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REMARKS OF HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
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Thank you. It is so great to be back here after only a year's absence. I thought it would take a little longer to work out a way to get an invitation back, but this is just wonderful for us. We were here last year, we enjoyed the hospitality, the opportunity to meet so many of you who made Chautauqua your summer home and others of you who are able to come for a week or a weekend. This is the kind of place and the tradition that I believe so well represent what is best about America. People are coming together to share their views, looking for what brings us together and not divides us, and trying always to be better informed, maybe better motivated and certainly more caring about the world around us. So first, let me, on behalf of my husband and myself, thank Chautauqua and thank you, President Bratton for this invitation and this opportunity to be here.

We are also pleased to be here with the Moynihans and the Lundines, people who represent the kind of public service that we value, and also just delighted to have been on this bus tour with the Gores. You know, people keep asking us, "What's it really like?" It is so much fun to be out here in America meeting people, talking with them, listening to them. I don't know how many of you saw what happened to us in Youngstown yesterday but a whole bridal party came from the wedding on the way to their reception to our rally. And I thought that maybe they were just stopping by, but they were wearing their full regalia, all the bridesmaids and the groom's men, and one of them said to us, "We want to be part of changing America," and that's what we're finding all across the country.

You know, when Bill and I were here last year, we were here during a week in which we talked about families. I must confess the conversation was not so heated or so emotional as it was last week in Houston. It was more inclined to be about, "What can we do to help all families?" How do we understand the world we are living in now, which has changed so dramatically in just a generation? How do those of us who are parents navigate this

world? It is harder today to be child, I think. The kinds of challenges and temptations that confront children make the job of parenting and grandparenting much more difficult. Tipper wrote a book which I think sums it up pretty well, How to Raise PG Children in an X-Rated Society, and that is pretty much what all of us are up against.

But I think that the issues that underlie the questions being raised in homes and churches and workplaces about families are far more important than the kind of political rhetoric that heated up the skies last week. What I find day after day, month after month, is that so many American families are coming to terms with the stresses and the challenges they face. Last year I talked about what it was like both to be someone who is concerned about family, committed to my own family, concerned about other people's families, and to be a woman whom I described as being on the cusp. What I meant by that was a woman between the generation of my mother and the generation of my daughter. And I said last year and I repeat today, it is a difficult journey we are on. It is hard for both men and women to know fully how to define themselves in this new world. But let's help one another. Let's not cast blame and point fingers, let's reach out helping hands and help every man and woman and boy and girl and family in America.

I also said last year and will repeat again that this argument which seems to have consumed the other political party about families, is presenting a false choice to America. We have to stand up for what I thought was so well expressed in the recent pastoral letter that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issued, a letter they entitled, "Putting Children and Families First." In that letter, they said this: "No government can love a child, and no policy can substitute for a family's care. But, government can either support or undermine families. There has been an unfortunate, unnecessary and unreal polarization in discussion in how best to help families. The undeniable fact is that our children's future is shaped both by the values of their parents and the policies of our nation." And it is time that we recognize that fundamental truth that yes, every family and every parent has to assume the responsibility for the most sacred trust they are given: the nurturing and care of the next generation.

All across this country there are families and parents struggling to fulfill that trust against unbelievable odds. They have no work, they have no health care, they have no housing, and in too many cases, they have no hope. There is something for all of us to do no matter who we might be. We each have, I believe, a calling that we may or may not recognize but which is there for us. For some it may be the art, the voices we heard; for others, the environment, and protecting and sustaining it; for others, the care of our elderly and the giving of dignity to them; but for me, ever since I was a child, it has been the care and nurturing of children, and I believe that is for two reasons. First, because I have a family which from the very beginning of my life said to me, "You are a valuable and special person." And they also said to me,

"You may be a girl, but you can do whatever you choose to do." And I took my mother and my father's words to heart. I took their belief in me and internalized it. And as I grew older I learned, mostly from my church, that I have been blessed because I have been given a family which gave me what every family should give every child, and what every child should have the right to expect: the kind of love and discipline and care and motivation that doesn't say "This is what you must be," or "You are wrong," but says, "Here is what God meant for you to be and we will give you the help we can to develop the gifts that God gave you in your life."

What my church taught me is because I had those blessings from that family, I owed something back. That it would not be enough if I were successful and grew to have the kind of wonderful marriage and love and partnership that I am blessed with, the family that I have and cherish, the opportunity to be better off than I ever dreamed possible -- that would not be enough. So from an early age my church said to me, "Yes, your personal salvation is important, but you have a scripturally ordained responsibility to reach out and help others as well." And for me that took the shape early on in caring about children, and doing what I could to try to give them whatever I thought I have received from my own family that might make their way in life a little easier, a little better. And I started with the Children's Defense Fund in 1970, and am as proud to stand here today as a staff member, a board member, a chair of the board of what I believe to have been the greatest child advocacy organization in this country that stands for the proposition that every child deserves a chance and no child should be left behind in a country as rich as ours.

And so, what I would ask today is what my husband, and Al, and Tipper, and I have been asking and saying at stops all over this great country. Let us live with the vision in our minds of what this country can be. Let us recognize the reality around us. Let us know that every 13 seconds a child is abused and neglected; every 53 minutes a child dies from the effects of poverty in this country; and, as Tipper said, every three hours a child in America is murdered. But then let us look those horrific facts and ask ourselves, "What can we do to try to make a difference?" Let's start with our own families and the children closest to us, but then reach out in a wonderful outreach of care and hope, so that in years to come, we can have conferences here in Chautauqua in which we talk about how we turned the tide and helped families, because we secured their economic futures, we gave them back the dignity of work, we changed the debilitating welfare system, we provided health care for every person, and we gave our young people an education that will enable them to be competitive and productive.

You know, at the end of the Cold War, this country's best years are before us. But one of the things I learned early on, advocating for children, sometimes representing children which have been terribly abused and terribly neglected, I learned that a year in the life of a two-year old is half their life. Five years in the life of a ten-year old is half their life. We have to move

now. We have to care now. There are too many American children, waiting, waiting, waiting and hoping that you and I will help their family give them what I took for granted and what we should want for every child. Thank you all very much.

June 28, 1991

As I was listening to Letty (Cottin Pegrebin) introduce me, it ran through my mind that many of the things I have done in the last 20 or so years in my life have been connected with trying to define what it means to be an adult, a woman, a wife, a mother in today's world.

I think all of us come to the idea of family with some built-in presumptions because we all were members of one, and so it's probably a bit presumptuous and perhaps a little bit foolish to stand in front of a group such as this to talk about these matters, but we were invited to do so, and it was a wonderful reason to come to Chautauqua, so here I am.

I thought I would spent a little time talking about how I came to these issues about family and marriage and parenting, and then share with you some of what it means to try to have a marriage and a family in the public eye. Then, my husband will talk ... he'll talk about whatever he wants to... but I think he will talk about (at least as of 8:00 this morning) some of what we've tried to do in our state to make conditions more friendly toward the responsibilities of parenting and families.

You know, I was thinking, as I have, steadily, for the past several days, about these issues that we've been discussing here this week. I am so delighted that Chautauqua has chosen once again to focus on the family. My husband was here three years ago in a similar series of lectures.

It is very clear to me, and I think, to many of you here, that our country can only be as strong as our individuals are, and our

individuals can only be as strong and as competent as the families from which they come are. And, it is imperative that we begin to study and understand those connections.

I first began to think about this, really, in the context of my church. I was raised, and am, a Methodist, and I can remember in my junior high years having the experience of being taught and ministered to by a youth minister who was wise beyond his years. He assumed although we were only 13 or 14 or 15, we could learn something about the world outside of us.

And, he spoke often that the families we were part of and the world in which we live was a very, very tiny part of the whole global experience. He took us to care for the children of migrant families who came up from Mexico to pick the crops -- it's impossible for many people to believe it now -- but when I grew up outside of Chicago, three blocks from where I lived, in a suburb which is now totally a concrete field, there were all kinds of other fields, where crops were grown and people made a living by coming to pick them, and we were out there as youngsters, working with very different kinds of families from our own.

And, he took us down to the central city of Chicago, where we learned to meet and talk children from very different kinds of backgrounds, different cultures, with different sorts of expectations for their lives.

I can remember thinking from that time forward that one of the great mysteries that I was concerned about is how did we raise children with different backgrounds and cultures and economic standards to have to kind of competence and character that we needed to have to

keep our country going and to make society really available in all of its quality to as many of our people as possible.

When I went to collage, in the middle and late sixties, it was clear there were lots of forces at work in our society, many of which were tearing and pulling at its very foundations. That prompted me to think even more about what are our problems and how do we begin to address them.

Then, in law school, my first month there, I read an article about Marian Wright Edelman, who many of you heard speak yesterday, and she inspired me, and when she came to Yale, I went and met with her and said I wanted to try and work with her, and I did, from that summer through the many years that have led to my being on her board and chairing it now.

So these themes about how do we provide for families and how do we give them the resources they need to do their job, has been a biding concern of mine for many, many years. Being concerned about something, though, doesn't necessarily mean that one understands it.

I have to confess that at the same time that I was concerned about how we raise children and equip them and prepare them and nurture them, I was also going through what many women my age have gone through, and that is, how do we define for ourselves as women what we want out of our lives.

My mother did an absolutely superb job, in my opinion, again presumptuous, of raising me. But she did it as a full time mother. She did it having lunch on the table every day when I came home from school, and she did it every afternoon when I came home from school.

Yet, I, along with so many members of my generation, for reasons that are complex and difficult, often, to articulate, and often encouraged by those very mothers who were there for us 24 hours per day, chose a different way.

My mother never went to college. She absolutely believed with all her heart that I would, and I did. She was never a professional, but she believed with all her heart that I could do whatever I set my mind to, if I was willing to make the commitment. I chose to become a lawyer, and to fulfill her confidence and faith in me.

But, it became increasingly difficult for me, along with many of my friends and compatriots, to understand how this new role that we had chosen to assume would fit with the kind of marital and parenting responsibilities that were also an absolutely essential part, we hoped, of our own experience; but certainly of the human experience.

That kind of tension and struggle between the redefinition of adult roles and the needs that children have to have met, is one of the defining struggles of the past 20 years. It is acted out in our homes, in our communities, and it has societal repercussions that we're only beginning now to understand.

I know for a long time the idea of marriage, for me, was not as clear as it certainly was for women of an earlier generation. Because, I didn't know how it would fit in with this new personality or person that I was developing.

Unfortunately I went to Yale Law School, where Bill Clinton also chose to go. If that hadn't happened, I don't know what I'd be saying to you this morning. But the first words I heard out of his mouth occurred as I was walking through the Yale Law School Lounge, one day

with a friend of mine, to get a Coke after class. I heard this voice say, "And not only that, we grow the biggest watermelons in the world."

I said, "Who is that?" and she replied, "That's Bill Clinton. He comes from Arkansas and that's all he ever talks about."

I should have known then what it's taken me years to find out, that was absolutely true. But I got to know him over the time of our being in class. He will tell you that we got to know each other because we were both in a class where we were the two worst attenders. I think that's a cruel criticism of my attendance at that class. But, it's probably got some truth in it.

But we did get to know each other, and we found that we had many things in common. We were both very concerned about our country and its direction and fascinated by politics, and committed to public service. We also realized that a marriage between two people like us was never, ever going to be easy, if it could even happen at all.

When we graduated from law school, he went right back to Arkansas. I wanted nothing to do with that. I had never been to Arkansas, and like many people who grew up in Chicago, wasn't even sure where it was. I did know that they grew the biggest watermelons in the world, but that was about the limit of my knowledge.

So we thought, well, this was one of those relationships that can't really stand the test of time, because we are so different, we have career paths that probably cannot be reconciled, and so it's been a very important experience, but it's probably finished.

That's not the way it worked out. I went to work, as Letty said, for the Children's Defense Fund, first, and then, in January of 1974,

went to work for the impeachment staff, that investigated President Nixon, during Watergate. These are two very intense jobs.

During that time, Bill taught at the law school in Fayetteville, and then decided to run for congress, because he couldn't find anyone else who would run and raise some of the issues that he wanted raised. So, again, it didn't seem very likely that we would ever find our way together.

But, one of the real challenges, it seems to me, for women growing up such as I have, women as a friend of mine describes us as "on the cusp," caught between two changing paradigms about what it means to be a woman, a wife and a mother. One of the things, it seemed clear to me, was a challenge for those on the cusp was to deal not just with our ego, in which resided our ambitions, our education, our motivations, our hopes for ourselves as an actor in the world, but also our emotions.

It was clear to me, as much as I would have liked to have denied it, that there was something very special about Bill and there was something very important between us. When President Nixon resigned, in 1974, I had to make a decision. What was I to do?

I could have gone to work for a big law firm in a place like Chicago or New York, I could have gone back to work for the Children's Defense Fund, stayed on that career path that for whatever series of motivations, I had been moving toward all of my life. I also knew that I had to deal with a whole other side of life -- the emotional side, where we live and where we grow and when all is said and done, where the most important parts of life take place.

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So, I called the dean of the law school, and I said, "When I met you, you said if I ever wanted to teach in Arkansas, you'd give me a job. Is that still open?"

He said "Yes," so I moved to Arkansas in 1974. My family and friends thought I had lost my mind. I was a little bit concerned about that as well. And I moved to Fayetteville, Arkansas, a town smaller than anywhere I had ever lived before, and to teach in a law school a subject I didn't even know yet, because they hadn't assigned it to me. They did that about two days before class.

So, it was an adventure, to put the most optimistic look on it. But it was something I had to do. Because even then, I knew that the struggle that integrates our lives is an on-going struggle. And to turn away from the challenges that are posed in our lives is to turn away from who we are. And a lot of the dissonance and the difficulties that conflict us today, are at bottom, I think, rooted in this conflict about who we are to be in a very different world than any of us were prepared to live in.

Eventually we got married, and I thought at that point that I had it figured out. I thought "Well, here we are. We've gotten married." I knew Bill was interested in politics, so he would go off in the morning and do politics. I thought I'd married another professional. You marry a doctor or a lawyer, you go off in the morning, you do your job, and you come home.

I'd go off in the morning, I'd be a lawyer, and we'd come home in the evening and talk about "How was your day?"

What I didn't realize was that when your in a political life, there are a whole different set of obligations that are imposed upon you

from the outside. And that was one of the greatest continuing education courses I've ever been a part of.

Because even if intellectually I thought I knew what was going to happen, being married to someone in politics, pragmatically I didn't have a clue. And anyone who lived through my coming to terms with what it meant to be a political spouse in Arkansas can attest to that.

I started off believing that one of the best things I could do for my career and his was keeping our lives as separate as possible, so there would never be any question of conflict of interest, since I really did want to practice law.

So, I kept my maiden name, and you would have thought that I had decided to do some terrible deed equivalent to killing the first born. I didn't have any sense of how significant a decision that would be seen as being by the people of Arkansas. So, I kept my name and decided I would just keep practicing law, meeting at the dinner table, going somewhere, and then Bill was elected governor. We had our first and only child (maybe our first child) while he was in the Governor's office. And that was like chapter two of the experience I lived through, because to be pregnant while married to the governor means that it is everybody's baby. It is not just your baby. And people walk up and offer all kinds of unsolicited advice -- totally off the wall -- whether you're looking for it or not.

It also means that when you go to Lamaze, which is what Bill and I chose to do, a lot of the men in the state think he has lost his mind. Especially the older men, who would stop him and say "I can't believe you even want to be in the hospital, let alone the delivery

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room. I always used to support you until I learned you were going to do something as crazy as that."

It also means that when it is finally time to go to the hospital, you are surrounded by state policemen, all of whom want to be helpful. But any woman who has ever gone to the hospital with one man, and I don't mean to be sexist, I really don't, but there are certain biological imperatives that still rule the universe. And if you've gone to the hospital with one man, you know how difficult it is to keep him functioning. But if you've gone to the hospital with your husband and four state troopers, you cannot believe what it's like. Especially, when they're all running around having no idea what they're supposed to do. Weeks before, in an effort to be organized for this moment, I had posted what we would take for our Lamaze experience, and one of the things was a little ice pack.

Well, I get out to the car, trying desperately to get to the hospital, and I see this conscientious trooper, dragging a huge plastic garbage bag. I said "Larry, what is that?"

He said "It's the ice you need."

I said, "I do not need a garbage bag full of ice."

But those are the kinds of experiences that my mother likes to call growing experiences. I sometimes refer to them as "groaning experiences." But they enable at least me to have some opportunity to see how a lot of other people live, because if Bill had not been elected governor and if I had not been as active as I'd tried to be in our state, meeting a lot of people and working with them, I would never have had the opportunity to be part of as many families as I have been, nor would I have had the opportunity to see how this

struggle between the traditional model and this new one that is yet being born is played out in the lives of very many different kinds of people.

It is often impossible for me to imagine what it must be like to be the single parent of children who has to be at work at 4:00 in the morning. I can't even think about how you must need to organize your life in order to do that. And yet, hundreds of thousands of women and men do that every day. So, being in the position that I've been in, has enabled me to at least grow in understanding of what families are going through and how difficult these times are.

I don't think that we're even near writing the last chapter on it. My experience is maybe a little bit atypical because so much of our married life and our parenting has been played out in the public eye. But, I think the stresses and the strains are the same across the board. And one of my hopes is, through efforts like these and other kinds of outreach, processes and communities around the country, we can begin lending a helping hand to families who are going through this transition.

I don't think it will do us much good merely to be quiet, or to list the statistics that exemplify the trouble that we're in in this country. I do think it's time for us to take a deep breath and say "We cannot turn back the clock overnight, but we can begin trying to make life a little easier through the day, for all those people who are trying to do the best they can to define their roles.

And, if we can move in that direction, then I think we will have made some progress, and I appreciate the chance to have shared this with you today.

QUESTION AND ANSWER FOR H. CLINTON:

IN THE ISSUE OF BLENDING A PUBLIC LIFE WITH A PUBLIC LIFE, A POLITICAL LIFE, HOW MUCH OF THE MEDIA INTRUSION INTO THE PERSONAL AND FAMILY LIVES OF PUBLIC FIGURES IS APPROPRIATE AND HOW MUCH IS INAPPROPRIATE?

HLLARY: I think that a certain amount of media interest and intrusion is part of the job and it answers the legitimate needs that people have to know something about their public leaders. It has become increasingly difficult, though, for those of us in public life to understand where the lines are, and who is drawing them.

It is difficult to live a life that has some personal integrity to it, to deal with the problems and the challenges that come to any family or marriage or individual, if you think every single decision you might make would be on the front page of the newspaper.

So, I don't have an easy answer for that, Dan, but it has been a continuing problem for us. One quick story, when our daughter was born, one of my goals from the morning she was born, was to insure that she would have as normal a life as we could imagine under the circumstances, so I didn't have a million photographers at the hospital and we haven't exposed her to the press. We have kept her, I think, with a sense of privacy, so that she could develop who she was as opposed to being told very early, "Go do this and look good doing it, because the press will be there. So, we've tried to walk that line, and it is very hard, and it is one of the main reasons why people opt out of public life, today.

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And, I wish that the press would realize that the more intrusive they get, the shallower the political leadership they will get, in my opinion.

Remarks by William J. Bennett*
Christian Coalition Conference
September 16, 1994

I want to discuss with you the coarsening of American society and how -- although the government is a problem and the government is an auxiliary of a lot that is going wrong -- we, the American people, are contributing to our own coarsening. It is an act in a series of acts which we have to stop.

If we believe that our children are moral and spiritual beings, we should invite them to activities which will encourage them in that direction. But we are seeing a continuing assault on our children. Many of us who have been taking the pulse of the culture, going around the country and occasionally watching TV and the movies, are getting increasingly concerned about it. I for one am getting even more impatient with what I see on television and in the movies. I am tired of taking my child to see *Batman* and having to leave in the middle of it because of the casual cruelty and the knowing sex. I am tired of a stupid, ridiculous, pointless movie like *Natural Born Killers* getting the kind of attention that it has. It's produced by people that don't have any moral sense. But where is the moral sense of the people that go to see it? I am embarrassed when I go see one of these movies. But you know, it's hard to know what to go to see; it's hard to know what to trust. I went to see the *Flintstones* with my kids. I didn't know that the seduction of a secretary was one of the underlying motifs of this film. I thought the *Flintstones* would be safe. Is it possible for these guys to make one movie without their garbage? Without their casual cruelty and their knowing sex?

If you walk around Washington today, you will see billboards at the bus stops with advertisements for a TV show called *Melrose Place*. And written across the advertisement are the words, "Mondays are a Bitch...*Melrose Place*," and there is a picture of a woman. Where is the National Organization for Women on this? Why aren't they protesting this? Why do we have this out in public? Why, when I flew back from the West Coast yesterday, do I have to sit on an airplane and watch the coming attractions with a lot of writhing bodies? Why do I have to do that -- and why do the kids have to see that? Why is so much of what is on TV and in the movies seemingly out to destroy the innocence of young people? What has it all come to? We are reaping the whirlwind. You read about eleven-year-old Robert Sandifer, who killed a fourteen-year-old girl, and who himself was later executed. He was buried last week -- buried with a teddy bear and a stuffed toy pig, his favorite toys, to keep him company in his casket. It has come to this.

I have been talking to cultural anthropologists and historians lately to find out about historical precedents for the situation which we are in. Is there a historical precedent for reversing the kind of moral decline that we are experiencing now? People are

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hard pressed to find one. Of course, there is no historical precedent for America, either. And the capacity for self-renewal in this country is well-known, so we will likely, I hope, with effort, be able to turn this around. But a friend of mine, an anthropologist, said to me just a few months ago, "It dawned on me recently that we have now become, in many places, the kind of society that in the 19th century almost every Christian denomination felt compelled to missionize." If you were in the 19th century and you looked out and got reports of a society with the kinds of pathologies that we have, you would send missionaries to it. You would send missionaries to preach to the people to try to help them come around and to come around for the sake of themselves and their children.

We have a lot of work to do.

In a book I am working on, one of the governing metaphors is going to be lifting people up instead of leveling people down. In the last 30 years, it seems to me that we have done almost everything we can think of to level down. We have leveled down standards. We have accepted behavior in public that we never would have tolerated three decades ago. We have leveled down people's expectations. And we have leveled down the *aspirations* of the young, so that when one talks to young people today, they don't talk about aspiring to be a certain kind of person. They talk about wanting to grow up and to have certain kinds of experiences: to travel, to have money, to do this, to experience that, but not to be a certain kind of person. We have leveled down and down and down. We said for a number of years, "get down," and we did. We are down. And now, it is time to start lifting ourselves up. Lifting ourselves up in the schools, in the communities, and most of all in the most important place -- in the family, in the home.

How has it happened in the last thirty years that a movement which intended the liberation of women from oppression led to the liberation of men from their responsibilities? How did this come to be? Many men have been sent the signal that it's all right to hit-and-run, that their role as father is limited to that of *genitor* [biological role], not that of *pater*. *Pater* is where you take the responsibility of fatherhood...you promise the world that you will keep your son from doing it harm, and you promise your son that, to the best of your ability, you will keep the world from doing harm to him. But in America today, 60% of our boys will grow up without fathers in their lives at some important part of their childhood. Fatherhood as a *concept* is disappearing from some communities.

Little boys want to be men -- nothing has been more clear to me as a father of two sons -- but when they are born they do not know what it means. So they look for signals, they look to other people to see what it means to be a man. If they see garbage on TV and see garbage on the streets -- garbage behavior by men -- that's what they think it means. If they see something else -- someone else in their lives,

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particularly someone close to them -- then they may get another lesson of what it means to be a man. But supposing that nobody's there when it counts to send that signal and give that message? Then they will probably grow up imitating the guy who's closest to them -- in the school yard, or maybe the leader of a gang, or someone who is on TV. In the late 20th century, many children are left with a very frail and diminished notion of fatherhood. For some boys, the only time they see anything that resembles male authority is when it's too late, in the form of a cop, or in the form of a judge, or the form of a prison. We are asking prisons to do what fathers used to do; fathers will [either] do their job, or prisons will have to do more of theirs.

I want to talk today about the responsibility of the upper and middle class for what has happened to the rest of society, and for what, in part, has happened to [the poor]. When you have an earthquake somewhere in the world, how much damage is done depends upon how strong the foundation is, how strong the structure is. When I went to Hollywood and talked about the drug problem a few years ago, they said, "Oh, it's gone now. Nobody uses drugs in Beverly Hills. We've all been through the Betty Ford treatment center." Almost everybody was able to afford a good treatment program. But down the road in Watts, there was devastation. When, metaphorically speaking, the earth shook in Los Angeles in the form of the drug problem, the rich could survive. They could buy good treatment programs. They could cushion the blow. But the poor were destroyed. And that is often the way it is with social pathologies.

You see the same thing in education. You get some stupid educational fad in the schools, and the wealthy and middle class find a way to avoid it, by sending their children to private schools, or by raising heck with the teachers. But those same ideas might do terrible damage to kids who are going to school in another part of the city.

Crime may increase in the middle class neighborhoods -- and in many middle class neighborhoods, crime has in fact *not* increased -- but in the inner cities, crime explodes and creates the kind of cauldron of violence and terror that we are now seeing.

The acts that we perform in the middle class, the signals that we send on television, the things that we do as the largest demographic group in America -- the group that everybody seems to look to and model themselves on -- have enormous implications.

This has had no greater implication than on the whole area of family. Let me explain to you what I mean. I am a strong opponent of welfare. I have argued consistently -- and I am very proud to say our group, Empower America, helped give some Members of Congress some backbone on this issue -- that we need to end the current

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welfare system. We have to stop subsidizing out-of-wedlock births. It is as if the government took out an ad in the paper in the mid-1960s, saying "Wanted for government program: Women. Must be single. Must be willing to have babies. Must not get married. Must not hold a job. Apply here." Only a few women applied early on, but as the men left and as they got the signal that someone else would take care of mother and child, they poured out the door faster than ever. And more and more women applied.

In 1960, 73,000 women between the ages of 18 and 34 were never-married mothers. In 1980, there were a million women between 18 and 34 who were never-married mothers. And in 1990, there are 3 million women between the ages of 18 and 34 who are never-married mothers. Welfare has an awful lot to do with it because of the signals it sends. It's time we said, "End welfare." People have got to be responsible for their lives.

But I will tell you something else: in thinking about this as responsibly as I can, I believe it is wrong for this society to put most of the burden on the poor, because the behavior of the middle class has been a model -- and in this case, a negative model -- for the poor people of society. It is wrong to ask poor blacks to pick up all the damage caused by a lot of people in the white middle class.

When we loosened the marital bond on the middle class of this country, we destroyed it for many of the poor. When the people who are supposed to be the model, supposed to be the example, supposed to represent what America stands for, stopped taking marriage seriously, it was a signal for the rest of society. Every individual is responsible for his own life, but we are also responsible for others and we are our brother's keeper.

The breakdown of marital commitment and fidelity... when it starts [among the upper and middle class] -- when it starts with people who are supposed to be the model for other people -- then the whole thing spreads as a conflagration through society.

What the middle class accepts as conventional and acceptable -- 'if things don't work out, just get a divorce' -- when it gets translated down to the socio-economic level, it becomes "no regard" for the institution of marriage at all. Do we not think there is a connection between the things we do in suburbia and the things that go on in the city? The damage done is large.

[Some] groups have been fixated on homosexuality. I understand the aversion to homosexuality. I understand the difference between approval and tolerance.... But if you look in terms of damage to the children of America, you cannot compare what the homosexual movement has done in terms of damage, to what divorce has done to this society. In terms of the consequences to children, it is not even close.

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Some may wish to focus and obsess on homosexuality because for some it's so far from them -- it's so far from anything they could be tempted to or by -- and so that's what they wish to talk about. Divorce and infidelity are something much more familiar to people; they are something much closer to home for a lot of people. As Karl Zinsmeister, a great scholar, has said, 'A lot of guys run off with their secretaries or members of their parish because it's fun.' And the rules are broken down. If you leave your wife and get yourself a 'trophy wife,' you're not going to be greeted with condemnation or even a raised eye by most people, because it has become a convention. But what has the convention done to American society? Some people aren't comfortable talking about divorce and adultery, but it seems to me we have to talk about them. They are before us, and they have had great consequences.

How do we know the different value attached to this in American society? Next time you are in the store, go up to the Hallmark cards, and check what the cards say to the people who are getting divorced: "Greetings to a hot new single." But to the children of divorce, parents cards said this, "I'm sorry I won't be there when you need me." We know who benefits from this disintegration of family; we know who suffers from it. It is time we talked honestly and candidly about it.

During a trip not long ago, I saw the Oprah Winfrey Show, where a divorced mom was talking about her active dating life and her sister said, "You go out too much." The mom said, "Three times a week isn't too much." The sister said, "What about your children? They have needs." And the mom said, "I have my needs, too." In that statement, ladies and gentlemen, 2,000 years of civilization crumbled. It used to be axiomatic, that if you had a child, the needs of your child took precedence over yours. That is not the case anymore.

I'd like to think I'm a realist; I live in the real world; I've seen enough marriages dissolve around me. There are some marriages that are not meant to be. I have seen abuse of wives by their husbands. I've seen other problems in marriages that make you think this thing ought to stop. But surely nothing can justify the numbers we are talking about now -- a million kids every year put into the system as a result of divorce. The statistics about divorce are increasingly discouraging because it indicates a failure of *commitment*. We have to think hard and long as a society about commitment and conviction, and whether the new philosophy of self-expression... what its standing is against our old notions of honor and commitment and fidelity.

A marriage I know of that dissolved six months ago was explained to me by the wife in the following terms: "It just wasn't working out. We weren't as happy as we thought we would be." Where did we get this notion that the sole purpose of this enterprise was happiness? Where did this idea come from? It's bad philosophy, it's bad sociology, and it's bad psychology. What I am asking for is proportionality. Let's look at where the real problems are, identify them, and speak to them honestly.

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I want to end by saying that there are secularists and guardians of contemporary liberalism who disagree with you and your views. They don't like what you stand for. And, just as important, they don't like what you stand *against*. One of the reasons many of us like you is because we think you know what to stand for -- and just as important, you know what you won't stand for. There are fights that matter, there are some fights worth being in, and you are in them.

Politics matters. But the solution to what ails us, I have become increasingly convinced, lies beyond politics. It lies with a change of the heart. St. Augustine wrote about the *ordo amoris*, the "order of the loves." I think that most of our problems, in the end, can be reduced to what the "order of the loves" are. What do you love the most? Figure out how you spend your time and that will probably tell you what you love the most.

Two reminders: First, regarding the tone and attitude and manner in which we fight the good fight, remember the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Always be sure that you struggle with Christian methods and Christian weapons. Never succumb to the temptation of becoming bitter. As you press on for justice, be sure to move with dignity and discipline, using only the weapons of love."

And the second thing is to remind ourselves -- and this is especially important here inside the beltway -- that as Christians, we are pilgrims and sojourners, citizens of heaven, not of earth. Stay involved in politics if you wish. But do it as your civic duty, not as your ultimate destiny. For your ultimate destiny is elsewhere.

* The speech was delivered from notes and has been slightly edited.