

these young people a new future and give America a better future. We can make a real difference, folks, a real difference if we'll pass this legislation and get about providing every young people the opportunity to be as self-assured, as knowledgeable, as skilled as the two young people you heard from today. That's an important legacy we ought to leave to them.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:47 a.m. in the Delmarva Aircraft Hangar at Sussex County Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Opportunity Skyway participants Chrissy Thomas and Francis Orphe; Larry Perlman, chairman and CEO of Ceridian Corp. and chairman of the Business Roundtable working group on workforce training and development; and Carlton Spitzer, director, Opportunity Skyway.

Remarks on Naming Bill Frenzel as Special Adviser to the President for NAFTA and an Exchange With Reporters

September 3, 1993

The President. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. A few days ago, as all of you know, I announced that Bill Daley in Chicago would be Special Counselor to the President to coordinate our effort to pass the North American Free Trade Agreement in the Congress. It is my great pleasure today to announce that Bill will be joined in our team by the gentleman to my left—probably an uncomfortable position for him—[laughter]—the distinguished former ranking minority member of the House Ways and Means Committee, Bill Frenzel from Minnesota, who for 20 years in Congress established a well-deserved record and is a genuine expert on this use of trade. He is now a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution, and he has agreed to come aboard as Special Adviser to the President for NAFTA while we work through this effort in Congress.

I also want to point out that we have just received a letter signed by 283 economists, among them liberals and conservatives and 12 Nobel laureates, reinforcing the position that I have taken strongly for over a year now, which is that this agreement, especially coupled with the side agreements, means more jobs, not fewer jobs, for the American people. This is a jobs issue.

Since the late 1980's, over half of our net new jobs have come from expanding exports. And one of the biggest deterrents to our expanding the job base in America today is declines in exports because of the flat economy in Europe, the flat economy in Japan. Latin America, as a whole, is the second fastest growing area of the world. Mexico is leading that

growth. I believe this is a very good move for the United States. It means more jobs. And I want to thank Bill Frenzel for his willingness to come aboard to make clear to all of America that this is a truly bipartisan effort and also to make it clear that we are serious about getting as many votes from Members of both parties as we can in the United States Congress. I thank you.

Congressman, I invite you to make a few remarks.

[At this point, Representative Frenzel thanked the President and reaffirmed his commitment to NAFTA.]

Q. Mr. President, do you think it will pass? And also, is there some intramural fight on whether health care should go first or you should focus on NAFTA first?

The President. Yes, I think it will pass, and no, there isn't one. We believe that it is the challenge, obviously, to present any kind of a major initiative to the Congress. But there is quite a difference between the two issues. Once the bill is ready for introduction under the laws governing NAFTA, it must be voted on in a certain amount of time. So there is a legislative timetable that will control that. The health care issue—the timetable for that will be largely determined by how quickly a consensus can be reached and by how much time the individual Members of the Congress are willing to put into mastering what is clearly the most complex public policy issue facing the United States today.

Nevertheless, I continue to believe strongly that the two issues complement each other; I do not think they conflict. I think that there is an enormous amount of bipartisan interest in doing something to control health care costs as a way of stimulating the economy as well as providing health security to all Americans. And it gives people something to be for, and it puts in the larger context that all these things are being done to try to provide the American economy and bring the American people into a stronger position as we face the 21st century. So I just don't buy the conflict argument. I feel good about this.

Health Care Reform

Q. Mr. President, do you think that the fact the Congress won't let you go forward with any additional broad-based taxes to pay for health care reform, that that's going to force you to so scale back the universal health care that you once envisaged that it won't have the kind of effect that you thought it would originally?

The President. No, not at all. If you go back to my February address, I have never wanted to have any big, broad-based taxes to pay for health care. I have never thought that was right, and I've never understood why you can justify taxing the American people as a whole to pay to cover those who aren't covered, when more than half of the American people are paying more for their health care than they'll be paying today. And when we are paying now almost 40 percent more of our income for our health care than any other advanced nation, I just don't think you can justify that. So I'm quite comfortable with that, and I think when we put

out our ideas and others put theirs out, that the American people will see pretty quickly we can do comprehensive coverage and without a big, new tax.

Q. Do you think Mr. Kantor is big enough to take on Mr. Perot?

The President. Yes, he's wanted to—show them your—he's already wounded, but even wounded, Mr. Kantor is a formidable fighter. Now he's got a lot of good help, too.

Oval Office Redecoration

Q. What do you think of your new surroundings?

The President. I like them very much. I think it's a beautiful rug. I like the couch. I like it.

Q. How much input did you have in this? I mean, is this you?

The President. I like it a lot. A little input. I thought a darker rug would be pretty and would lift the room, and something other than white couches. I like it.

You ought to sit on the couches. He also made them stronger so people don't sink in when they come in here. Did you ever go into an office and sink into the couch, you know? I don't think that's very good, so I wanted people to feel good.

Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International], when Mickey opened his coat, did you think of President Johnson? [Laughter]

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:37 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Message on the Observance of Labor Day, 1993 *September 3, 1993*

On this important occasion of Labor Day, we take time out of our active schedules to honor the working men and women of America whose diligence and energy have made this country great.

These are the men and women whose sweat and toil built this nation from the ground up. They laid the railways, highways, and runways that brought this far-flung land together. They created an industrial machine that became and

still remains the envy of the world. They answered the call in every time of need and forged the military might of a superpower. And, more recently, they have led the world into a new age of communications and services. Their labors have fed, clothed, and housed this nation in good times and in bad.

Despite labor's tremendous contribution to the growth and success of our country, those who worked hard and played by the rules were