

Baker, thank you for this most inspirational gift. With your help and with the help of Americans just like you all across this country, we will restore the vitality of the American economy and enjoy a nation united by the dreams we all share.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks and a Question-and-Answer Session at the Adult Learning Center in New Brunswick, New Jersey March 1, 1993

Judy Kesin. Welcome, Mr. President. We are so thrilled and pleased and honored to have you with us today. And we also would like to welcome Governor Florio, the attorney general Del Tufo, Eli Segal from your office who works with national community service. This is just such a treat. My name is Judy Kesin, and I am the principal of the Adult Learning Center of the New Brunswick Public Schools. We are so thrilled you could visit our program.

[At this point, Ms. Kesin described the center's educational and community service programs and the involvement of Rutgers University students and then presented the President with a gift. Several participants then discussed the effect of education and involvement in community service on their lives.]

The President. Well, first of all, I want to thank everyone who spoke. And maybe in a minute I could give some of you who haven't spoken a chance to say something, if you want to say something.

Let me tell you why I came here today. First of all, I've been very impressed by a lot of the efforts that the State of New Jersey has already made to serve people who need an education and need a second chance and to give people a chance to serve their communities.

Secondly, this center reflects two very important things that I'm trying to do in my national economic program that I'm asking the Congress to pass. The first is what I came here to talk about, and I'm going over to Rutgers to talk to the students about in a few moments, and that is the idea of giving people a chance to serve their country in their community, and in return, giving them the opportunity to further their education.

I've got the gentleman who was introduced here a minute ago with me to my right. Eli

Segal and I have been friends since we were about your age, since we were very young. And I've asked him to head up our national and community service program. What we want to do is to provide young people the opportunity to do the following things.

Number one, if you go to college and you have loans outstanding, we want to give people the opportunity to go out in the community and do community service work, work as teachers or police officers or work with the homeless or work in hospitals or work on immunizing children who need it, and doing that for a lower rate of pay for a couple of years and then pay off their college loans by doing the same. Number two, we want to give people some credit for community service they do while they're in college. And number three, we want to give people like you the opportunity to earn some credits to get college or job training by doing community service before you go. So the idea is to make higher education available to more people, in return for the service they give to the community.

Now, in addition to all that, we're going to change the way young people pay their college loans back. We're going to make it possible for people who get out of college to pay their loans back as a percentage, a limited percentage, of their income. Because what happens now is a lot of young people get out of college, they have big college loans. Because they have to pay the loans back, they might want to get out, let's say, and do community service work which doesn't pay very much, but instead they may take a job paying a higher salary just to make their loan repayment. So we're going to try to restructure the college loan program so that if people want to serve over a long period of time,

they won't be discouraged from taking community service type jobs just because they pay less. They'll be able to pay their loans back as a percentage of their income.

Now, the other thing I want to emphasize is there's also an investment in this education program that helps centers like this: more money for adult education for people who come back after dropping out of school, more money to help welfare mothers move from dependence to independence, more money to help young people who drop out of school and come back. When I was Governor of my State over the period of about 1983 to 1992, we increased by about 6 times the amount of investment in re-making education programs like this. It just exploded the number of people in it.

Now, why is that an important economic investment? Because this lady with her three children—it wasn't her fault that her husband, first of all, is out of the service and then gets hurt, right? She can either draw taxpayer dollars by taking public assistance, or get an education and pay taxes to educate other people's children. One of the things we have to realize in this country is that an economic investment is not just building an airport or a road or investing in new technology. It's also investing in people who are prepared to help themselves, to make sure that all of you can contribute in a world that is dominated by knowledge, in a world in which the living you make depends on what you know and what you can learn.

And if every person, if every single mother in the United States could stand up and give the speech you just gave with the determination you just gave, it would not only help people like you but you'd be helping people like me. Right? I mean, we're all better off, right? We are. And if you look at our country, if you look at all the different racial and ethnic groups in our country, all the different levels of education, if you look at all the different levels of income, if you look at all the problems we've got, you just think about it—if everybody in our country had a chance to get a really good high school diploma or a GED and then get at least 2 years of education and training beyond that in some way or another, and if all the while they were doing it they were doing community service work, we'd have about half as many problems than we've got, wouldn't we?

So that's why I wanted to come here today, to emphasize that this economic program that

I'm trying to persuade the Congress to pass will help people to do what you've been doing in service, will help people who do it to pile up education credits, and will invest more money in programs like those here at this center.

Developing the capacity of the American people to be all they can be is perhaps the most important job that I have as President. And people now all across America will see you today, and you may have no idea how many people you will inspire today because you had the courage to do what you did; you, or you, or you, or all of you for being here. And I really—I thank you very much. You were great.

Would anybody else like to say anything or ask a question? I can't believe you have nine children. You're a beautiful mother to have nine children. Were one of you going to talk? Yes, go ahead. Tell us your name and how you happen to be here.

[A Rutgers student presented the President with a sweatshirt.]

The President. I wish I had this this morning in Washington. [Laughter] The wind chill factor was 13 when I was on my jog this morning. Thank you very much. It's beautiful.

Funding for Arts Programs

Q. My name is Shantel Ehrenberg. I'm a dance major at the School of the Arts, and I'm originally from Minnesota. I have a question as during our program with the children and teaching them about art and through art, eliminating the prejudices and educating them on something that they find kind of foreign to them. I was wondering what you were going to do, if you have any plans for the arts, funding the arts?

The President. Programs like the one you're in will be funded basically based on the initiative of people at the local level. So if there's a program like this one at the local level which you're participating in, then it will be eligible to get community service funding.

So the answer is maybe yes, maybe no. And let me tell you why that's important. We don't want to set up a big new national bureaucracy to tell every State and every community what they should teach and what they should do. What we want to do is to build on the strengths of existing community programs like the one you're involved in. In other words, why should we come into New Jersey and create some big

bureaucracy and waste a lot of money hiring people to administer programs when you've got a perfectly good program here who can access the money and use it all to put people to work teaching art or whatever else you're doing.

So the answer is that the people who are interested in arts education throughout America, once this national program is passed, should make sure that that is an important part of the community service efforts in every State and every community. Because they will be certainly eligible for it, but we're not going to tell people what to do.

As a matter of fact, we'll have relatively few mandates in this program. The two things we are going to do is to require every State to try to provide opportunities for college graduates to be either teachers or police officers, because we know we've got a shortage of both of them in every State. But otherwise, particularly with the college students themselves or with young people who are like you, who are in school and may be earning credit toward going to college or getting job training, we're going to let that be highly decentralized so that you can meet the needs in each community and State.

National and Community Service Program

Q. I'm a Rutgers College graduating senior in May. And I was wondering when you think that law you're trying to instate or whatever is going to come into effect. I'm worrying, like, when I graduate in May, whether I'm going to go pursue chiropractic college, or because I may not have the money for it, I may have to get a job or get in more debt to try to get into chiropractic school. And I think it's a good program that you're trying to instate, but how soon would it come that we would have a chance to excel?

The President. It's up to the Congress. We'll present the law, the bill, soon. And I'm hoping it will pass this year and become immediately effective.

[A participant explained how improving her education would enable her to pass the citizenship test. Another participant said how happy she was to meet the President.]

The President. Anybody else want to say anything?

[A participant presented the President with a gift from the New Jersey Youth Corps.]

Q. It's my pleasure to have you here, not only because you're the President but because you're a President we all like. [Laughter] And I just wanted to ask you one question. As a minority student in the United States I have experience of some kind of prejudice in the country, and how we have to struggle a little bit harder than everyone else. And I just wanted to tell you that all this that you're doing is great, especially for Hispanics, Latinos, blacks. We all recognize how you're trying to make it seem that this is not only a white country anymore but all a mixture of all different cultures. And one of the groups that I've seen that has not been seen and they are a minority group, and there has not been putting any attention toward the handicapped people. I think that I wanted to ask you are you thinking of doing anything for them, because I think that they're there, and we should put some kind of value to them and some kind importance. I'm very close to one family that they have experienced with their handicapped child many different problems. And one of the things was the Reagan administration; they always had been cutting down on those programs, especially for the handicapped. And they had to have been placed in different schools, which is not appropriate for handicapped people. And they have, you know, have many problems because it's not where they should be. Do you plan to do anything for them?

The President. Yes, I'm glad you brought that up. Let's talk about two or three things. Let me say, first of all, a lot of people with disabilities have problems that aren't easy to solve, as you know. But they also have enormous potential to contribute to this country. I can make the same argument for people with disabilities I made for all of you: that it is in our interest to see that everyone develops to the maximum of his or her capacity and serves to the maximum of his or her capacity.

Let me just mention two or three things: Number one, last year before I became President, the Congress passed and President Bush signed a bill called the Americans with Disabilities Act. It has not been fully implemented. One of the commitments I made in this campaign is to try to bring that law to life for Americans with disabilities. It provides all kinds of extra effort to make America accessible and to invest in the potential of people with disabilities.

The second thing is, I hope that a lot of these service programs will involve special services to people with disabilities working toward independence, not dependence. There are a lot of Government programs now which if you know someone with disabilities, you know it's basically—it favors funding that is designed almost to keep disabled people dependent instead of independent. And more and more disabled people want to and are able to, given technological supports, to live on their own, to work on their own, to live in at least assisted-living environments. And this is a very big deal for me and for my administration. My Domestic Policy Adviser has a child, whom I've known since he was a little boy, who had cerebral palsy and is now living out on his own in an assisted-living environment. And he will soon get his high school diploma. So I believe in that.

The third thing I would say is we're going to do a lot of work through the Department of Education to try to make sure that children get appropriate placements and at least have the chance that they need to get a public education.

I don't know if you've noticed this but, not this Saturday, the Saturday before last, I did a little town meeting like this with children. And there was a 9-year-old child with cerebral palsy who was very eloquent on the show. And she said she had a twin sister who was also in a wheelchair, but her twin sister couldn't speak except with the use of a computer, which is not uncommon. And she said because she could speak, she was in a regular classroom; because her sister had to use the computer to speak, she was in a special ed classroom. And she felt that they had the same mental capacity. So she said, "Can you help get my sister in my classroom?" And I asked—it was an interesting thing to question—I asked her, I said, "Would you, if your sister couldn't do the work, would you then favor her getting special assistance?" And she said, "Yes." And I said, "What you really want is for your sister just to have a chance to do what you do?" And she said, "That's what I want. I just want her to have a chance." It was very moving.

But a lot of schools and school districts are just now learning what they can do. And we're always learning more and more about proper placements of these children. So anyway, those are some of the things that I will work on for persons with disabilities.

I appreciate the other comment you made, because I am trying to demonstrate to the American people that we are all one country. We have to live together not only with tolerance for one another but with absolute appreciation for one another's differences. We shouldn't just put up with one another; we should actually enjoy the fact that this is a country of people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.

When you look at what's going on today in the former Yugoslavia with the ethnic hatred—the Serbs and the Croats and the Bosnian Muslims shooting and killing each other and starving each other, with differences, cultural and historic differences that are deep and long-lasting but, at least to the naked eye, not near as different as the cultural differences represented just in this room—for all of the problems we have in this country, we are moving forward on that. And I really believe that a great test of whether we will go into the next century and maintain our position as the greatest and strongest nation in the world may well be whether we can learn to live together across racial and ethnic lines, and not just put up with one another but absolutely enjoy the fact and make the most of it.

One of our counties, Los Angeles County in California, has 150 different racial and ethnic groups within one county. I once spoke at a university there that had students from 122 different countries. You know what that meant. This can be an enormous strength of us in a world that is getting smaller and smaller and smaller. If you look around this room, the fact that some of you can come from such different cultures is a very big positive in a world that's getting smaller. The fact that we have a huge Hispanic population, for example, will be an enormous asset to us as more and more of our trade goes to Mexico, Central America, and South America to try to build up their economy. That's just one example. If you look at the fact that we have a substantial Asian population, it can be an enormous strength to us with the fastest growing economies in the world being in Asia. There are lots of examples. The fact that we have a big African-American population will be an enormous strength to us when 20 years from now we might find out that Africa then has the fastest growing economy in the world, if they can solve some of their political problems. So America is in an incredible position to have another great century as a nation

if we can learn to really build on the strength of our diversity.

Oh, yes. I want you all to be—you've been invited to ride a bus over to the speech. And I'm going to go with you. Do you want to go? Ready?

World Trade Center Bombing

Q. Mr. President, I have a question before you go, if you don't mind. It's not directly related to this event. But if you could, I know the American public is really interested in knowing what is going on with the World Trade Center explosion. Was it a terrorist incident?

The President. I'm not in a position to say that now, and I don't mean because I know something that I'm not telling you. I think you know that there was severe structural damage done to the World Trade Center. And as I think Governor Cuomo has already announced, you know the Federal and State and local people have been working together ever since the incident occurred. It took a substantial amount of time just to get people down in the crater that the bomb made to begin the analysis. I can tell you this: that we have put the full, full resources, the Federal law enforcement agencies, all kinds of agencies, all kinds of access to information at the service of those who are working to figure out who did this and why and what the facts are. But I cannot answer your question yet.

National and Community Service Program

Q. Mr. President, on national service, you campaigned on the promise that anybody who wanted to go to school could go and then repay their loans in national service. I think in your economic plan, under investment, there's \$3 billion allotted for national service.

The President. More now.

Q. Which would not be enough to provide this to everyone. How long would it take to phase it in? And do you think that you're not really fulfilling your campaign promise?

The President. No. As a matter of fact, in the campaign, we only talked about making it available as an option. We talked about making it available for everybody to pay off their loans as a percentage of their income, and then the funding of national service slots will be college graduates. That's all we talked about in the campaign. Now, we're actually going to start funding slots for people before they go to high school.

And we think we'll start—we think we'll have 35,000 of them, which is twice as many people as were ever in the Peace Corps in any given year, in addition to those coming out of college.

What we don't know, and we may have to modify the funding I asked for from Congress over the next 4 years, but it is impossible to know how many people will choose the service option. So the funding we asked for is based on our best available effort to estimate how many people will choose the service option. All the students will be able to choose to pay their loans back as a percentage of their income immediately. And we think we'll be able to accommodate over the next 4 years, everybody who chooses the service option. We think we will.

But we have to build it up a little in the first year or two so we learn how to do it. There has been a pilot project going, as you probably know, under legislation that was sponsored in the previous Congress by, I think, Senator Nunn, Senator Wofford, and others. And we're going to expand it just as quickly as we can, and we're going to do our level-best, once we get the system worked out over the next year or so, to make service available to everybody who wants it. We think their numbers are about right. We think we have funded it about the level of maximum participation for college graduates. But we're adding on pre-college students, which we think is a good thing. This is something I had not planned to do basically until I kept seeing programs like the L.A. Conservation Corps, City Year, programs like the ones the young people are involved in here.

Q. Are you concerned, sir, that it may become a kind of a new entitlement, that it will grow beyond the ability to fund and out of control?

The President. No, if we can't fund it, the entitlement will be access to a loan you can pay back based on a percentage of your income, which will be a huge—we're going to strengthen collection procedures, cut defaults, cut the cost of administering the program until we can fund a lot of that.

The service issue cannot become an entitlement. If all of a sudden in one year a million people want to convert from a loan to service, we won't be able to afford that. But based on the experiences we have seen in the past, we think that this will be, by far, the biggest service program in the history of America. And we think we'll be able to take everybody who will choose the service option. We're just going on historical

precedents now. We think we can more than fund the people who will choose the service option in the first 4 years. If they don't, I would consider going back. But we can't let that become an absolute entitlement.

World Trade Center Bombing

Q. [Inaudible]—economic aid, sir, to New York, and are you prepared to do that? Governor Cuomo has asked for it.

The President. This morning I got a report on that, and it's my understanding that we are going through the regular agencies and that the request will be processed promptly. I don't think that there is any problem with the request that he made as far as I understand it. And we're giving that a high priority.

Rutgers University and Community Service

Q. Mr. President, why did you choose Rutgers for this announcement? And what impressed you about their community service program here?

The President. I chose Rutgers because, first of all, the university was involved with this facility and because I want to keep highlighting adult education, education of welfare recipients, education of kids that drop out of school, and because I like this New Jersey Youth Program here. Under Governor Florio's administration, they started, I think, 9, 10, 11 of these, something like that. Again, I do not want this to be a bureaucratic program. I want to encourage kind of an entrepreneurial spirit out there at the State and local level. I want States to be encouraged to set up Youth Corps. I want comprehensive community service centers like this to be able to get people doing national service.

So I wanted to come here to say I really appreciate what these folks are doing, but also to give the rest of America an idea of what we mean by community service, what we mean by national service, and how it can embrace people of different ages and different backgrounds with different needs; because it's very important that to make this work, we're going to have to rely on the creativity of people at the grassroots level. And the last thing I want is another centralized bureaucracy telling people how to serve.

As I said, right now, the only decisions we have made for categories of service that have to be approved in every State are in the area of police and teaching, because we know as a practical matter we need more community polic-

ing in high-crime areas where we can reduce crime and work with kids and not just be there after it happens. And we know we need more teachers in a lot of core areas to reduce the student-teacher ratio and increase learning. So we've done that. But otherwise, this program is not going to have a huge set of national requirements or bureaucracy.

Neighborhood Corps Legislation

Q. Mr. President, how closely, if at all, did you work with Senator Bradley's neighborhood corps bill?

The President. We reviewed it very closely. I think he's going to meet us over at Rutgers today. I was very impressed by it. And as a matter of fact, I had a personal conversation with him about it. That's one of the reasons we wanted to come up here, too. And I invited him to come today, and I think he's going to be over there.

Terrorism

Q. Mr. President, do you fear that a fear of terrorism in America might change the way of life that most Americans have, if this bombing proves to be terrorism?

The President. I certainly hope not. We've been very blessed in this country to have been free of the kind of terrorist activity that has gripped other countries. Even a country like Great Britain, that has a much lower general crime rate, has more of that sort of activity because of the political problems that it has been involved in.

I don't want the American people to overreact to this at this time. I can tell you, I have put the—I will reiterate—I have put the full resources of the Federal Government, every conceivable law enforcement information resource we could put to work on this, we have. I'm very concerned about it. But I think it's also important that we not overreact to it. After all, sometimes when an incident like this happens, people try to claim credit for it who didn't do it. Sometimes if folks like that can get you to stop doing what you're doing, they've won half the battle. If they get you ruffled, if they get us to change the way we live and what we do, that's half the battle.

I would discourage the American people from overreacting to this. It's a very serious thing. And I'm heartbroken for the people who were killed and their families and those who were

injured. There was some significant business disruptions, too, as you probably know and as I'm afraid we'll find out more about in the next day or two, just by shutting down the World Trade Center and all the activities that go on there. But I would plead with the American people and the good people of New York to right now keep your courage up, go on about your lives. And we're working as hard as we can to get to the bottom of this.

[A student expressed appreciation and support for community service ideals.]

Gun Control Legislation

Q. The National Rifle Association right now, in New Jersey, is actively seeking to overturn the assault weapons ban that Governor Florio put on the books in 1990. They say if they're successful, then no other State will be able to enact rigid gun control and that you'll have a very tough time getting the Brady bill through Congress. Are you concerned about that?

The President. I think Governor Florio is right. And I'm going to sure try to pass the Brady bill. I think Americans who want safer streets and still want people to be able to hunt and fish and pursue their sporting activities should take a lot of heart in the success that Governor Wilder had in Virginia recently. And Virginia, it has become a source, as you know, of weapons for a lot of illegal activity all up and down the Atlantic seaboard. And they've gone to that once-a-month limitation on the purchase of guns.

You know, we can't be so fixated on our desire to preserve the rights of ordinary Americans to legitimately own handguns and rifles—it's something I strongly support—we can't be so fixated on that that we are unable to think about the reality of life that millions of Americans face on streets that are unsafe, under conditions that no other nation—no other nations—has permitted to exist. And at some point, I still hope that the leadership of the National Rifle Association will go back to doing what it did when I was a boy and which made me want to be a lifetime member because they put out valuable information about hunting and marksmanship and safe use of guns. But just to know of the conditions we face today in a lot of our cities and other places in this country and the enormous threat to public safety is amazing.

I've got young Americans now in Somalia trying to create conditions of peaceful existence

there in a country where it is difficult. But there are a lot of young Americans who are living in neighborhoods today that are about as dangerous or worse than what kids are facing in Somalia in terms of shots, not in terms of hunger and access to medicine and shelter, that's different.

But I have to tell you I think that Governor Florio did a gutsy thing here. I think Governor Wilder did a brave thing. I had my own encounters back home in Arkansas, and I just hope to be able to pass the Brady bill and do some other sensible things that do not unduly infringe on the right of the law-abiding citizen to keep and bear arms, but will help make these children's future safer. And I think we ought to do that.

Q. Do you think that the NRA's contributing to that threat that you just talked about because it is opposing these gun control measures?

The President. Well, I don't want to get into character. I think that it is an error for them to oppose every attempt to bring some safety and some rationality into the way we handle some of the most serious criminal problems we have. And these things do not unduly affect the right to keep and bear arms. It's not going to kill anybody to wait a couple of days to get a handgun while we do a background check on somebody that wants to buy a gun.

I have personal experience with this. I live in a State where half the people have a hunting or a fishing license. I know somebody who once sold a weapon to a person who went out and killed a bunch of people because he was an escapee from a mental hospital. And the guy liked to never got over it. And if he had just had a law where he was supposed to wait 2 or 3 days to check, they would have found that out. I know that happens. I don't believe that everybody in America needs to be able to buy a semiautomatic or an automatic weapon, built only for the purpose of killing people, in order to protect the right of Americans to hunt and to practice marksmanship and to be secure in their own homes and own a weapon to be secure. I just don't believe that.

So I hope that this is a debate that will continue. And I think, as I said, what Governor Florio did and what Governor Wilder did, I think will contribute to Americans facing this and trying to reconcile our absolute obligation under the Constitution to give people the right

to handle a firearm responsibly and our obligation to try to preserve peace and keep these kids alive in our cities.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:20 a.m. at the center.

Remarks on National Service at Rutgers University in New Brunswick March 1, 1993

Thank you, Nakia Tomlinson, for that fine introduction. I wish I could take you with me everywhere. We'd make a great duo there. Let's give her another hand. I thought she was great. [Applause]

I'd like to thank President Frank Lawrence—Francis Lawrence—for his fine speech. Does anybody call him Frank? I should have asked. [Laughter] I want to compliment Professor Benjamin Barber for his leadership and service here. And I want to thank all of you here in the Rutgers community for coming out for what I hope will be a truly historic moment in our Nation's history.

In addition to the people who have been introduced here, there are a host of mayors and members of the assembly and county officials here from your State. We have two former Governors, both of whom I served with, Brendan Byrne and Tom Kean, who are out there. I'm glad to see them, my friends. We have a distinguished array of Members of the House from New Jersey, Herb Klein, Bob Menendez, Frank Pallone, Donald Payne.

But you have some Members of the Congress from all over America here, and I want to introduce them, too, because they have taken a lot of trouble to come to Rutgers and because without them and without the people who represent you, the proposal I make today has no hope of passage. Many Members of the Congress for years have believed we ought to do more in national service, and some of them are here today.

I'd like to begin by introducing your Senator, Bill Bradley, who's behind me. I must say, when I walked into this arena, I turned around and asked Bill Bradley if he'd ever shot any baskets in here. I'd be intimidated to be the opposing team in here. Senator Bradley sponsored legislation to establish neighborhood corps and self-

reliance scholarships, things that are forebears of the proposal I came to make.

I'd like to recognize the presence on the platform of Senator Ted Kennedy from Massachusetts who chairs the Senate Committee on Human Resources and Education, which shepherded the pilot national and community service bill through the Congress in the last session, along with his counterpart who is out here in the audience somewhere. I'd like to ask him to stand up, the chairman of the House committee, Congressman Bill Ford, who came all the way from Michigan to be with us. Congressman, would you stand up.

I'd like to recognize in the audience the presence of Senator Chris Dodd from Connecticut, who was one of the first Peace Corps volunteers in the United States.

The Member of Congress who introduced many, many years ago the first piece of national service legislation ever introduced, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Claiborne Pell from Rhode Island is here.

I'd also like to introduce the only person in this audience, at least of our crowd, who doesn't have to look up to Senator Bradley, Senator Jay Rockefeller from West Virginia, an early VISTA volunteer in the United States.

And finally, I would like to recognize two other people, one a Member of the United States Senate and one a distinguished American citizen, the first boss of the Peace Corps, Sargent Shriver, who's up here with me, and his deputy, Senator Harris Wofford, from Pennsylvania, and Mrs. Wofford, I'm glad to see you.

Now, I was involved before I became President in a group called the Democratic Leadership Council, and we made one of the central parts of our platform to reclaim a new majority