk to you. They had this idea that women in law weren't fit to be a woman or wife in particular. I was severely warned by my pupil master, including people in the same class as me, if I wanted to be a barrister that I don't expect to get married. Perhaps a lot of the senior women lawyers before didn't get married. So it's a very big change from the early '70s to now. We have among us here one of the women high court judges, Mrs. Bucarri (sp.?). Her husband is a permanent judge of our Court of Final Appeal. She one of the four lady high court judges. We have a few district court judges and of course magistrates who are women as well. It is a profession where we are attracting more women, and one of the reasons is probably because of the assertive attitude of women, and I think language is a very important factor. If you want to do law, you must be outspoken and express yourself, and in that sense women are better than men.

You ask about how we are able to help our people in the legal matters, and I think Anna mentioned divorce. And again I'd like to tell that when I was a teenager I remember there was one divorced lady that lived in a house of a gentlemen where I was having a private English lesson. You never heard her speak, and she always tiptoed and always held her head low, and people referred to her in whispers because she was a divorced women. It was a stigma attached to divorced women, and the divorce rate was low. I can't tell the exact figures. Our divorce rate has now risen dramatically. It is not a good thing to cite divorce as advancement for women, but in a way it is, because people refer to choices. It is to be able to make a choice that you can get a divorce. ___ It is of welfare we now have because of legal aid because women are suffering in very difficult circumstances. In Hong Kong, a lot of the men are not doing very well and are going back to the mainland to get a mainland wife, and they have difficulty coming here. And when they come here, they get discriminated against. They have the accent here, and the way they dress and look. They live in very difficult circumstances and have very much particular problems in Hong Kong society. And if the Hong Kong women want to divorce, because of the legal aid they can do so. Therefore that is why the divorce rate has risen. If you are able to make the choice and have your own career, that also encouraged divorce.

MRS. CLINTON: That's a very interesting comment. You know, when I was at the legal aid center in Beijing I met one of their clients, a woman who had a very abusive husband, and she and her 12-year-old daughter really did not know where to go to have any kind of help, or not even really aware of the 1992 changes in the Family and Marriage Law that China adopted. But she found her way to the legal aid center, and they were able to get her a divorce, but she was left in a very difficult position because the housing in which she lived was assigned by her husband's work unit, and she had nowhere else to go. There was no mechanism to help her find a separate place, so she had to remain in the house with her abusive ex-husband while the law center is looking for an opportunity for her to move out and also to enforce her child support order. But certainly the look of relief on that woman's face said volumes to me about choices, because she

at least felt a legal sense of freedom from her abusive husband, and that is something that you know is a very significant step in the life of an individual.

President Jiang told my husband and me that he thought China now had too many engineers and too few lawyers. And my husband said, “You know, in the United States we say just the opposite — we have far too many lawyers and not enough engineers.” So we’re thinking of a swap (laughter) to try to right the imbalance in both countries. Now I know that Lena Chi is involved in a mutual legal assistance in the Justice Department, and perhaps you could explain how that works and how it perhaps affects some of the issues we’ve been discussing.

LENA CHI: My area is actually mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, so in a way I suppose we’re involved in international cooperation in enforcing the orders or requests or judgments of other jurisdictions. But if I may, what I’d like to talk about is to follow on a topic that is quite dear to my heart in relation to women. Earlier on, Audrey mentioned the worry that some people had about not being able to marry or not getting married if you did law, and Anson mentioned that the support of the family was also very important, particularly support of one’s spouse. In my case I got married before I did law, so that worry was never a real worry to me. (Laughter.) And as in Anson’s case, I’m also very fortunate in that my husband supported me throughout the time even before when I applied for a legal training scholarship.

But I think to maintain that support of family, what’s very important is communication. Communication not just with your spouse but also with your kids. I’ve got two young kids, and I work fairly long hours in the office. I have a lot of other engagements as well, and I have to juggle amongst a lot of other commitments, engagements, activities, personal interests as well. So it’s important for my husband to understand me, to see this creature that he married, you know, turn from a docile health worker in the hospital to suddenly this assertive or aggressive woman working in the Department of Justice, working long hours because of the nature of the work I do, receiving calls in the middle of the night because I’m involved in international mutual cooperation. So I get calls in the middle of the night, and he’ll say, “Here’s another strange man looking for you.” (Laughter.)

I think communication is important and I try to remind myself to take time to communicate, to explain to my kids why is it that I can’t be home before 8 o’clock or 8:30 generally, and my kids say, “Oh mom, other mummies, why can’t you be like other mummies, they come pick their kids up after school at 5 o’clock or 6 o’clock. They’re there watching TV with the kids.” But I think it’s important, I know it sounds a bit tired, but quality is more important than quantity. And one thing that reinforced, I think, my efforts and made me feel very happy and warm inside was a recent conversation I had with my son. He’s twelve. He’s going into the rebellious stage — he was in that for the past 12 months. So recently I’ve been trying to check on his times going to bed, and he’s saying, “Oh, Mom, I don’t need you to interfere with my bedtime hours, and I don’t need you to tell me what to wear and what not to wear, what to do, what not to do.” And then I, in some sort of resentment, said, “Right, you don’t need me for anything.” And he said, “No. I need you for heart-to-heart talks. I need you to be somebody I can confide in. So you’re useful,

Mom.” (Laughter.) So I thought, in a way, at least my efforts at trying to talk with my son to build up a stronger bond rather than just being there caring for him, trying to make the time we spend together quality time instead of just sitting in front of the telly watching television stars singing on TV or whatever, I think it’s paid off.

But this juggling of time is something that I think we all face, you know. And one area that I think we do miss out on is women’s health. You know, we’re busy rushing to this engagement, rushing to that engagement, and with my health background, I’m fairly conscious that a lot of us, particularly people maybe who are from a say, housing estate, housewife for example, who’s very busy taking care of kids, who may not have the luxury of having domestic help, not just them, other people who are very powerful women or women in charge of a lot of matters, they tend to forget to exercise.

MRS. CLINTON: This is getting very personal and embarrassing. (Laughter.)

LENA CHI: No, I talk to my friends and a lot of my women colleagues. Although I know that the trend is improving nowadays because of all these ads we see, you know, beautiful bodies on the MTR, you come out and you look at that and you go home, you look at the mirror, and you think, “Oh, I must do something about it.” (Laughter.) But that’s something that I don’t know how other panelists feel, whether or not that is something that we should perhaps try and take up and remember. I wonder whether other panelists do any form of exercise, weight-bearing exercise. (Laughter.) Really, it’s true: Women have these problems, for example, osteoporosis, and if you don’t do weight-bearing exercises, you don’t exercise your heart, you come up with all these modern diseases.

MRS. CLINTON: That’s a very good point, because one of the mixed blessings of having domestic help, of having labor-saving devices, of working in offices, of all that many of us do, is that we don’t even have in our daily life the amount of physical movement and activity that used to be just taken for granted by so many women in the past. I mean, we don’t walk places, we don’t climb stairs, we don’t even do the simplest sorts of activities, and then we have to find a big block of time artificially imposed on our schedule to exercise. So we’ve put ourselves into sort of an awkward position, that we are among the first generation of women to find ourselves in, and we’re going to have to really think about that. (Gap) . . . that we’re able to make our contribution to our family, find the time for communication. These are new problems. Now, they are in some respects as my husband often says about such problems, “high-class problems,” because, you know, you are working from a position of accomplishment and strength and affluence, those of us who are in this room perhaps. So I think that it is right to point that out and make it clear that this is an ongoing challenge that women face.

ANSON CHAN: I agree with Lena. I think the question of quality time, women’s health and exercise are all very important. I think sometimes because we assume so many roles, occasionally we have a sort of guilty feeling. We feel we ought to be apportioning time for this, as a mother, as a wife, as a career. And I think we sometimes need to get rid of this guilty

feeling. But it also takes a good deal of organizing of one's time. You can't have the best of all three worlds. But if you plan your time, I think you can manage to make a reasonable job of all three roles. Exercise is particularly important for those of us who are desk-bound. And I try to make a point, and I often feel that if you're determined enough, no matter how busy you are, and no matter how long hours you work, you can always try and squeeze out time to do the things that are really important and should be done. So I try consciously to set aside two hours for exercise. But I agree entirely with Lena; it's very important. It's important for one's physical well-being, and also one's spiritual well-being.

MRS. CLINTON: I agree. You mentioned though in passing that we are in a fortunate position, and most women are not, and someone who knows a lot about the life of many women in Hong Kong is Rosanna Wong, who is involved in the very important task of trying to find housing for women who are here on their own, they either live here or have come here or maybe they are one of these new wives who are here. Would you talk a little bit about what you see happening in the area of your responsibility?

ROSANNA WONG: Thank you, Mrs. Clinton. I do see providing decent housing for the people of Hong Kong is extremely important. A lot of problems you know started with the lack of proper housing, the lack of proper provisions for housing. I can say in Hong Kong we have been working very hard on this front. I still remember when I was in my student age, we were talking about 24 square feet per person. Hong Kong is very crowded, I mean very packed. Now we are talking about 70 square feet per person. So I think this is how we are moving towards increasing the space standard for those who are in need of housing. And particularly for a family of four, I mean, they do need space. Particularly in the past we do have families who have children about five or six, and so on and so forth, and if they are all packed in a cubicle like this, a lot of family problems do come in. So I think this is a very important area that I think we need to work very hard to improve, not only the space standard but also the quality of housing. And how we handle the whole problem of overcrowding, splitting of family, and so on and so forth. And I think this is an area we still need to work very hard on.

But talking about choice, you know, sometimes I do wonder whether all people at any one time, we do have a real choice. Because Hong Kong is a very competitive society, and the gap between the rich and the poor is still very wide. And talking about those who belong to the lower income group, and often I am very sympathetic with them. They sometimes do not have the choice. And very often if they are not very economically independent, they sometimes need to stay at home even though they want to go to work. I mean, it's very difficult. And then some of them, if they really want to go to work, they find there is a lack of day care services, a lack of family services, and so on and so forth. I think these kinds of problems do exist in Hong Kong, although we have done a lot to improve that.

But I think that in order to strengthen the role of women, particularly to strengthen the real choice, very often we need a lot of support services for those who want to exercise their choice. Very often this is not the case. I also agree with what Lena has said. Communications with

young people, managing our children, is a challenge for today's women. I have two children, too. And they are all teenagers. And so I think communicating, I'm a youth worker by profession, in fact, and even though I work with young people all my life, when I have before me two teenagers, I find I have a lot of difficulties communicating with them. Of course we're lucky because we're able to have domestic workers at home. We're able to work and do the balancing very well. But even with that, I think the challenge facing us is how to communicate and live with our teenagers. I think a lot of support needs to be given to career women, and even ordinary women, how to really work through our children. And I think this is really a challenge for all of us, particularly when you're facing them. They have all sorts of problems before you. And I think that support is extremely important. Not only support among women, but support services given to all of us. And I think this is an important area that we perhaps need to share a lot more.

FANNY CHEUNG: I would ask Rosanna to comment on housing for divorced and abused women as well, because that is a topic that Lena, or I think Audrey mentioned.

ROSANNA WONG: We do have a policy, particularly for a divorced couple. We try to accommodate their need as much as possible by perhaps first of all, we need to look at whether there are children or not. If they have children, usually we will give the housing unit either to the mother, if they are holding the children with them, and if the father also has a need for housing, they can still line up for public housing, for subsidized housing. But the priority will be given to those who look after the children. But if they do not have children, say for example, then they have to decide among themselves who is the head of the household. Of course, the male always says they are the head of the household, they have to resolve this themselves. But I think the priority would always be given to the children.

ANSON CHAN: Rosanna, you might also like to say a word, in your capacity as the head of the Federation of Youth Groups, you deal with so many young girls and young boys, you might like to just draw the audience's attention as to whether you see any difference and some of the problems that they face.

ROSANNA WONG: Yes. Because I deal with a lot of children with problems. Of course, I also handle a lot of very healthy kids. But a lot of young people who have problems, and I think mainly arising from family breakup. And I think this is something that I feel very sorry for them. And we do have a problem about drugs. We do have a problem about sex. And I also involve myself with an organization called Mother's Choice -- I know Helen Stephen (sp?) is around here -- working with teenage pregnant girls. And I know in the States, this is really a problem, but I tell you, this is also a growing problem in Hong Kong. And we have to do a lot to help them face the problem. We can't just criticize them. There's no point criticizing. For Chinese families, it's very difficult for them to accept the fact that their daughter is having a baby. As such, usually they would just call them out of the family. But I think this is not the way out now. So teenage pregnancy does become a problem in Hong Kong.

And also runaway youth, particularly girls nowadays. And this is also a problem that I'm very

glad that the government is providing quite a bit of services to handle problems like this, to help them really settle down. Because once they run away, it is very difficult to call them back. I have a client who ran away 10 times, and every time the police get her back, she runs away again. And until the time that she can reconcile with the family — if she cannot reconcile with the family, no point asking them to come back. These are all the problems facing us. Although young people in Hong Kong are more educated, they have more choices, they have a lot of opportunities, but Hong Kong is a very competitive society. They are bound to have youngsters who fail in the system. And I think it's extremely important that we continue to provide services and to tell them that we do love them. And I think that family care and family love is always very important.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you very much. I'd like now to turn to Christine Loh, who has made a very strong impression in her leadership of the Citizens Party, and ask her how she views developments in Hong Kong and any particular comments you would have about any of the subjects we've mentioned or anything else on your mind.

CHRISTINE LOH: Perhaps I can start off just by saying that there's been a great generational change. Anson Chan embodies the professional woman, and I think it really started with her generation, women who've had the benefit at that time of a full education, that they can rise to the heights today. If I look back at my mother's generation, it was very difficult to face family problems, because women didn't have a choice. Divorce was not acceptable. But today I'm proud to say that it's all right being single, even as an older girl. (Laughter.) It's all right being a divorcee; it's all right being a single parent. The social stigma has gone, and I think it has been tremendously liberating.

The second point I want to make is I do want to agree with Rosanna Wong, that many women simply don't really have a choice as to whether they want to work or they want to be a homemaker. We have 700,000 female homemakers in Hong Kong, out of a population of about 6.3 million. Their work is generally not acknowledged. I think in many countries around the world, the economic contribution of homemakers, the policy-makers haven't found a way of incorporating that in GDP and GNP, and I would very much like to see as a matter of public policy that that is done.

Another thing that I think public policy-makers don't do enough of is, when they're looking at charting policy, not necessarily women's policies or family policies but all types of policies, that they don't necessarily look at that policy from the point of view of what gender impact it has. I know that's done in Sweden, and I certainly would like very much Hong Kong and other countries to also when they're thinking of policy, to look at whether it has a gender impact or not.

Also, we know very well, and I think my generation of women, we know very well that we've been able to do what we do today because we've had an education. Hong Kong has only had universal education since 1978, so quite late on. According to our census statistics, there are still 560,000 women in Hong Kong who have not had any formal schooling. Only 200,000 out of that 560,000 are over 60 years old. And I know for a fact that there are many women in our midst

who are maybe in their late 30s and 40s who haven't had much of an education. Many of them have not completed primary school. So again, whilst we need to put out a lot of resources to educate our young, I think it's also very important that we don't forget that for those women who are grown today but who want to complete schooling, that somehow as a community we owe it to them and we should now find the resources for them to do so.

I do want to make one last point about choices and about health. Hong Kong people I think generally are pretty unfit. (Laughter.) Rosanna was telling us about the density in which we live in. That means we have not always found the space around where we live for children to have fields and grounds to play. And we forget to play sometimes because throughout our young lives, we haven't had these facilities. So I think it's very important as a matter of public policy that we integrate sports, physical health, much more now into our curriculum and into our lives. People make choices, as Anna said. Consumer choice is really important.

Well, our health is also affected by the fact that we have fairly poor environmental health and hygiene. I don't know whether you're aware, Mrs. Clinton, but in the last year in Hong Kong, we've had the most appalling food safety scare. We've had the bird flu, which you've heard about, but we've also had a red tide killing most of our fish, we've had pigs coming from China that had hormones in them that create asthma, they may or may not affect our health. We've had beef that had somehow been affected, and also vegetables. So I think one message, not just from Hong Kong but probably from many developing, other neighboring countries, is that our environment and our health, we need to spend a lot more time to make sure that we clean our act up. And also of course in terms of children, unsafe food affects children the most. So I think we need to upgrade our hygiene standards. We need consumers to understand the choice that they are making.

And a last plug for politics: There are now four directly elected women in our legislature. It's hell having to run elections, and I'm sure you know that. (Laughter.) But when I was young, there were no role models. There were no people that I could see who were elected to office. This only started in 1991, and I would like particularly to honor Emily Lau. She was our first woman to run in direct election and won. I'm the second, in 1995, and in 1998, we now have a total of four women. So political life, it's hell, but it's a tremendous business. It's one where I think in Asia as a whole, I'd very, very much like Asian women to want to participate, because the decisions that are made in political life are truly important because they impact on all of us.

MRS. CLINTON: Hear, hear.

(Applause.)

ANSON CHAN: Could I just speak about a point that Christine made, that I thoroughly agree with, and this is the whole question of healthy living. I think a lot of it has to do with culture, particularly here in Hong Kong. I think there are very few places elsewhere in the world that are health-conscious where a housewife — for that matter, a house-man — can go to the market and

pick out a live chicken and say, "I want this chicken, I want to see it slaughtered on the spot." And it has all the attendant problems associated with it. And it is because we are increasingly aware of the importance of healthy living, the impact it has on society, not only on the physical well-being, but also the economic well-being of the community. So the government has decided to set up a steering committee under my chairmanship that will promote healthy living.

And healthy living not just means eating habits, it means starting in the home with clean habits, teaching children what is clean living, and particularly changing the attitude of the older generation. And this is not going to be an easy task, but I think the government has a responsibility to give a real push to this. What we want to see is a far healthier, a far more health-conscious community, particularly as we move into the 21st century.

MRS. CLINTON: I would echo that. We are having some of the same debates in our country as well, because we know that if we cannot provide clean air, clean water, and safe food for people, we have not done one of our most fundamental tasks as a society. And we are also very well aware of the greater impact of environmental hazards on children, because of their size, and they breathe more air into those little lungs, more quickly. Food safety problems hit them more quickly. And I would imagine, Anson, that in your campaign to change attitudes, the media will have to be a major partner --

ANSON CHAN: Absolutely.

MRS. CLINTON: — in order to communicate this message, so I would like to turn to Cheung Man-yee, who is a representative of the media, to talk about whatever is on her mind, but particularly how she sees things now in Hong Kong.

CHEUNG MAN-YEE: Thank you. Hong Kong has a very active media. But I think you know, Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Albright, maybe you will be surprised to hear that up to now, we do not have one woman chief editor in all the newspapers and electronic media in Hong Kong. I am one of the two heads of electronic media stations. The other newspapers are all headed by men. We have only two women proprietors, one more active, one slightly less active. When you were first talking about women in Hong Kong, this very successful, well-educated, assertive image that the people in this room have presented is not as true when it comes to the majority of the other groups of women.

In the media in Hong Kong, we still have a very big problem. On the one hand, we have successful women, as always highlighted by the presence of Anson Chan when she speaks on television and when she does her public functions, that this is a good place for women. They are successful, they are treated fairly, they can be respected. But in the media portrayal of the ordinary women, I'm sure you are aware of the same problem in many other countries, that is very stereotyped: housewives, junior workers, and all sorts of women even including abused wives and battered wives; they are treated in a very stereotyped way. And most women who are less educated, as Christine has pointed out, and most of the community members, men or

women, are still biased by a kind of traditional Chinese thinking that they are not keenly aware of the difference between a woman's right and a man's right.

And we would like to say that when press freedom is so important in Hong Kong, and we promote democracy, human rights, and rule of law all the time, we haven't — it might be our fault -- we haven't devoted enough time to women's rights to pursue the portrayal of their situations in the media. So the latest development is we have jointly organized a lot of media programs with Fanny Cheung's Equal Opportunities Commission. But in the production of these things, we have found out that there is still a lot of misconceptions about things. Say for example, most elderly women in Hong Kong, and women in the lower income group, still think that voting has nothing to do with them, is men's business. When they go to vote, they might follow the husband, or the sons in some cases. And they are not aware of their own rights not just as a woman, but as a citizen — human rights rather than just women's rights. So these are some of the things that we have to really concentrate on in Hong Kong.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Could I ask, to what extent do you make an effort for instance to get Christine on television and to try to get women political leaders so that there is a connection between the electoral politics and press freedom?

CHEUNG MAN-YEE: That's right. We do as much of that as we could. Christine and Emily, in fact, are well-exposed. They have pretty good exposure on television and in all the media. But our problem is we see that most women will see Anson or Christine or Emily as, "Wow, it's great to see them." But they don't think that --

FANNY CHEUNG: Identify with them.

CHEUNG MAN-YEE: They don't think that we can do that, too. It's something very strange in the Chinese community. And we will have to spend more time, and put more effort into these areas.

CHRISTINE LOH: I would like to make a suggestion. I think this is an area where Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Albright, that you can help. This is an elite gathering today. But in Hong Kong over the years we do have quite a number of women's grassroots groups who've done tremendous help to help the deprived — the single-parent families, battered women, women who work in low-income jobs. I think what's very important is for those of us who can help them to integrate them more in international discussions. For example, these groups are usually left out. There was an international gathering somewhere, people don't even know that these groups exist, and I'm sure that's a problem in many other countries. So for you who are very often organizers or somehow have some influence on these gatherings, please think about how to help the grassroots groups get there. They might need some extra funding so that they can see what is happening, and it will help them tremendously to develop.

ANNA WU: Mrs. Clinton, can I just add that actually women, because of the right to vote, have

now succeeded at least in putting that issue on the political agenda, because if you survey the platforms of the various political parties today who are making a heavy bid for votes, you will see that they have to say something about women and politics, women and social life, women and work, and so on. And in fact the legislative history relating to women in Hong Kong demonstrates that women can and do succeed in bringing about some changes. The concubinage matrimonial arrangement in Hong Kong peculiar to Hong Kong's Ch'ing Dynasty law was not prohibited until 1972. This is very recent. It was only then that we start with a mandatory modern monogamous marriage and this was largely attributable to the women legislators of that particular time, in particular Mrs. Ellen Lee.

The Equal Opportunities laws relating to women, the disabled, and so on, did not come about until the last few years. I pushed for a private members' bill in 1995 on equal opportunities. Christine did a lot relating to the inheritance rights of New Territories women. Up until that point, New Territories women could not inherit land. And these are some of the issues that women have succeeded in bringing about in terms of changes. Some of the statistics are also quite useful to bear in mind. The average worker in Hong Kong for the female sector earns just over U.S. \$1,000 per month, and this was by the third-quarter statistics of 1997. The same male worker earns approximately U.S. \$1,400 per month. In the age group 30-39, we will see that there are approximately over 300,000 female workers, as distinct from over 600,000 for the male population. What is heartening, of course, is that we found women in Asia and elsewhere succeed in small businesses. What is also heartening is the statement that women are better loan-payers. We actually discharge our debts. And therefore I would encourage bankers to make loans to women and not question their ability to repay. (Laughter and applause.)

FANNY CHEUNG: I think that this also a global issue, because I think globally, women are not making as much as men in the same sector. I think our earnings differential being about 76% is very similar to the U.S. earnings ratio, it's about 75%. So we're in the same boat. In terms of cabinet members, I think you have 29%, and in Hong Kong in the past few years we have a sudden surge and now we have about 25% of the principal officials being women, whereas less than a decade ago it was about less than 10%. So I think with more women coming out speaking for other women, I think it is important that we get these global issues and join forces with women elsewhere to bring the women's agenda into a respectful agenda.

Because even in the newspaper, when we say we need women's issues in the newspaper, they say, no, political issues are more important, no, women's issues they can wait. So I think we need to bring it into the public agenda, to recognize that it is important, that women's issues are not just a fringe interest, that they are very much part of daily life, and they have to be recognized.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I think as we look at the challenges of the 21st century and the issues that we all are going to be dealing with globally, in many ways they are what have classically been considered women's issues — environment, drugs, health, refugees. To a great extent those are issues that were kind of considered, quote, soft issues in terms of strategic issues

of countries. But the bottom line is that from now on, those are the central issues in the ways that countries will relate to each other. Therefore I think we have a natural role to play, and these are the issues that women have to a great extent advocated. And as Mrs. Clinton said, we have now made those kinds of issues central to American foreign policy.

MRS. CLINTON: And I would even add to what Fanny said, that I don't think that anybody in Hong Kong or elsewhere would debate that economic policy is at root political in many respects. If you don't have good governmental policies, transparency, all of the issues that we have seen come to the forefront in the last year in the rest of Asia, you're going to have economic difficulties that you're going to have to contend with. So following up on what Anna just said, one of the ways to work out of an economic downturn is by increasing economic activity in the lower end of the income scale, and that is often overlooked because it is not viewed as significant, so that, for example, if you did have more small business help, if you did have more micro-credit lending, if you did have a way of getting income resources that could build capital worth in low-income people, you would have a way from the bottom up to create more demand and to be able to generate more economic activity.

But many bankers only see macro issues. And, you know, I've done a lot of work on micro credit and supporting small- and medium-sized businesses, where most women work and where most women have an ownership interest. And I have been struck how despite the overwhelming global statistics that women are better credit risks, that for the very same reason that we all worry and are anxious about issues like talking to our 12-year-old sons, we are all worried and anxious about not repaying our loans, and so in country after country if you look at the statistics that are available, women repay loans between 92 and 99%. Now that is a loan repayment rate that most commercial banks would die for. And yet they do not go out of their way to support the kind of economic activity that women are primarily involved in, thereby, I would argue, missing an enormous opportunity to generate economic growth in a sector of the economy that is a very large sector and that will become increasingly important in the 21st century. So these issues are no longer I think easily divisible, and they are categorized as so-called women's issues to our detriment. Because they have to be fully integrated into the economic and political policy-making of our various societies. And that will redound to our advantage.

I know we're getting close to the end of our time, but we've been talking about money for the last few minutes, and Denise Yue is someone who knows a lot about money and has been involved deeply in a lot of the trade and industry activity and now as Secretary of the Treasury, as she told me when I met her, counting beans every day. So, Denise, would you like to --

DENISE YUE: Yes, thank you Mrs. Clinton. I know a lot about other people's money. (Laughter) Not my own. But it is very interesting, and I feel a quiet degree of satisfaction in hearing what the panelists said this morning, in the way the government allocates its resources, which is currently my main responsibility. And we are allocating most of our resources to four main areas, which I think all panelists this morning are in agreement that these are the priority areas of Hong Kong, namely education, housing, health, and I've jotted down another one, which

is welfare. These are the four main areas in which we spend most of our resources.

And if I may be allowed to sort of take off my official hat for a moment and perhaps offer some personal observations. Yes, the gathering this morning is an elitist group, but I don't consider myself an elitist. My family, my parents, were refugees from mainland China in 1949. I was lucky enough to be born in Hong Kong, in the sense that I think that Hong Kong amongst Asia at least is the area which offers the best opportunities to women, and I was fortunate enough to be born in Hong Kong. But I can remember living in a squatter hut for the better part of my youth. And I can remember my brothers and my sister and my parents working extremely hard to climb the social ladder, so to speak. And I think this is Hong Kong's strength. The vertical mobility that one is allowed in Hong Kong, and I think the two most important factors backing that are education and economic opportunity. I think all the panelists said this morning, education is vitally important. And I can remember 30 years ago being born as the daughter in the family. You probably would not even be able to go into secondary school, forget about university.

And here, I think, this is what the government of Hong Kong can be rightly proud of, and that is it recognized the importance of education some thirty years ago. And by providing free and compulsory education, by offering scholarships, grants, aid, loans, everyone who wanted to have a decent education is able to enjoy that. And the other side of the coin to education, is of course, that with education comes, in my view, economic opportunity. And with economic opportunity, you get a certain degree of economic independence. And here I'd like to echo what Audrey said. In my mother's generation, in my grandmother's generation, I am sure the thought of leaving their husbands did occur to them every now and then. But the idea of their having to survive in the world without any economic ability made them stick with their spouses even though the circumstances were totally intolerable. And I think this is, again, what we are looking at as we move into the next millenium, and that is to ensure that women, as well as men, girls as well as boys, are able to have equal economic opportunities through not just formal education, but echoing what Christine said, through lifelong education. And through making up, compensating, for those who missed out on their formal education for one reason or another. And this is again another area where major government expenses are being expended on.

Housing, welfare, are equally important because I think many panelists said this morning, supportive services are vitally important. And I'd like to think, supportive services not just in a material sense, but supportive services in the sense of comradeship, in the sense of companionship, being able just to talk through problems with other people who perhaps have gone through through those paths. I'd like to end on a very high note. Lena mentioned health as a problem of women. And I think Christine also mentioned health. I want Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Albright to know that Hong Kong people are the second longest-living people in the whole world. We still have a little bit to catch up with the Japanese. We'll do our very best, at least to match the Japanese, if not to outwin the Japanese. And in Hong Kong, the women live longer than men, notwithstanding the additional pressures that women have, juggling their time, juggling their various roles as daughters to their parents, granddaughters to their grandparents, as wives to their husbands, as mothers to their children, as well as whether they are homemakers as

a career or other professions as a career. We manage to juggle all those pressures, and I think we seem to be coming out of it perhaps slightly better than men. Perhaps this is an area for scientists to research, as to why we are able to do that even though, if we listen to the panelists only this morning, we do have a lot to put up with.

FANNY CHEUNG: I think on an optimistic note, to echo Denise, in terms of parental attitude toward daughters' and sons' education, in a recent survey we found that parents are willing to invest just as much in daughters' education in terms of school as well as extracurricular investment, as they are on their sons', and that is very optimistic. And secondly, that women are more likely and more keen to go into continuing education, adult education, to pick up on what they missed earlier. And I think we need to support women in those areas as well.

MRS. CLINTON: Since I am a congenital optimist, I love ending on a positive note because people have been waving at us and telling us that we have to end. I wish we didn't have to end. I would much prefer to continue this conversation. I hope it's the first of many, and I do hope that both the secretary and I have a chance to return when we have more time. This is an unfortunately very compressed amount of time. Because I would like to see for myself the work that is being done and do what we can to highlight that work, because I agree with you how important it is. But I would like to give the last word to Anson, and to thank all of you for being part of this and for sharing not only your perceptions of public affairs and issues but some of the personal concerns that we talk about among friends. And I would just echo the final comments that Denise made about being supportive of one another, because we are, in many respects, in uncharted waters.

We are very lucky to be women at this point in history. And to be women who from whatever combination of circumstances have been able to make many of our own choices, and to live with the consequences of those choices. We know that we are more privileged than not only the women who are living in the majority of circumstances in the world today, but the vast majority of women who have ever lived. And I think that that is not only a personal accomplishment or satisfaction, but I think it imposes certain obligations on those of us who are so fortunate, to speak out on behalf of other women, and to ensure that the kind of survey result that Fanny just referred to becomes the norm and not the exception, so that girls in the future will be given even more opportunities and be more supportive in the choices they make. So, Anson.

ANSON CHAN: Thank you very much, Mrs. Clinton. Mrs. Clinton, Secretary Albright, ladies and gentlemen, I'd like first of all to thank Mrs. Clinton and Secretary Albright for organizing this very very stimulating discussion today. I'm only sorry that time does not permit us to continue this discussion, and furthermore to allow the audience, and particularly the men in the audience, to express some of their views to us. I think we've discussed a range of subjects that are of concern, I suggest, not just to women, but also to men and to the entire community. Because every decision that a woman makes, whether she is single or married, has an impact on the family, on the community at large. I think all of us realize, those of us who have been fortunate to have had a good education, to have had choices, and to have been able to pursue and

advance in our career. I think we realize how fortunate we are. But at the same time, we need to bear in mind that there are many, many hundreds of thousands in our community and I'm sure in other communities who have not had the choice and the opportunities. I think economic opportunity, as Denise said, is very important.

But I think that those opportunities and with power and advancement in our career, there is also a basic responsibility, a responsibility to ourselves to make the best of the opportunities that have been given to us, sometimes at considerable sacrifices from our parents, a responsibility to our family, to our children, and to our husband. And I think at the end of the day, the responsibility needs to be shared between the men and the women. Because to the extent that more women now have equal opportunities and economic freedom, I think that also in itself is a cause for the increasing rate of divorce. Now I'm not suggesting there's anything wrong in it. It's perfectly right that women should have economic independence. But I think the men and the women should discuss amongst themselves, should perhaps give more effort in reconciliation and trying to arrive at a model that would suit both and still maintain harmony in the family. Because at the end of the day, if there are more breakdowns in the family, that has a direct impact on the government and on government expenditures.

I would like to thank you very, very much Mrs Clinton, for giving us this stimulating discussion.

MRS. CLINTON: Thank you. (Applause) Thank you so much.

REMARKS OF THE FIRST LADY

SALZBURG SEMINAR

Monday, July 14, 1997

Olin Robison, President, Salzburg Seminar: Good morning everyone. It is a very special day in the life of the Salzburg Seminar. Mrs. Clinton, we are honored that you are here. You arrive 50 years to the day from when the first group of young men and women from all over the United States and Europe arrived here for Session # 1. In the intervening years, the Salzburg Seminar has become a global institution, we now have 18,000 alumni in 145 countries and this is Session # 348 on the subject of youth and education. We have fellows here from 44 countries. Mrs. Clinton quite literally needs no introduction. I would simply say that she has used her position in public life to speak out on behalf of those who otherwise would have no voice. The disenfranchised, the poor, the dispossessed and especially on behalf of children. Children and education, the responsibility of each of our societies to provide for the next generation. Mrs. Clinton, we are honored that you are here, we look forward to this very special morning in this very special day in the life of the Seminar.

Mrs. Clinton: Thank you

(Applause)

Thank you Olin and thank all of you. I am delighted to be here, especially on an anniversary such as this celebrating 50 years of this Seminar, and particularly because of the original purpose of the Seminar and the way its goals have been fulfilled and furthered over the last 50 years. As I was thinking of coming here I was trying to imagine what it must have been like 50 years ago, in the year I was born -- 1947, for

those optimistic Harvard students to even imagine they could start something like this Seminar. Europe lay in ashes, ideology divided the world into enemy camps, Austria's fate was uncertain, most people measured time in days and hours, fearful of putting any trust in anything more permanent.

Yet the basic premise of this Seminar, which we celebrate and commemorate today, was that a better future would be possible if people came together and in good faith shared ideas, debated and discussed, and believed in the importance of education. So here we are, with the United States as a partner, Europe rebuilt itself on a solid foundation. We have seen the fall of communism and we have seen countries of the world creating their own new narrative of peace and democracy. And the Salzburg Seminar has consistently lived up to the challenge set forth by F. O. Matthiessen during its very first session, that "we come here to enact anew the chief function of culture and humanism, to bring man again into communication with man." And I would add "women" as well, because the first session included women. Margaret Mead was present and delivered a very detailed report about everything that occurred. And this Seminar has held fast to that commitment.

First in the early days bringing together soldiers who only a short time before had been fighting each other on the battlefields of Europe. Then -- by transforming itself in these beautiful surroundings into a safe place for people to come together across their differences and engage in honest, constructive dialogue: Arabs and Jews, Eastern and Western Europeans, Serbs, Croats, and Bosnians; by opening its doors to young men and women; by promoting dialogue among people whose views may not yet have hardened; by focusing not on current leaders, but on the next generation of leaders --

the Seminar has helped to sow the seeds of a more peaceful, productive future. So I congratulate the Salzburg Seminar on its anniversary and I am delighted to see so many of you from 44 different countries gathered here today to discuss one of the most important issues facing every country in the world – the future of education and of our youth.

We know very well that education is essential to the success of an individual, but we are also learning that education is essential to the success of democracy. Without education, citizens cannot make informed choices. Without education, citizens are subject to the propaganda that demagogues and powerful interests send out into a society attempting to shape public opinion. Education is essential to building civil society. For civil society depends on learning to live with, tolerate, and respect those whom we will never agree with and maybe not even understand very well.

So education is essential in so many different ways: to the creation and sustaining of democracy, to the vitality of civil society, and more and more to the success of a country's economy. In developing countries and industrial ones alike, education is the bright line that divides those who are able to navigate through the new global economy and those who are not. In the United States, for example, by the year 2000, we estimate that nearly 90% of the new jobs created will require post-high school education. So what we are talking about today has to do with what will occur in the lives of countless individuals, countries, the global economy, and it is as it was 50 years ago essential to the peace and prosperity of us all.

I want to talk this morning about what we have been attempting to do in the United States to renew and reform public education at the elementary and secondary levels.

Education has always been the currency of the American dream. Since the days of our founding of the republic, democracy and education have gone hand in hand. Our first President, George Washington, wrote: "Knowledge is in every country the surest basis for public happiness." Even in the middle of our worst national crisis, our Civil War, the Congress enacted a plan by which each new state would have a public university for the benefit of its citizens. And after the end of the Second World War, a grateful nation rewarded those who had fought for freedom with the most valuable gift we could think of – the G.I. Bill – which sent record numbers of Americans to college and, therefore, enabled them to pursue the American dream.

But it became clear to us, starting as early as the late 1950's, that education was never a finished enterprise. I remember very well when I was in grade school when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, before most of you were born. And when Sputnik went into the skies, our Government decided we were not doing a very good job preparing our children for math and science education. And I remember very well my teacher telling us as young students we had to study harder because our country and our President needed us to. Now, I was not particularly interested in math and science at the age of ten, but because it kept being told to me that this was something I could do for my country and my President, I tried my best. And through the years, I have seen over and over again how there comes a point in our country's history that we have to pull together to take a hard look at education. That what worked for earlier generations of Americans is no longer adequate for our children and certainly for the children that will come after.

Since my husband entered public life back in the state of Arkansas, he has been convinced that education was the most important priority that he could pay attention to; that if he worked on improving educational opportunity, he would be able to provide the greatest opportunity for personal and public progress that was possible. And so because of that, he has worked very hard over many years to improve education. First as a governor, he appointed a committee to look at the state of education in Arkansas, asked me to chair that committee, and we worked very hard to improve the standards of education in that relatively poor state.

When my husband became President, he was convinced that it was important for the entire country to reform education, and he set about with a very specific plan as to what he thought would be the elements for a reformed education system. So since he took office back in 1993, he has been working on certain themes for education reform that he has carried through his entire public career.

In the first term as President, there were certain goals that he wanted to establish for the American education system. So something called "Goals 2000" was introduced and passed by the Congress, and I want to spend just a minute talking about this, because I think it is very important for education systems to have stated goals, not assumed goals, that can be measured. That is something that on the national basis we have never had in the United States. Some of the countries from which you come have had such goals, but our education system is structured in such a way at the federal, state, and local levels that different authority rests in each level of government. But most authority rests at the local level. And the local school district is responsible for setting goals and setting curriculum and most of the money to run our public schools

comes from local taxes and state taxes. The federal government in Washington does not primarily fund public education in the United States, and because it does not fund it, it does not set the goals or the curriculum for what every student should be learning.

Now that is the kind of system we have, which is very different from most of the countries represented here. There are advantages to that kind of approach and there are disadvantages. Among the advantages are that people are responsible at the local level, and there may be reasons why one school district would approach a particular educational issue in a different way from another school district. If you can imagine, a school in the middle of New York City might have very different ideas about how to teach children than a school in the farthest reaches of Alaska's Northern Territory. So because of the vast size of our country and the different kinds of people and ideas that make up America, the local control has always been a very important part of how we provide public education.

At the next level, the state level, they are responsible in our individual fifty states for working with the local school districts and for providing additional funding for them. And they also have authority because they do provide funding, to try to hold schools accountable in different districts. So that, for example, in some of our states, if schools are not functioning well, if they are not educating children, they have been taken over by the state government, which then sends in teachers to try to do a better job.

At the federal level, we have money that goes for certain programs to the states and to the local districts, and that money is determined in a way that can only be used for certain purposes. So that, for example, the federal government provides money to help

districts that have many poor children provide additional instruction for those children, so it adds to the amount of money available from the local and state level.

But when my husband became President, he began to make the argument that it was important for the United States to have goals that every school district and state would try to follow. Because for those of you who have visited the United States, you, I am sure, have noticed that many people move all the time. So that if you go to school one year in California and then you move to Texas, you want your children to be learning basically the same thing. And so by setting goals you can tell local school districts, here is what we hope all American children will learn, and that it doesn't depend only on where you go to school. So that was one of the important accomplishments of the President's first term.

A second important accomplishment was to expand the program known as „Title One“ – that's a description of where it is in the laws of the United States, which provides the extra help for poor children. Because some of our school districts are very rich. The parents who live in the school districts are professionals, they are corporate executives, they live in very big houses and so they pay a lot of what we call property tax, so that the schools have all the latest computer equipment, they have teachers in the high schools with Masters degrees and Ph.d.'s and the children have many, many opportunities.

Then we have school districts in poorer areas of our country where the parents are working for much lower wages, where they may not even own their own homes, but they pay rent for apartments, and so there is not a lot of money coming in from the local taxes to support the schools. And so many of the children enter school behind

and it's a lot of work to try to help them catch up. So the federal government expanded the amount of money that would go to try to help children who are behind in the elementary grades achieve grade level.

The President also in his first term expanded what we call "Head Start." Because we believe very strongly that it is important to help prepare children before they get to elementary school, and the Head Start program is designed to provide school preparation for poor children. We do not have enough programs to include every poor child, but the President expanded widely the numbers of children who could come into Head Start. We also worked very hard to create more opportunities for young people who leave high school but do not go to college. We have, as many of you know because I am sure some of you have studied in our university system in the United States, we have a very good system of higher education – well funded, providing all kinds of programs at every level of degree granting institution. But many of our students don't go on to college and we have not done very much for them, and so the President has worked hard to create more opportunities for young people to go into work-training programs, apprenticeship programs, into what we call the "two-year community college" to get additional education. Not a four-year B.A. or B.S. degree, but a two-year experience.

Now while the President was working on those issues in the first term, he also had to work very hard to prevent the Congress in the second half of his first term from cutting funds for education. If you follow American politics, you know that we do not have a parliamentary system, so we elect a president separate from electing members of Congress. And in the first two years of the President's term, the Congress was of

the same party as the President. In the second two years, the Congress changed hands to the opposite party. And the opposite party does not believe in federal support for public education. So that we have had some difficult public and political debates about the appropriate role of the federal government. So while the President was pursuing his agenda to try to increase opportunity and set goals, he also had to prevent the Congress from cutting the money that would go to support that program. So it's always interesting in American politics.

Now when the President ran for re-election, he set some very clear priorities for what he wanted to do in education. And I think that you have perhaps been given a copy of this "Call to Education." And the "Call to Education" details many of the specific programs and I will be happy to answer questions about any of them in the question time. In a way, the President's hopes for education in the second term can be summed up as: making it possible for every eight-year old to read. Now that is a problem for us, because on international tests, approximately 40% -- primarily of the poorer children in America -- cannot read at a level that we consider adequate by the time they finish their third grade, which is the eight/nine-year old period. So we are attempting to put in a lot of effort and resources in making it possible for every eight-year old to read.

We want also to connect every classroom in America, particularly in poor areas, through computers to the Internet. We want to use technology to provide opportunities for poor children that children from more wealthy families have on their own. And we see technology, particularly through the Internet, as a way of opening up education to many children who do not have books in their houses, do not go to museums or

libraries, whose parents themselves cannot read very well, so that this is one hope that we have for technology, and we want to aim at the 12-year-old level, so that all of our 12-year-olds have access to computers that are hooked up to the Internet, and are computer-literate.

Then we also want to make it possible for any graduate of high school to go on to college by providing financial support because, although we have a wonderful system of higher education, many students have difficult financial problems that prevent them either from going to college or from going to the best school that their academic record would suggest, because they cannot afford the costs. I will be sending, with my husband, our daughter to a very fine American university next year, and the cost will be nearly \$30,000 a year. And there are many students who have excellent grades, excellent test scores, who are worthy of attending our finest colleges and universities, but whose families cannot pay that kind of cost and so the President has been trying to increase the amount of financial scholarship and loan money available. And that is something that he believes very strongly in.

Now in the 1997 State of the Union, which the President delivers every year, he made it very clear what he was going to focus on in these next four years to improve education. And they are summarized here in the „Call to Action.“

First, to go along with the goals that were adopted. He wants to set national standards. Now what does that mean. Well, if, for example, we say that American children will be the best in the world in math and science by a certain year – we always set those kinds of great American goals; you know, that’s how you kind of get everybody together. And we know we have a lot of work to be able to do that, because there are

many countries such as some of those represented here, that have children who do much better on math and science than American children. Well how do we do that? I mean if all we do is set a goal, that can just evaporate into thin air. What the President wants to do is to set accountability standards to measure our progress toward that goal and to hold our schools accountable, so that we can look at local school districts and we can say: you can determine how you choose to teach math and science, but we will measure you against other school districts so that we can tell how well you are doing.

Now that is a very radical concept in the United States, because as I explained, if you are a local school district, historically you did not answer to anyone other than the people in your area, who elected the school board and sent their children to your schools. So the President has set as one of his priorities to create national standards that would then be measured by international tests. And the way he has done that -- because, again, remember, we have this different system than many of your countries -- is to persuade states and local school districts to go ahead and agree for their children to take the tests. So over the last several months, he and his education secretary have been persuading governors of states and local school boards to let their children take this test.

Now I will tell you that although six states have signed up for national tests -- including our biggest state, California -- many states have refused to do so. And why is that? They do not want to be measured against other school districts because they feel that that is a federal violation of their rights to determine what their children learn. Now I have tried very hard to make the point that algebra is the same in

California as it is in New York or any other state in America, and so the first test that would be given is a reading test in fourth grade and a mathematics test in eighth grade. Because reading and mathematics are thought to be objective enough that local ideas about history or about what's appropriate literature will not cause the political problems that will inevitably arise. So the national standards are something that if you follow American education, you will hear more and more about.

We are trying also to make sure that we improve teacher preparation, and we provide continuing education for our teachers. This is another problem because we have colleges of education throughout the country that prepare our teachers, and, again, they are free to prepare teachers however they choose to prepare them. There is no standard national curriculum in place. So teacher preparation is very uneven. We have absolutely wonderful, brilliant teachers in elementary and secondary education, and then we have teachers who should not be in the classroom -- they are not capable of teaching either the academic subject or working with the students effectively.

So the President is urging states and local school boards to change the way teachers are prepared and teachers are evaluated, and to that end he has worked very hard, both of us have since 1983, to create a national teacher board of certification in the United States. Not mandatory, but voluntary, so that individual teachers can better prepare themselves and if they do so, we are encouraging states and local school districts to give them higher pay. That if they go to the extra work to become better teachers, they should be rewarded to be better teachers. So the whole issue about our teaching force is one that is very difficult.

I don't know about the composition of the teaching force in all of your countries, but I know that in many countries, teaching carries both more prestige and more income than it does in the United States. And it is seen as what it is, which is: one of the most important jobs in a country. Now in our country that is not the case, there is a very big disparity in what teachers are paid depending upon the district in which they teach. In many ways how they are treated in a classroom is very much dependent upon the kind of people who run the school district, and so we have a lot of issues that we are trying to deal with to improve the teaching force.

Third, in order to realize the President's goals of having every eight-year old read, he has launched something called „America Reads,“ and he's worked to get volunteers to go into the schools to help the teachers -- because in many of our school districts, we have a lot of disciplinary problems, we have a lot of different languages that our children speak, they come from many different places. In Los Angeles' school district, the students come from 150 countries, and many teachers will have a classroom with students from Mexico and Guatemala and Vietnam and Cambodia and Ghana and from all over the world, speaking many different languages as their first language. So part of our problem is to get enough people to help our teachers to give individual attention to these children, so that we can help every child both learn English and then learn to read.

And then we have a different problem with children who come from generational poverty, from families that have not provided the stimulation and support that a child needs to learn how to read, and they, too, need special, individual attention. We are learning more about teaching methods that work, and we are encouraging local school

districts to follow some of those teaching methods. There is a method that I am very supportive of that started in New Zealand called „Reading Recovery,“ which works very well for children who have not had the basic preparation in their first five years to be able to learn to read.

And that brings me to the President's fourth goal, and that is to emphasize early childhood learning. I am sure that many of you have been following the research that neuro-science has provided in the last several years. We now know that the brain is developing in the first three years of life in a way that we did not understand before. Now what does that mean? Well, it means that a parent is not only feeding a child's body with food, but is feeding a child's brain to create connections between brain cells in the first three years of life. If you read to a child, sing to a child, tell stories to a child, you are literally creating more brain connections. If you stimulate a child in an appropriate way by touching a child, by playing games with a child, you are also creating more brain connections and laying the foundation for verbal learning that will be helpful when a child goes to school.

Now in many homes in America, as around the world, parents have done that for years. No one taught them. They were either given that gift when they were children or they saw and learned themselves how important it was. But in many other homes around the world, children are not spoken to, they are not given the kind of attention from both mothers and fathers that stimulate brain development, and so by the time they get to school, they are already very far behind. There is also a connection between the income and education level of a parent and how much conversation occurs in a home. There's a very important study that I wrote about in my book in

which researchers went into three different levels of education and income homes in one of our cities in the United States. Went into homes like mine, where both the mother and the father went to college, even beyond, earned good incomes, and even where both mothers and fathers were working outside of the home, there was lots of conversation, lots of reading of books, lots of talk in the house – some might say too much talk, but there was certainly lots of talk.

Then the researchers went into homes that were very stable homes where the parents held jobs that were lower income jobs, where their education stopped at high school, where they loved their children as much as any of us do, but they did not talk very much to their children. The fathers often had jobs that were not verbal jobs. All of us in this room have verbal jobs. We are well equipped for the global economy – we talk, talk, talk. (Laughter) We couldn't build this building, but we talk, talk, talk.

(Laughter) And so the people who do the hard work of our societies are often not people who earn their money by talking. They do it with their hands. They don't know the importance of talking to their children. They want their children to be successful but it never was done for them; they don't know how or why to do it, so there was much less conversation. And as a result, when the children were four and five years old, their vocabularies were much smaller.

Then the third group of families, the poor families, in our country, often single mother families, no father in the home, and the single mother often on welfare or holding down a very low-paying, menial job, very little talk. But the talk that occurred -- again, these mothers love their children as much as we do, and they want their children to be successful, but the world has not treated them very well, so what is the

kind of talk you will find in such a family -- you will find a lot of negative talk. A lot of warnings about the world. A child who goes to explore this microphone -- "No, no, get away." Why? Because the child could get in trouble. And these families are worried about trouble. They are worried about the authorities getting them in trouble. So there are a lot of negative messages, so little talk, and talk being used negatively. So what is the result? Low verbal development, much more limited vocabulary, and children who often can't resolve their problems through talking but instead will fight. So what we now know is that what happens in those first three, four, five years of life is very important to what happens in all the rest of schooling. And the more we can help parents know how to help their children succeed, the better our schools and our students will be. And for parents who either cannot or will not help, the more we can have good pre-school programs, like a Head Start program, we could at least try to help those children get the tools that they would otherwise not have. So early childhood learning is one of the most important kinds of priorities any country, any society, can make. And the best way is to help parents do the best job they can do, by giving them the tools.

Fifth, we have to change the way our public schools function by providing more choice within the public school system. If you live in a school district in America, you go to the school you are assigned, whether it's a good school or a bad school or else you get out of the public school system, if you have enough money, and you go to a private school. One of the goals that the President has is to make it possible for you to choose among the public schools, to make it absolutely competitive within the public school system. Recently, I did the high school graduation at a high school in

Washington, DC which has some very, very bad schools in our nation's capital. It's one of our, in my view, great shames as a country, that we have permitted our schools in our nation's capital to deteriorate. This, though, is a school of choice. So students choose to go there, they compete to go there, and they have to work very hard – they have to take Latin, they have a very heavy curriculum, and all of the students who graduate from this high school go on to college.

Every year they take 100 students. Three hundred apply. That means they are willing to do the hard work. My question is, why don't they create more hard schools so that every one of those 300 students would have a place in a hard school, instead of going to a school where they don't learn. So we have to create more choice in our school system.

Sixth, we have a serious problem in many of our schools with order and discipline. I hope you do not have this problem to the extent that we do in our country, but to be honest with you, it really depends upon where the school is located, and how effective the adults in the community are in protecting our students. We have schools where weapons, drugs, gangs, all threaten the safety of our students, so my husband has worked very hard to change those conditions, and he has worked to create laws that will punish students who bring guns to school. As hard as it may be for you to believe, before my husband passed that law, thousands of American children brought guns to school every day -- some to be aggressors, many to protect themselves, but of course, the results often were tragic because of the kind of violence that occurred. To keep drug dealers and drug houses away from our children and to change some of the values in the school.

We have, as I am sure you have noticed from watching American TV, a very intense consumer culture that is aimed at our young people. You know you are told that you aren't a good or smart person unless you wear a certain kind of tennis shoes, sport shoe. If you don't wear a certain kind of jacket or other piece of clothing, you are not somebody who will be respected. And we have a lot of fights who can't afford to wear certain clothing and feel very resentful because of that and there is a lot of violence that is spawned by this culture of youthful consumerism. And one of the things the President has urged is that more students in our public schools wear uniforms. Many of your countries already do that, and I urge you not to change. It solves a lot of problems. We have found that where uniforms are used in our public schools, you see an almost immediate drop in clothing-related violence. You see more discipline in the classroom because students have to wear the same thing to school, and if teachers are trying to enforce discipline with students who wear clothes that are too tight, too loose, with hats on their heads, that causes a lot of difficulties for the teachers. So wearing uniforms is something that we wish more of our schools would do, but again, it's up to our local schools, they have the decision to make.

Now the President also thinks that we have to do a better job in making it possible for the students who want to learn, to learn. Many of our teachers have a lot of disciplinary problems in the classroom caused by students who are disruptive, and we have a lot of laws that we are trying to modify in the United States that are very good on the surface in terms of giving students a lot of rights, but make it difficult to enforce discipline in the classroom.

Seventh, as I said, the President is working to connect every classroom and public library to the Internet by the year 2000. We have had a public-private partnership created to do this, and I want to just spend a second or two talking about that, because it may be something that some of your countries also can look to. Our government did not have all the money or the expertise to create this technology linkup, but by working with a lot of our private companies, we have created a fund that now has about two billion dollars to form the kind of connection so that the schools can be wired, the computers can be put into the classrooms, the teachers can be trained. Now why would businesses voluntarily give this kind of money? Because they want well-trained workers. And you can make that argument in every country here, because every country here has to be moving toward technology use in order for the society to flourish. So I would urge you to think about how you can form partnerships -- even where you don't have a tradition of doing that -- with businesses, both international businesses doing business in your country and businesses of your nation, so that you can create more resources for technology advancement.

Now there are a few other things that I want to briefly mention that I know are not part of elementary or secondary school but are linked to it. The President has emphasized going to college because he wants children to work harder to improve their skills and that college would be available for them if they did it. So he's creating scholarships that would provide the cost of tuition at our community colleges, and he wants to give each family a ten thousand dollar credit for education and training that can be used. Because, for example, if you have a child who gets into a school that is expensive, that 10,000 dollars could make the difference. If you could take it off your taxes and you would be able to encourage your student to go wherever possible. So

that the college program that the President has talked about is directly linked if more people think about how the progression goes from being preschool all the way to finishing your education. But also we don't want to leave out the students who don't go to college, so these programs are available for skill training and additional job education as well.

Now if we look at what the United States is doing, some of it is very much a part of our particular culture and the way we have organized our schools; but some of it is more universal. Our youth today have a lot of other stimulation besides education coming at them and the kind of skill that it will take to keep young people's attention focused on education -- to help them realize that they have to make a commitment to education despite what the culture is saying or doing around them -- is becoming a more and more global problem, not merely an American problem, so that we all share a concern about how we will raise our next generation, and I think it is very important that we give the priority to education and youth and make it not just a priority of governments but of the entire society, so that businesses and academic institutions and every other institution pull together to try to support young people.

I have spoken with people from many of the countries represented here, and I hear often the same concerns: that there are no adults looking after children anymore; that children are in the streets too much; they have too much time to do whatever they want; that the schools are not open long enough hours, there is no other institution to help fill the gap of time; that parents are often working very long hours themselves, they are not able to provide the supervision that their children need; and this work of raising young people cannot be left merely to teachers and schools. That is not the

role of what a teacher should be doing, but certainly many teachers have the feeling that they must fill the gap that society has left.

So we have a lot of work to do in making education a priority, but more than that, in making young people a priority in our fast-paced, technology-driven age. Where we become connected with each other anonymously, how do we keep people connected personally, how do we make it possible for adults, whether or not they are parents, to invest in their children, so that we do not become a „brave new world“ where there are some people like us who are verbal, who are technologically literate, who live above all the rest of society because we have not given the parents and children of all of our people the chance to have an education and live in a safe, supportive community that will give them the chance to live up to their own God-given potential. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

(end remarks)

PLENARY SESSION
VITAL VOICES CONFERENCE
AUSTRIA CENTER, VIENNA
JULY 11, 1997

Introduction and Vignettes

Ambassador Swanee Hunt:

Good morning, I'm Swanee Hunt. Thank you all for being here at the closing day of our conference 'Vital Voices.' For the past two days, thousands of conversations have brought together ideas from 36 countries. Strategies to advance the role of women in building solid democracies, in politics, law and business. And during these days, in between all the professional work, life has of course gone on. Children at home had gotten sick, buttons have fallen off of our dresses, love letters have been written, and last night our cat had kittens. That's the wonder of women's lives, as we respond to a thousands details a day. The truth is: Our voices have never been silent. In fact, sometimes the voice of just one of us can seem like a whole choir. The question is, who is listening? Are the people making the decisions listening to the voices of women? This morning it's my honor, first, to introduce to you three women whose clear, powerful voices are vital to democracy. As you have come to expect, you'll hear from them honesty, intelligence, and passion. But something else will happen this morning, as important as their talking, and that is that we all will be listening. Listening to the meaning that projects the stories of Julia, Vilia and Karen, far beyond the boundaries of Bulgaria, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic. Hillary Rodham Clinton will be listening, too, because she knows: It's only when we absorb the experiences and the understanding of others that we can meaningfully respond. So, this is not a morning for grand-standing, but an exchange, and we look forward to hearing your questions from our audience at the end.

Now, after Mrs. Clinton speaks, our conference participants will go to the cafeteria at the Vienna International Center, then to the regular workshops. Those of you who have come just for today are invited to a sandwich in this room. They will return to their seats for an extraordinary afternoon led by my very dear friend, European Commissioner Emma Bonino. You'll spend time with Susanna Agnelli, the former Foreign Minister of Italy and the current soul-mate to women worldwide. You'll see a video profiling women heads of state and heads of government, and you'll participate in the discussion with top-level media experts about how to magnify women's voices. Then, after that, our 300 conference participants will return to this room, and altogether will hear the results of the hard work they've been giving these three days in their workshops, dealing with politics, law and business. Now, as you can imagine, given the evening news last night, two of our speakers are embroiled in developments in Bosnia: Christiane Amanpour asked me to convey to you her regrets. You probably saw her on TV last night from Sarajevo. And the office of Louise Arbor, the Chief Prosecutor for the War Crimes Tribunal at The Hague also called to cancel. But then, this morning, Justice Arbor telephoned to say she is trying nonetheless to get on a plane to be here with you this afternoon. Our final speaker today will be Sandra Day

O'Connor, who broke through thick psychological barriers to become the first woman Justice to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court. Now, let's begin. I'd like to introduce to you Julia Maleva-Berberian, a member of Parliament and the President of the Bulgarian Women's Union.

Ms. Julia Maleva-Berberian:

My maiden name is Julia Berberian, and although I have been happily married for 31 years now, I kept that maiden name because as a younger woman I was a nine-time tennis champion in Bulgaria. My married name is Maleva, and this is the name of my three daughters. I was born in 1944, when communism invaded Bulgaria. I have been working as a tennis coach for more than 25 years now, and I coached my three daughters to the highest level of world-class tennis. My eldest daughter, Manuela Maleva, was number three in the world, my middle one, Catherina, was number six, and the only one still playing in the family, the baby Magdalena, was number four last year. Our achievement was unique. We come from a country with no tennis tradition. I was 20 years old, when I heard for the first time the names of the great tennis tournaments like Wimbledon etc., there was no way I had any information from the Western world, because free radio stations like the Voice of America or others were jammed, and the only foreign TV in Bulgaria was Soviet TV.

Yes, we were coming from Bulgaria, maybe one of the most beautiful countries in the world, with beautiful nature, beautiful climate, and very fertile soil that can grow just about anything. Hunger was never known in Bulgaria, on the contrary: Just before World War II, Bulgaria was famous for its food all over Europe. The country, though was brought down on its knees by the most sophisticated regime of this earth, the Red Plague, communism. People in the country, except for the few that belong to the Communist elite, were also brought down on their knees. We became slaves in a big prison, and no one was permitted to go out. At age 13, when there was already no competition for my eldest daughter Manuela in Bulgaria, I decided that I should take her to the U.S. for a tournament. That was the year 1979. I was told: No, you cannot go. For no reason. No word of explanation. Pure silence. My dreams and my children's dreams were being shattered. No one was allowed to excel under communism. We were supposed to be equal. Equally poor, equally mediocre, equally obedient. I was taught not to be obedient. I refused to obey. I swallowed my pride, and I started begging. Each time that we wanted to go to tournaments, I had to run to a different communist boss, cry my eyes out, and beg and beg and beg to get permission to leave. But we refused to defect. This huge communism has got to come to an end, so we waited and waited and waited, and finally in '89 the Berlin wall fell down. And because we were all born under communism, this was our first age of freedom. And I solemnly swore to God that from now on I will do the best I can to resurrect my country from the ruins of the Red Plague. So, when two and half years ago, I was asked to become the President of the Bulgarian Women's Union, I accepted this honor, and I started working very diligently for the enlargement of the organization, and now we are the largest non-governmental organization in Bulgaria with 91 local branches all over the country, 4,000 women altogether, who are volunteering their time and energy to collect and distribute humanitarian aid, participate in educational projects, participate as volunteers in the Presidential campaign of our non-communist candidate Peter Stojanov. We also participated in the cold and windy winter of

January and February '97, in the street demonstrations with some other 2 million people around the country, to bring the socialist, ex-communist government down. And we did bring it down. Then we got our free parliamentary elections in April. And then, without being a member of any political party, I was nominated to run for Parliament in these free elections, because I'm well-known throughout the country for my tennis career and leadership of the Bulgarian Women's Union, and I was included on the list of United Democratic Forces. You won't believe it, without any campaign, without spending a penny, I was elected. I even became the holder of a diplomatic passport. So, here I am, after more than forty years in a different profession, in a very different, though very competitive field, professional sports, I am part of a conference of this calibre. Everything is very new to me. But I cannot tell you how happy and honored I was when I got that invitation to come here from Ambassador Hunt and the U.S. Ambassador to Bulgaria, Avis Bohlen. I feel very privileged to be here on my new mission, because the feeling that I am serving my country is so fulfilling that I feel stronger than ever before. Bulgarian women have a lot to be proud of. We helped elect a democratic President, we helped build a democratic government. Bulgaria is quickly building a civil society, and although the country's wealth was siphoned out of the country by the communist party, Bulgaria is now on its way to Euro-Atlantic integration. Thank you very much.

Amb. Hunt:

Now let me introduce to you Vilia Alekneite-Abrahamekinia.

Ms. Alekneite-Abrahamekinia:

Dear Mrs. Clinton, Madame Ambassador, Excellencies, dear friends: If the years ago, somebody would have told me that I'll be in Vienna, will speak English, and will meet the First Lady of the United States, I would have answered: I love that dream. Because when I was a student of the Lithuanian music academy, I wasn't even allowed to go to the music festival in Poland. But that was a standard situation for the people behind the iron curtain. By paradox, the first city I visited in the West was New York City. It was in the spring of 1991, after Lithuania returned to the political map of the world. I will never forget the feeling of me sitting at the window sill on the 37th floor looking down at the Manhattan night lights. It was the night when I turned 34. I remembered my mother's words: Be a musician. That is the most safe way to keep away from politics. In 1989, when I was secretly invited to the first meeting of the Lithuanian movement for independence, the last thing I thought of was politics. I went there, because my music professor, Mr. Landsbergis, was there, and I trusted him. He became the person who restored our independence, and he's again the chairman of our Parliament. And I still trust him. It was the same meeting I met Mrs. Prunskiene, our first Prime Minister, who is here today with us in the Conference room, and she said then: The sky of Lithuania belongs to Lithuania. These words affected me greatly. On the same day, I joined the Lithuanian movement for independence. And in 1992, it was the first time I was elected to the Parliament. I recall one famous woman doctor, a quite young man, just before the election campaign started. He told me: 'I know quite a lot about a woman's hormone system, and I can assure you, baby, there is nothing to do for a woman in politics.' And nevertheless, I was elected to the Parliament and proved the stability of my hormone system giving birth to my second son who is three years old now. Today, I'm elected again among 25 women members of the Parliament, that makes 18.5 per cent. Lithuanian women always participated in solving the main historical questions of the nation. European and Transatlantic integration are our vital issues for maintaining independence. Lithuania is very concerned about the recent statement by the leaders of the European Union. That means to us: No. At the Madrid summit, we also received 'no.' But we think and believe that the doors to NATO have not been closed for good to Lithuania. Lithuanians have always believed that the true advocate of Lithuania is the United States of America. And we are very happy to have Madame Albright in Lithuania, in Vilnius, now. Every important issue within my country is the development of the civil society. Our presence in the Parliament fulfills its role only if we improve women's position in society. We have to encourage women's participation in all levels of decision-making. I totally agree with the words of Mrs. Hillary Clinton. Freedom and progress are not born from silence. The most creative ideas to solve problems in women's issues come to us from the NGO's. We experience that in Lithuania. Freedom and progress are not born from silence. Vital voices of women break this silence. Thanks to the initiators of this conference and especially to Madame Ambassador Swanee Hunt, we bring vital voices to our countries. Thank you.

Mrs. Hunt:

Now finally let me introduce to you Karen Mangorova from the Czech Republic, a business owner and a founder of the Women's Forum.

Ms. Mangorova:

Mrs. Clinton, Ambassador Hunt, Ladies and Gentlemen: I have come to this conference from Prague, Czech Republic. You certainly know about our Velvet Revolution made in 1989. We changed the political system, we started democracy and market economy. Last week, Western democracies brought us back to where we always used to be: with the tremendous support of the United States of America, the Czech Republic, together with Poland and Hungary, were invited to start negotiations to become members of NATO, the organization which always defended Western democracies. Soon, we will start negotiations with the European Union about our membership as well. I feel privileged to participate in this forum and to become one of the vital voices of this conference 'Women in Democracy.' I have the chance to meet great successful women from different countries. I have a chance to exchange ideas and experiences. In the year 1990, when I started my consulting company, I realized I did not know anything about foreign trade. So I took the opportunity and participated in many scholarships in Western Europe and the United States sponsored by the European Union and USAID. I learned about international trade, marketing, management etc. Today, we do market surveys for example about chemicals, biotechnology, looking for investors in the United States, Europe and Japan, doing market surveys about service systems in the Czech banking sector, being compared to six countries in the European Union. My company founded a corporation to manufacture auto parts in the Czech Republic for major Japanese and European car producers. Recently, I came back from India, where we introduced a Czech producer of rails, and our aim is to do a contract with Indian railroads. Being a business woman, I do not represent only the women entrepreneurs, but an important women's group that I helped to start in the Czech Republic, 'Women's Forum.' Our aim is to strengthen the role of women in the Czech society, and to create a women's lobby in the Czech Republic. This 'Women in Democracy' experience gives us an excellent opportunity to network with other international women's groups and to find new friends among them. We are looking forward to a visit of the United States' Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, the real woman of democracy to the Czech Republic. I would like to thank the government of the United States of America, Ambassador Swanee Hunt, for bringing us together. I would like also to thank the First Lady to join us today. Your presence here, Mrs. Clinton, is very symbolic. It stresses the importance of international women's forums. Thank you very much for your support.

Ambassador Swanee Hunt
Introduction of
First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Vital Voices Conference at the Austria Center, Vienna
July 11, 1997

So Hillary Rodham Clinton has come to Vienna. May I please introduce her not only as a global leader, but as a human being. I should begin by telling you I'm very hard to impress. For 20 years I've been working with extraordinary people enduring with courage and dignity, very difficult circumstances, refugees fleeing torture and war, pregnant teenagers, dying old people, homeless families, schizophrenic mothers, illiterate criminals. I've worked in Central Europe and in the Balkans and with over 600 American NGO's, led by magnificent women and men who have given more than society ever had the right to ask.

So I'm very, very hard to impress.

And then along comes someone like Hillary Rodham Clinton, who has devoted her whole life to people struggling against the inequities of this world. Long before she was propelled onto the global stage, unbeknownst to her, she was preparing for this role.

As a girl, she was deeply influenced by her religious training, from which she drew both the values that have guided her action, and the inner faith to keep on, even when every outer sign says give up.

She became politically active as a teenager, as a way to shape her world. And today we are both members of the Democratic Party. But though we don't talk about it very often, one of the few things Hillary and I have in common is that in 1964 we both were campaigning for the most conservative Republican presidential candidate. We were both Goldwater Girls.

But it was a Wellesley College that Hillary made her mark: the first student ever asked to address her graduating class. Her vision of the world and her challenge to her classmates to make a difference landed her on the pages of Life magazine. So it's no surprise that a few years later, as a young lawyer, she was working for the U.S. Congress, passing up much more high-paying opportunities in the big-name law firms.

Later, living in the small state of Arkansas by the side of her husband, whose was the Governor, Hillary took up the cause of public education. She became a major advocate for children nationally, eventually serving as the Chair of the Children's Defense Fund, which is one of America's most important NGO's, and where she had once worked as a young staff lawyer.

And now, in her current position of extraordinary prestige and influence, how has the First Lady of the United States of America spent her time? Across our country, advocating for families who are struggling economically. In Beijing, declaring women's rights are human rights. Yesterday listening to the experiences of Bosnian refugees and the Austrians who are helping them. And with her book and her weekly column reminding us that it takes a whole village to raise a child.

Secluding herself to write is a real challenge, because this is a woman on the move, visiting

projects in every corner of the globe. In addition to palaces and halls of power, she's explored barrios in Nicaragua, health clinics in Bangladesh, windswept plains of Mongolia, and monuments to freedom in South Africa. She's talked directly to women economists and ministers and to women sitting at their new sewing machines funded by a micro-enterprise loan. And from these travels, she's brought home the wisdom of global leaders and basket weavers.

I've seen Hillary Rodham Clinton in lots of circumstances: meeting a head of state, laughing with her staff, leading tours of the White House, sitting drenched in the rain, collapsed in sleep on a plane, dancing at a ball, stepping up to a microphone.

But the time I'll never forget is a phone call to Vienna, when Chelsea's mom called to say she'd heard my daughter was very ill, and she wanted me to know she cared.

This is a woman who understands what "care" means.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Vital Voices Speech
July 11, 1997
Austria Center, Vienna

Mrs. Clinton: I want to start by thanking Ambassador Hunt for her service to the United States, but more than that for her leadership and commitment to human rights and the work that she has done here in Europe on behalf of raising the voices of women so that all can hear them. I would like to thank the other conference sponsors for supporting this very important meeting. And I would also like to thank the Austrian people and their government for their willingness to serve the cause of peace and democracy. Home to the United Nations and other critical international organizations, host to important summits of the Cold War, haven for refugees, Austria has given the people of Europe and the world a safe place to come to [line missing from her reading] challenge, hear out and understand one another so that together we may shape a common future.

This conference is held in that same spirit. We are here to advance the cause of women and to advance the cause of democracy and to make it absolutely clear that the two are inseparable. There cannot be true democracy unless women's voices are heard. There cannot be true democracy unless women are given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own lives. There cannot be true democracy unless all citizens are able to participate fully in the lives of their country. We have seen great progress in this region of the world. Our previous speakers this morning, from Bulgaria, Lithuania and the Czech Republic shared with us some of the progress they have seen in their own lives. How those walls did come tumbling down. How they were able to take advantage of new opportunities. To seek new responsibilities on behalf of themselves and to further the cause of democracy in their countries. We come at a point in time when the architecture of revolution is nearly complete in Europe. The old order is being replaced by democratic institutions and open markets, of free press, functioning parliaments, political parties. Basic rights of assembly and association are becoming facts of life. Last month Russia joined the community of creditor nations. This week the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland were invited to join NATO, and at the time the announcement was made it was clear that those were the first invitations, not the last invitations. Today my husband is in Poland and Romania to reiterate America's support for democracy's progress. And I think it is also significant that you are gathered here in Vienna to recognize both the crucial role that women have played and will play in continuing that democratic progress. But also in talking and working together to devise strategies and learn from one another about how we can continue to overcome the obstacles that still lie ahead. It is clear, I think, to all of us, to someone like me who comes from a democracy that has been working at perfecting its union for more than 220 years, and to those of you who come from much newer democracies, that democracy is very hard work. You cannot flip a switch and expect to have a democracy as we dream of. In my own country we struggle every year with the challenges that are posed to democracy. We have to work very hard to make sure all of our people are given the opportunity to participate fully in the life of our democracy. We meet new challenges every day. So the work of democracy is never finished and all of us who are here today are committed to continuing that work no matter what the obstacles we face. Because even though you may have a free press or a functioning parliament, even though you may have elections that are fair and are repeated successfully, democracy depends

on more than that. It depends on more than just a written constitution. It depends upon more than even economic progress. Democracy depends ultimately on whether democratic values are rooted in the hearts of men and women. Whether all citizens believe that all people are entitled to be accorded the respect to which each of us as human beings should be able to demand. As a Croatian writer once said, "for everyday life revolution consists much more of the small things, of sounds, of looks and images." So even though we may look and see the institutions of democracy functioning, even though we may see the image reflected of our open markets and the progress we are making economically, we still and we always will have work to do, to make sure what Alexis de Tocqueville called "the habits of the heart" that really are at the center of a democratic institution or a democratic country are cultivated and passed on from generation to generation.

If we look at where we are in the world today, we see that one of the sounds that is most important to ensuring that democracies take root is the sound of women's voices, those vital voices that we celebrate here. On my visits to Central and Eastern Europe, I have heard the sounds of those voices. I have heard women from many countries articulating their dreams for the world and their lives after communism. Despite the differences between them, everyone seemed to speak the same mother tongue. The language of freedom and hope. I heard women's voices in Estonia when I visited a clinic that is the first in that country to offer a broad range of health services for women. I heard them in Romania when I met with teachers who are developing a new pedagogy that emphasizes civic participation and democratic values. I heard them in Ukraine when I met with nurses who had just started their own professional organization. I heard them in Hungary when I visited a center that is helping the minority Roma community overcome barriers to education, employment and full participation in Hungarian society. I heard them in the Czech Republic when I met with leaders of non-governmental organizations who are involved in local projects to protect the rights of children and to safeguard the environment. I heard them in Belarus when I spoke with women health professionals struggling to bring quality health care to the critically ill children of Chernobyl. I heard them in Russia when I talked over the radio with listeners throughout the country on a women-owned radio station. I heard the voices of women asking "what do we do now? We are educated; how do we use that education to be part of democracy?" And I heard them in Poland when I sat around a table with women representing different political points of view and participated in one of the most important of democratic acts, disagreeing with one another respectfully, as we debated the issues that were important to us. And I heard women's vital voices in Bosnia where I was told by a teacher how she kept trying to keep her students learning despite a horrific war. How I was told by health professionals the struggles that they faced treating the wounded and how they were all committed to rebuilding their lives. You bring these voices here, these voices that I have heard, and now we must determine what we do with those voices.

Do we merely use our voice for our own personal advantage? Do we take our educations, do we take whatever fortunate advances we have been given at this point in history, and only work for ourselves? That is a perfectly legitimate choice. To be a successful politician, to have power for oneself, to be a lawyer or a judge, to be a business leader, to have economic gain for oneself in a democracy -- that is our choice. But I hope that the vital voices represented here will do something else as well. To use our experience, our voices, to speak on behalf of all people, to give voice to the voiceless. Because we know very well in my country and in each country represented here that there are many women who do not have the education we have. There are many women who are held down by cultural and historical

traditions, prevented from exercising the choices they might want to make. We know there are poor people who can only dream of coming to Vienna or sitting in a hotel room looking down at Manhattan. And we know, or we should know, that we ignore the needs of all our people at our peril, that part of the great challenge we face in our democracies is to be sure we create conditions for all men and women to make the choices that are right for their lives. And women particularly have an opportunity at this point in history to express that commitment of conscience, to make clear that, yes, we want to be successful on our own, we want to be held accountable and responsible for the choices we make because we want to be seen as full human beings. But that is not all we want, we do want to help create societies and a world where the opportunities for all children, young boys and young girls, are available to them in ways we could not have even dreamed a few years ago.

When we met, many of us in this room, together in Beijing we came to declare in clear and unequivocal terms that women's voices must be heard and we offered a clear proposition: that a nation's progress depends on the progress of women, that the strength of a political system depends on the inclusion of women. That the vibrancy of an economy depends on the full contribution of women. That the richness of civil society depends on the participation of women. That human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights. And I have been asked what did I mean when I said that. And I have always been amazed that I would be asked such a question. I was on a Voice of America call-in program one day and I received a call from Iran, and the speaker on the other end, a man, said that he had heard that I said that. What could I have meant? And I said, "Well, I meant what I said and if you will just shut your eyes and imagine the rights that men have, those are the rights women should have as well." And the reason we want those rights is not merely to make a statement, not to be part of a political movement, but because we want our dignity to be respected as human beings and we want to be part of building a democratic world.

We have seen changes since Beijing. Here in Central and Eastern Europe, we have seen in Albania the birth of a parliamentary caucus devoted solely to issues affecting women. In Bulgaria, a non-governmental organization is teaching judges and lawyers and citizen jurors about the legal rights of women. In Ukraine, there has been a new government ministry devoted to women's affairs. In Lithuania, new services are being given to support the needs of elderly women. In Poland, we have seen created one of the largest micro-enterprise networks in the world, a new agency sponsored by the Polish and American governments and the World Bank whose sole mission is to teach women important new job skills and to help them find well-paying jobs.

And yet, despite the progress, since the fall of the Berlin wall, since the conference in Beijing, we have a lot of work to do. Because the transition from communism to free markets and democracy has created new obstacles to women's realization of their God-given potential. We have seen new stresses and sacrifices imposed on women. Throughout the region, cuts in pension and childcare, kindergartens and health care has meant that women are shouldering a double burden that was heavy enough to begin with. The oppressive structures of Communism may have been torn down but the new structures and standards necessary to advocate for women's rights and to protect women from exploitation are not yet fully constructed. The hard work of building these political, legal, and economic standards and structures must include women and it is what you have been speaking about here. That is why this conference comes at such an important time, for it is enabling us to share practical ideas and methods to advance the presence of women in the political, legal and business

spheres.

Exchanging ideas and strategies enables us to learn from one another and take these ideas home. But that is too rare in our own world. When I am privileged to travel as I do, I always meet with groups of women for informal discussions. Whether I am in Bangladesh, Romania, Poland, Nicaragua or Chile, I find that women have much more in common than might appear on the surface. And yet I also find that even in those cities where I am meeting with women who represent the academia or the professions or business or politics, they often do not speak to one another. They sometimes do not even know one another. They are surprised to learn what the woman down the street is doing to assist them in their work. We cannot build strong civil societies without working together and creating associations that enable us to make progress on the issues we care about. That is why this conference has the potential for creating new networks and associations of support, within countries and between countries.

The United States government, largely through the Agency for International Development, will continue to support a broad range of programs that provide grants, training, and technical assistance to citizens to strengthen democracy at the grass roots. We want to be part of building democracy and we especially want to be part of enabling women to participate in that process. Today we build on the commitment we have made, a commitment to local groups that are working to protect the environment, or improve health services, or spark economic development, teaching children basic democratic values. Working to create that area between the market and the government which is crucial to the continuation and progress of democracy. We call that 'civil society.' And it is only civil society that can inculcate the values of democracy, those habits of the heart. It is only through our families, our religious organizations, our associations at the civic and the neighborhood level, our trade unions, our other groups where we come together voluntarily joining in forums to create better opportunities that we will really create democracy. The market place can do better than any other institution the work of creating wealth. But the market place, which knows the price of everything, knows the value of nothing. That is not the market place's job. The government has to preserve order, has to provide the basic services but it cannot reach the heart. It can stir the emotions. It can, as we all know, create demagoguery, but it cannot in those very small sacred places of the heart do the work that can only be done voluntarily through the civil society. And so the United States Agency for International Development knows that, and that is why so much of its work has been aimed at this middle, this important part of every democratic society. And today I have the honor of announcing that the United States will commit three million dollars next year to projects that will directly support the objectives of this conference. These funds, which are entirely new funds, will be reserved solely for efforts that help women enter and ascend the realms of politics, law and business. Moreover, we will continue to see to it that women have full and complete access to the entire range of democracy and business programs that we support. These efforts will supplement the work of this conference and the work that you do everyday. We know what the symptoms of inequality and oppression look like in real life. We see them when women are beaten or sold or denied credit or refused a job because of gender or passed over for promotions or treated with disrespect and not listened to. But we have to do what we can to alleviate those systems, those symptoms of injustice. And yet we cannot lose sight of their root cause -- disrespect for women's spirit as human beings and citizens.

Here in Vienna in 1993, leaders from around the world gathered to craft the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. This is what they called for: the

universal application to women of the rights and principles with regard to equality, security, liberty, integrity and dignity of all human persons. That word dignity is essentially the premise on which our democratic efforts in our respective countries will stand or fall. It is time for us as a global community to understand once and for all, we have run out of excuses. Here we are at the end of the twentieth century, at the heart of a continent that has been scorched by war time and time again. If the history of this century teaches us anything, it is that whenever the dignity of any group is compromised by a derogation of who they are, of some essential attribute that they possess, then we leave ourselves open to having our own dignity questioned. Where we do not respect the dignity of others, we do not make the dignity of any of us safe from attack. If this century has a lesson that is redeeming, it is that by extending the circle of citizenship and human dignity to include everyone without exception, we have the hope that can come to those of us who believe that by working together we can create a better life for ourselves and our children. If we take seriously what you are talking about here at this conference, and you go home and bring the message of excitement and solidarity that you have achieved here, you will not change anything overnight. But your voice and your work, added to the inexorable, incremental steps that are necessary for change in a democracy will create the conditions for change. And then we will have a glimpse of seeing what a newsroom and a courtroom will look like with women fully participating. What the corporate board room and the political back room will consist of when women take their rightful places. We will see more clearly what can happen in the home when women are given the respect and dignity they deserve.

I am very much in awe of the stories of many of you. I can only imagine the strength that it took to have done what you have done in this audience, to join Charter 77, to march for Solidarity, to expose human rights abuses, to make freedom's voice carry over the heads of those who would silence you. I think of all this and I ask myself how you kept your focus, through those years of totalitarian oppression, on what was most important in the human heart. Perhaps the answer lies in a speech that was given in Austria seven years ago, just after the fall of Communism. Part of it goes as follows:

"Many of us who in recent years strove to speak the truth in spite of everything, were able to maintain an inner perspective, a willingness to endure, a sense of proportion, an ability to understand and forgive others and a light heart, only because we were speaking the truth, otherwise we might have perished from despair."

Many of you will recognize the words of President Havel, talking about the totalitarian lies that recently prevailed in this part of the world and of the heroic individuals like so many of you who struggled against them. Those words are just as true today, even though the burdens and obstacles are nowhere near what oppressed Europe for so many years. But we know that it takes strength to keep your voice heard. We know that it takes courage to stand up for those without voices. All of you who tore down communism did so because you believed in democracy and freedom and the human heart and spirit. Now you fight for women's rights because you believe in the same values. One barrier is rubble, the other is crumbling. With the strength of our commitment and the power of our voices that barrier too will surely fall. If we keep faith with those values that brought you to this day, if we work with one another, if we enable all of the voices of men and women who believe in freedom and hope to be heard, then the dreams that brought us here will be realized and we will be able to look back at this conference and say to ourselves "Women's vital voices played a role in creating the kind of world I am proud to call my own." Thank you very much.

children to watch. And finally, we have encouraged the entertainment industry to create different kinds of programs. Now, I think having said all that, I am not hopeful about being able to limit the violence on American television or in American movies. We have too much freedom that is given for good reason to be able to prevent that. And it sells, unfortunately. People watch it. It's like driving by an automobile accident. You know you shouldn't, but you slow down and you look and are interested and stimulated by such programs. So we are doing what we can from the governmental level. In my book It Takes A Village, I urged parents and other citizens to boycott certain programs, not to buy the products that are advertised on programs, to use citizen action to make a statement about what programs should or should not be seen on our television. But I think that many of you in countries with different legal systems will have to be working very hard to try to create a situation in which you are not flooded by the most violent television programming from our culture, and I continue to try in the United States both to limit it and to get citizens and especially parents to exercise more authority with children and to try to limit the effect of it. I think it is one of our most serious problems because it is part of the conflict that is developing between 'are we creating in our society citizens or consumers' and it is a very difficult problem.

Question:

Speaking of your book, I liked your book about raising children. Do you agree that women should emphasize our central role in the family even as we advocate our rights?

Mrs. Clinton:

I do, because I am very committed to family and to my particular obligations as wife and mother, but I don't think every woman has to become a wife and a mother. If we are talking about democracy, it is very important to make clear that women should have a range of choices. There are women who wish to be full-time mothers and commit themselves to that task. That should be a respected choice. There are women who do not choose to marry, or if they marry, do not chose to have children. That should be a respected choice. So, the vast majority of women in our countries will try to do both, as I have and as most of you have, to have a family and to have work that is important and meaningful to me. That balancing act that we're all engaged in must also be respected and more support must be given to women who are attempting to do that. But the larger point I would make beyond individual women's choices and being respected for these choices, is that whether or not we make any of these choices, every one of us has an obligation to do what we can to make sure our children are well raised, and that our children have the health care, the education, the safety, stability, and all the conditions that will enable them to grow to their own potential. So, whether or not a person is a parent, or however many children a person has, every one of us will be affected in the quality of our life by how our children and the next generation are treated. So, I think that goes beyond the individual choice, and keeping the importance of raising children central to our political and economic and social consideration is not just a family's responsibility, it is the entire society's responsibility.

**Q & A Session
after the
First Lady's Speech at the Vital Voices Conference
July 11, 1997**

[First portion of this section inaudible due to central audio feed problem]

Mrs. Clinton:

Anything we can do to create good opportunities for girls and women, I think, will benefit many, many women. But I also believe that in many different societies for different reasons, an individual woman's chances for pursuing her own dreams will be enhanced if other women work together to change social, historical, and cultural conditions that hold women back. There are many women who have attained a good education and then are told that they cannot succeed in the area they wish to work in for artificial reasons. So the individual woman has to do what she can to prepare herself, but then as part of our vital voices we have to make it possible for every women to be able to pursue whatever her ambitions or dreams might be. I also think there is another element, and that is the sort of psychological barriers that are the internal barriers to many women's success. Women who feel that they are not entitled to pursue their own dreams. Women who feel that, if they make a choice to pursue an education or to pursue a job, they are making a choice not to pursue family or relationships. So I think we have to enable women to feel that they can attain that balance between work and family that is so difficult in all societies, which many of us have worked on for many years, and support young women so that they feel comfortable making these choices.

Question:

There's a lot of violence on TV in America, which also influences our cultures. What can you do to stop it?

Mrs. Clinton:

Well, I agree with that. I deplore the violence that is depicted on American television and in American movies, and we -- my husband and the Vice-President and Mrs. Gore and I -- have worked very hard over the last several years within the system that we have, which is a not only a free and open-market place of ideas, but with our first amendment to the Constitution, we have very broad protections for anything that is characterized as speech, which most television programs and movies are. And you may have heard that just two weeks ago, our United States Supreme Court struck down a law that the Congress had passed and the President had signed, trying to limit pornography on the Internet in the United States. So they take a very broad view of what is protected under our Constitution. So, within a limit, we have tried to do several things. The President has advocated that a computer chip be built into new televisions so that programs can be blocked out by parents exercising authority over their television set, so that the television set can be programmed in such a way that certain stations and programs cannot be seen. So, that will work for younger children, but then we know older children will spend their time figuring out how to break the system, but at least, you know, for a few years parents will have the illusion of control over their children again, and even an illusion in these circumstances is comforting to some extent. And we've also worked with the television to create labels for television programs, so that parents can make better decisions about what they permit their

Amb. Hunt:

Before I ask you the last question and ask you to close your remarks with that question, I want to thank you personally for coming and I want to tell you that this conference, which has been hugely successful, would not have happened without some very generous help from organizations like Bank Austria, Austrian Airlines which flew about 160 people here, Nestle Corporation, the US Government, the European Union, the Soros Foundation, and a host of others. And I know that you are as impressed as I am with their generosity, too. If you could just say two sentences about the key question of this conference: What can Americans learn from our experience as Eastern and Central Europeans? What can Americans learn from Central and Eastern Europeans?

Mrs. Clinton:

Thank you, whoever asked that question. Because I think there is a great deal that Americans can learn from your experiences. I think, first, that it takes courage and perseverance to both win and keep a democracy, that the building of a democracy is an ongoing challenge and struggle, and that we can never take it for granted. And that many of you in this room and in the countries from which you come, have a much clearer idea of the importance of the values that underlie democracy than many people in my country do today. Because we have many people who have gotten very complacent in the United States. They don't take the trouble to vote. They don't defend the freedoms that we have fought for, and people in previous generations have died for. So, maybe it is a good thing that a society gets to the point of the United States and many of the European countries, where freedom is so ingrained in the fabric of life that we don't have to worry about it or fight over it any more. I think there's always a danger when people become complacent, because there's always the risk that demagogues and authoritarians will assert themselves and influence the minds of people and take over the political and economic structures again. So that is one important thing. The second point I would make is this struggle that I referred to earlier, in the new global economy, in the Information Age in which we are living, how do we live as human beings? How do we ensure that we are able to deal with the enormous number of choices that we have? Many of you came from countries where under communism you had no choices. Now in many countries we have so many choices that people are often bewildered about what is the right choice that they should be making. How do we create the right conditions, the balance between government and the marketplace, a balance of power that will create jobs and good incomes and economic opportunities, but will also provide support for people in a social safety net and will create an environment in which the marketplace does not determine everything. So, as you are struggling to make those choices, we in the United States will be watching you and supporting you, and together I hope that we will enter into the twenty-first century with a much clearer understanding of and commitment to those basic democratic values that we have worked on for so many years, but that you now hold as a trust for the rest of us. Because how you deal with democracy's new challenges will affect the United States and the entire world.

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AUSTRIA DEPARTURE STATEMENT
SALZBURG, AUSTRIA
JULY 16, 1997**

My daughter Chelsea and I would like to thank the people of Austria for a wonderful stay in your country. We will always remember the warmth and kindness shown us in Vienna and Salzburg.

I would also like to thank President Klestil and Chancellor Klima for two very productive meetings that underscored the strong and historic ties between our two countries.

I come away with great admiration for Austria's commitment to peace and stability in Europe. In recent days, I have seen this commitment expressed in your work on behalf of refugees from the Balkans, in your promotion of the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, in your efforts to protect your environment, and in your support of important international organizations.

I was a pleased to meet with Austrian women in Vienna and Salzburg to hear firsthand about the progress they are making and the challenges they still face. I was also honored to participate in the "Vital Voices" conference, which brought together women from Central and Eastern Europe and the United States. The purpose of this conference, organized by American Ambassador Swanee Hunt, was to give women the chance to share ideas and strategies that will enable them to participate fully in the lives of their newly free countries. Finally, I was delighted to be able to take part in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Salzburg Seminar -- an institution that reflects the highest standards of American and Austrian cultural cooperation.

It would be impossible to come to Austria and not be moved by its great cultural heritage. Walking through Schönbrunn or the National Library, listening to the music of Schubert or Mozart, it is clear that Austria has enriched civilization beyond measure. Judging from the performances I heard and the young artists I met, it is equally clear that your artistic tradition is alive and well.

Thank you for showing my daughter, my traveling party, and me the true meaning of "Gemütlichkeit."

7/9/97

**FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
AUSTRIA ARRIVAL STATEMENT
JULY 10, 1997**

My daughter Chelsea and I are delighted to be in Austria on behalf of President Clinton and the people of the United States of America.

The United States and Austria have long been united by strong bonds of friendship, mutual respect, and shared devotion to democratic ideals. I look forward, over the next six days, to celebrating those ties and to meeting with President Kletsil and Chancellor Klima.

I also look forward to celebrating and partaking of Austria's rich cultural heritage. I feel particularly privileged to be able to visit in a year of important anniversaries for Franz Schubert and Johannes Brahms -- two Austrian composers whose music has meant so much to the world.

Austria's contributions, of course, are not limited to art. For many years now, Austria has committed itself to promoting peace and understanding -- particularly in Europe.

Over the next several days, I will participate in a number of events that underscore Austria's commitment to protecting refugees, promoting women's rights, expanding educational opportunities, and helping the former communist countries make the transition to freedom and democracy.

Today, under the auspices of the Center for Democracy, I will meet with refugees and NGOs to discuss the refugee crisis resulting from the turmoil in the Balkans. Tomorrow, I will participate in the Vital Voices conference, which brings together women from Europe and the United States. The purpose of this gathering is to support the democratic transformation occurring in Central and Eastern Europe by promoting the participation of women in all realms of society.

Early next week, in honor of its 50th anniversary, I will address participants in the Salzburg Seminar -- an institution that reflects the highest standards of U.S.-Austrian cultural and academic cooperation.

Finally, I hope to have the opportunity to see firsthand Austria's famed natural beauty and, most important of all, to meet with its wonderful people.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
PORTUGAL DEPARTURE STATEMENT
JULY 20, 1997

Before I depart this beautiful country, I want to thank the Portuguese people for their warm hospitality. Portugal's rich heritage is to be found not only in its magnificent castles, monasteries, and works of art, but also in its people. Over the last several days, I have learned that the citizens of this country are meeting today's challenges with the same spirit of discovery and commitment that enabled your ancestors to explore new worlds more than 500 years ago.

I was honored to have had the chance to meet with President Sampaio and Prime Minister Guterres to reinforce the strong bonds between our countries. It is clear that Portugal and the United States share many of the same values: a belief in democracy, a deep sense of community, and a recognition that strong families are the hallmark of a healthy society. The United States is fortunate indeed to have Portugal as an ally. We are fortunate, too, for the many Americans of Portuguese descent who have enriched the life of our country.

During my stay, I was pleased to have had the opportunity to meet with parents and teachers at a school to discuss Portugal's education reforms, to talk with women from all sectors of Portuguese society about their achievements and the challenges they face, and to speak at the Gulbenkian Foundation about early childhood education.

I was also pleased to have had the chance to learn about your preparations for Expo '98, to see Portugal's rolling green countryside, and to walk down the cobblestone streets of your ancient towns. Like so many people from all faiths around the world, I was truly moved by my visit to the Shrine of Fatima.

Later today, I will travel to the Azores to visit American troops stationed there and to thank the Azorean community, the Regional Government and the Portuguese Government for the half-century of hospitality they have extended to our forces at Lajes Field.

As my daughter Chelsea and I return home, we will carry with us wonderful memories of our stay in Portugal and the strong hope that we will be able to return again soon.

FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ARRIVAL STATEMENT
LISBON, PORTUGAL
JULY 16, 1997

My daughter Chelsea and I are delighted to be making our first visit to Portugal on behalf of President Clinton and the people of United States of America. I have been especially eager to visit since my husband and I met Prime Minister Guterres earlier this year. I look forward to seeing the Prime Minister again and also to meeting Mrs. Guterres and President and Mrs. Sampaio.

The United States is fortunate to count Portugal among its closest allies. We are proud of the strong bonds between our countries -- bonds of friendship, mutual respect, and shared devotion to democratic ideals. The success of the Portugese communities in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, California, and other parts of the United States is a tribute to the promise of America and to the traditional values of the Portugese people: love of family, belief in hard work, devotion to community.

Prince Henry the Navigator and Vasco de Gama literally changed the world around them and shaped the course of human history. During my visit, I hope to learn more about Portugal's rich history and to see how the people of your country are working together to meet the challenges of the 21st century. I am pleased that my visit will coincide with your preparations for Expo '98, which will commemorate the 500th anniversary of Vasco de Gama's historic journey from Portugal to India.

This afternoon, I will talk with teachers, parents, and administrators at one of your schools to hear about Portugal's educational reforms, particularly your emphasis on the importance of pre-school. I will also meet with women from all sectors of Portugese society to hear about their achievements and the continuing challenges they face. Tomorrow, at the Gulbenkian Foundation, I will speak on early childhood education. And, like so many visitors from all faiths around the world, I will visit the Shrine of Fatima.

Finally, I am looking forward to seeing firsthand Portugal's famed natural beauty and to experiencing the warmth of its people.