HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

MICHAEL P. FORBES
FIRST DISTRICT
NEW YORK

cc Rahm
Hillary
Ann Lewis
M Waldman
B Reed

January 7, 1998

Erskine,

Copied
Emanuel
Hillary
Lewis
Waldman
Reed
COS

Attached is copy of the Op-Ed Newsday will be running. I mentioned to the President at the Christmas Party I planned to write it.

He is right on target on Education and I will support him through "thick and thin" on this.

Mike

Shron

The War on Ignorance Can Be This President's Legacy

by Michael P. Forbes

Some of my more partisan colleagues would like to think that President Clinton is a lame duck whose term in office will leave no lasting legacy. I say baloney.

The President appears to be embarking on a crusade to reform education. In this era of relative peace and prosperity, no issue is more critical than the future of our children. And no issue is fraught with more political pussyfooting and double-talk.

Both parties in Washington have avoided responsibility for improving education for too long. Democrats fear alienating the politically active teachers unions. Republicans sidestep the problem by saying education should be exclusively a state and local responsibility.

I agree that Washington has no business dictating what subjects are taught, or how they are presented in our classrooms but it is high time we played a substantial role in supporting K through 12 public education. There is no better investment in protecting our economic and security interests in the global marketplace.

Politics must stop, the President said, at the school house door. He's dead right on that. And the fact is, most non-politicians agree. Americans of all ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds see a critical need to improve educational opportunities for our children, particularly for the most disadvantaged families.

"Our K-12 education is among the least effective in the developed world," notes E.D. Hirsch, Jr., in The Schools We Need, Why We Don't Have Them.

Prof. Hirsch points out that the gap for educational opportunity between advantaged and disadvantaged students widens as they progress through the grades. This rift in educational opportunity contributes mightily to the continued divisions in our society, and to a growing disparity between the rich and the poor. Social justice can only come with equal access to educational excellence.

In last year's State of the Union message, the President urged Congress to provide additional aid for the construction and renovation of school facilities; to embrace initiatives that elevate student achievement, particularly in reading, math and science; to allow for voluntary national standards and testing to better assess the performance of our schools; to augment teacher training and professional certification; to expand choice in public education through additional charter schools, and to promote the use of computers in America's classrooms.

Just as John Kennedy challenged the nation to land a man on the moon, so too can a popular Bill Clinton use the Presidency — and his uncanny ability to communicate — to rally us behind the initiatives he proposed. With the people's support, I'm convinced he can put together a successful coalition of Democrats and Republicans in Congress, and in the state legislatures, to build a better life for every child.

There are reports that the President is preparing a package of incentives to bolster performance in the most-troubled urban schools. He may reveal this plan in his upcoming State of the Union address.

He must do this, and more. We need a national plan of action that improves all of our schools.

The President is correct to advocate voluntary national test standards so that parents, teachers, and administrators in our nation's 13,000 school districts can measure the performance of their children against other regions of the country. As one of only three Republicans to support the President on this initiative, I urge my colleagues to put the urgent need for improvement in education above philosophical roadblocks.

The G.I. Bill, which helped returning veterans attend the college of their choice after World War II, contributed significantly to our nation's post-war prosperity. President Clinton is promoting a voucher that works like the G.I. Bill to assist the unemployed with job training. He advocates innovative charter schools and choice in public schools. These deserve our support.

A voucher program could also clear the way for low- and moderate income parents to send their children to whatever public or private school they choose. A voucher program will strengthen public education, not weaken it, as some advocates with vested interests suggest. It will put failing schools on notice that they must better educate our children, or risk losing them. The President must drop his opposition to such a voucher plan.

On the other hand, Congress must drop its opposition to the President's initiative to provide for construction and renovation of school buildings. Children, instinctively hungry to learn, must be able to do so in a safe and secure environment. Assisting the increasing number of districts that are plagued by deteriorating and overcrowded schools should be a federal priority.

How can we pay for all this?

I've long advocated a strong military. Reallocating $20 billion annually from the

Department of Defense's $ 255 billion budget, however, will do a lot more to protect our national security interests than will a few more bombers or a few more tanks.

We need to a declare war on ignorance. We need to summon the resolve this nation always shows in times of crises. We need to improve poor performance and provide school choice to struggling families so their children won't be trapped in substandard schools.

I trust President Clinton will pursue educational reform and revitalization with the same tenacity that he has shown in winning his political races. If he does, his Presidency will earn an A+. And in this most important campaign of his career, he can count on my full support.

Michael P. Forbes (R-Suffolk County) is in his second term as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and serves on the Committee on Appropriations.

1/14 cc HRC

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN 1-8

1-7-98

Dear Mr. President,

As I mentioned this morning, I would really enjoy an opportunity to spend the night in the White House for the 25th anniversary of Roe Jan 22. (Ruth Bowers, now 77 who gave the money for the Roe expenses will also be in DC.)

If possible...

Thanks for your support of choice

SARAH WEDDINGTON

512 478-7163
fax 512 478-7184

709 W. 14th St

copied
Hennreich
HRC
COS

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DATE: 1-7-98

NOTE FOR: The Honorable Robert E. Rubin

The President has reviewed the attached, and it is forwarded to you for your:

Information ☒

Action ☐

Thank you.

Staff Secretary
(x6-2702)

cc:

Sandy / Bob T

cc Rubin / Summers

They think they've always been there for us, but we abandoned them while helping Indonesia + Korea. Let's discuss

See the 2 things they want →

BC

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
1-5-98

Office of the Prime Minister,
Government House, Bangkok

19 December B.E. 2540 (1997)

Dear Mr. President,

It was a great pleasure to see you again at the APEC meeting in Vancouver. I was particularly grateful for your sharing with me many moments to reminisce about our previous meetings. I was also deeply appreciative of your statement of concern and support for Thailand in our efforts to deal with our economic difficulties.

You may also be interested to know that, on my initiative, the ASEAN Informal Summit in Kuala Lumpur, during 15 - 16 December, adopted the suggestion you made at APEC that Japan and Europe should also be involved in East Asia's economic recovery, by incorporating it in the meeting's declaration that is attached herewith for your information.

In early December, Mr. William Rhodes, Vice-Chairman of Citicorp and Citibank N.A., during his courtesy call on me observed that, while Thailand is America's first and oldest ally in Asia and has stood shoulder to shoulder with America from World War I to the Gulf War, she is now abandoned to cope with the present crisis alone. In view of the close ties and the mutual assistance that have long characterized the relations between our two countries, I am concerned that Mr. Rhodes' remarks, true and relevant as they are, echo the sentiments of many Thai people.

Let me reassure you that my government will resolve our economic difficulties, with determination and dignity. We also remain fully committed to the economic reform package agreed to with the IMF. Our readiness to bite the bullet is reflected by my government's willingness to make politically sensitive decisions and undertake painful measures, such as the closure of almost two-thirds of our financial institutions just two weeks ago. Your support for us during this critical time will therefore ensure that, even with the gravity of economic crisis, Thailand continues to be the beacon of democracy in the region.

Yours sincerely,

(Chuan Leekpai)
Prime Minister of Thailand

copied
Berger
Tarullo
Bowles
~~Rubin~~
Summers

The Honorable
William J. Clinton,
President of the United States of America,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
5-1-98

1. Thailand would be deeply grateful if the United States Government could provide assistance from the Economic Equalization Fund in the same manner as those given to Indonesia and the Republic of Korea. Such assistance will facilitate the economic restructuring program of the Thai Government and enhance foreign investors' confidence in Thailand. The present economic crisis started in Thailand and has led to the tumbling of several other Asian economies like falling dominoes. If economic stability were to return to the Asia-Pacific region, the line of reversal may well begin in Thailand.

2. Thailand also would be deeply appreciative if during the visit of The Honorable William Cohen, the U.S. Defense Secretary, to Thailand on 16 January 1998, the U.S. Government could kindly give favorable consideration to the request for a roll-over of payments for the arms procurement program of the Royal Thai Armed Forces until the Thai economy returns to stability. Such a roll-over would relieve an enormous burden on Thailand as it struggles to stabilize its economy in the shortest possible time. Moreover, the alleviation of the debt burden of the armed forces will contribute towards political stability and help institutionalize the development of democracy in Thailand.

Joint Statement
of the Heads of State/Government of
the Member States of ASEAN on the Financial Situation
Kuala Lumpur, 15 December 1997

The ASEAN Heads of State/Government reviewed the prevailing regional currency situation and their implications for the region's economies. They noted that despite the economic fundamentals of the regional economies being corrected and improved through the support and advice of the IMF, the depreciation of the currencies has continued unabated. This has resulted in serious regression in the economic well-being of the countries, their businesses and their peoples. Recognising the global dimension of the problem, they called for greater national, regional and international efforts, including by the major economies such as the ***European Union, Japan and the United States***, and international financial institutions, to overcome this situation as soon as possible and address the systemic issues underlying it.

The ASEAN Heads of State/Government stressed that ASEAN countries must remain united and show resolve in responding to the challenge posed by the currency situation. In particular, they exchanged views on the appropriate policy responses and agreed on the following :

They strongly endorsed the ASEAN Finance Ministers' agreement on the early implementation of the Manila Framework to enhance regional surveillance, strengthen economic and technical cooperation, support measures to strengthen the IMF's capacity to respond to financial crises, and support the proposed Cooperative financing arrangements that would supplement the IMF's resources;

They strongly endorsed the ASEAN Finance Ministers' commitment to ensure sound economic fundamentals and strengthen the financial sector. Taking note of the recent establishment of the ASEAN Central Bank Forum, they supported the ASEAN Finance Ministers' decision to form a Select Committee with a permanent Secretariat, assisted by the Asian Development Bank, to develop in close cooperation with international financial agencies a regional surveillance mechanism that would emphasise preventive efforts to avoid the emergence of risks that would precipitate a crisis;

They emphasised the importance of the ASEAN Finance Ministers' call upon the IMF to undertake in-depth analysis of the structure of global financial markets and short-term capital flows, including the ongoing study of the operations of hedge funds and their impact on financial market activities as well as the implications of technology on capital flows. They urged the IMF to expedite this study and propose solutions to immediately stabilise the currencies.

Towards this end, while they agreed that it is important to have sound economic and financial policies and reforms to strengthen ASEAN's ability to cope effectively with the challenges associated with liberalisation, they stressed the importance of greater transparency of capital flows to ensure greater efficiency in the functioning of economies and financial markets, They noted that since the ASEAN Finance Ministers met two weeks ago, regional currencies have fallen, causing further deterioration of the regional economies. It is therefore urgent that global efforts be undertaken, including the central role of the IMF, to arrest the currency slide and restore stability to the currency markets;

They reaffirmed their commitment to maintain an open trade and investment environment in ASEAN, including through accelerated implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), the ASEAN Investment Area (AIA) and the ASEAN Industrial Cooperation (AICO) scheme. They agreed that in view of the present situation, every effort should be made to remove barriers to trade and to promote greater intra-ASEAN trade and investment;

They called on ASEAN capital market authorities to expeditiously draw up measures to encourage the financing of infrastructure projects in ASEAN through the ASEAN capital markets, and joint efforts to promote the attractiveness of the region's capital markets to international investors; and

They reaffirmed the importance of enhanced cooperation on economic and financial issues between the ASEAN Finance Ministers.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

DATE: 1-7-98

NOTE FOR: The Honorable Larry Summers

The President has reviewed the attached, and it is forwarded to you for your:

Information [X]

Action [ ]

Phil -
are these ok
to go out?

all ok

Thank you.

Staff Secretary
(x6-2702)

cc:

Sandy/Bob T
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They have a point they've always been there for us, but we abandoned them while helping Indonesia + Korea
Let's discuss
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THE PRESIDENT HAS SE
1-6-98

THE CONCORD COALITION

1019 19th Street N.W. Suite 810 Washington D.C. 20036
202 467 6222 ◆ (Fax) 202 467 6333 ◆ http://concordcoalition.org

BUDGET EXPERTS, ECONOMISTS URGE PRESIDENT, CONGRESS TO AVOID SQUANDERING POSSIBLE BUDGET SURPLUSES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, Dec. 18, 1997

Contact: Jamie Ridge 202-467-6222
Bob Bixby

WASHINGTON--A group of federal budget experts and economists representing diverse organizations has sent a letter to President Clinton and members of Congress urging them to resist spending federal budget surpluses before they materialize, and to strongly consider using any surpluses to prepare for the retirement of the massive baby boom generation.

The letter was signed by **Martha Phillips**, executive director of the Concord Coalition; **Robert Greenstein,** Director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities; **Charles Kolb,** President of the Committee for Economic Development; **William Niskanen,** President of the CATO Institute; **John Rother**, Director of Legislation and Public Policy for the American Association of Retired Persons; **Herb Stein,** former chairman of President Nixon's Council of Economic Advisors; and **Carol Cox Wait,** President of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget.

While the signers represent groups that have different budget priorities, their letter emphasized their agreement on the following points about any eventual budget surpluses:

1) The primary reason for moving Social Security off-budget was to protect annual surpluses and make it easier to fund the baby boom generation's retirement. The best way to meet future needs is to exclude the Social Security surpluses from any calculation of budget surpluses.

2) President Clinton and Congress should not commit to use any projected surpluses before we actually have the money in the bank. It is uncertain that surpluses actually will materialize.

3) When the President and Congress decide how to allocate any surplus solving the longer term problems in Medicare and Social Security and preserving the ability of future policy makers to meet the changing needs of our population should be high on the list of priorities. Failure to do either could cost future generations dearly.

Following is the full text of the letter.

1-7-98

-more-

Phil -
Should we send to Burkhardt for reply?
Yes ______
No ______

December 18, 1997

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton
President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We congratulate you and Congress for reaching agreement to balance the budget. Indeed, if current projections prove accurate, the country soon will enjoy unified budget surpluses. Now you have an opportunity to leave an even greater legacy for the future. The holiday season seems an especially appropriate time to talk of gifts to our children and grandchildren.

It is no secret that in a little more than a decade we will face the very serious challenge of fulfilling Social Security and Medicare promises to a retiring baby boom generation. At the same time, the new millennium will present government with new needs and priorities. Yet, even before short-term budget surpluses materialize, many interest groups in Washington are lining up to use them to fund pet projects; ranging from a new round of tax cuts to new spending for a long list of popular purposes from road building to law enforcement.

Instead, the bipartisan agreement to balance the budget and the modest surpluses that may result should be the foundation for the future. The Medicare Commission will recommend longer term reforms in Spring 1999. The Social Security Advisory Council recently urged immediate attention to the needs of this program. We cannot hope to solve those major problems if we devote precious time, energy, and whatever modest surpluses that the 1997 Balanced Budget Act may produce to meet shorter-term demands.

Our groups have different priorities, and we may disagree about the allocation of any eventual surpluses. But we all agree:

1) The primary reason for moving Social Security off-budget was to protect its annual surpluses and make it easier to fund the baby boom generation's retirement. The best way to meet future needs is to exclude the Social Security surpluses from any calculation of budget surpluses.

2) You and Congress should not commit to use any projected surpluses before we actually have the money in the bank. It is uncertain that surpluses actually will materialize.

3) When you decide how to allocate any surplus, solving the longer term problems in Medicare and Social Security and preserving the ability of future policy makers to meet the changing needs of our population should be high on the list of priorities. Failure to do either could cost future generations dearly.

It is a wonderful thing, and truly a great gift, for the United States to enter this holiday season at peace, with a growing economy, and to be able to talk about how we might use budget surpluses. This remarkable state of affairs is a tribute to your leadership, the leadership of Members of both parties in both Houses of Congress, and bipartisan commitment to get the job done.

Once again we need your strong leadership if we are to pass on these gifts to our children and grandchildren. Increasing national saving and promoting investment are the keys to rising future standards of living. We should begin now to prepare for the coming changes in our population and economy. Public policies, such as saving the Social Security surpluses, send a clear message to the American people that this is where we need to go.

We wish you and yours all of the best throughout the season and into the New Year.

Sincerely,

Robert Greenstein
Executive Director
Center for Budget and Policy Priorities

John C. Rother
Legislative Director
American Association of Retired People

Charles E. M. Kolb
President
Committee for Economic Development

Frank Shafroth
Director of Policy and Federal Relations
National League of Cities

William A. Niskanen
Chairman
Cato Institute

Herb Stein
Senior Fellow
American Enterprise Institute

Martha Phillips
Executive Director
Concord Coalition

Carol Cox Wait
President
Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget

Similar letters sent to the Speaker of the House, the House Minority Leader, the Senate Majority Leader, and Senate Minority Leader, and a copy was sent to every Member of Congress.