

ment, we will never be the nation we ought to be.

On Labor Day, you are doing your part by working for America. And I pledge to you that our administration will do its part by working for these goals to make this country what it ought to be.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Caribbean West Apartments. In his remarks, he referred to Marty Urra, president, South Florida AFL-CIO, and Jeffrey H. Watson, Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Remarks Announcing the Report of the National Performance Review and an Exchange With Reporters

September 7, 1993

The President. Mr. Vice President and members of the Cabinet, distinguished guests, Mrs. Gore, Senator Gore, thank you for coming. To all of you from the Federal Government and from the private sector who worked on this report and all of you who care about seeing it implemented, I think we all owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the Vice President for the difficult and thorough work which has been done and for the outstanding product which has been produced. My gratitude is great also to the staff of the National Performance Review and to the employees of the Federal Government and the people in the private sector who helped us to do this and to the Cabinet members who have supported it.

I will say I had the opportunity to read this report in draft over the weekend. I read it very carefully. I read some sections of it more than once. And if the report is any indication of where we're going, then the future looks bright indeed, because this is an oxymoron; this is a Government report that's fun to read. [*Laughter*] It's well written. It's interesting. It's compelling, and it is hopeful.

I ran for President because I wanted to get America on the move and I wanted to pull our country together. And it became quickly apparent to me in the campaign that the feelings I had developed not only as a citizen but as a Governor over the previous 12 years were widely shared by others. It's hard for the National Government to take a leadership role, even a partnership role, in bringing America together and putting America on the move when people have no confidence in the operations of the Government, when they don't believe they

get good value for the dollars they give to the Government in taxes, when they don't believe that they're being treated like customers, when they don't really feel that they are the bosses in this great democratic enterprise.

And so, 6 months ago, I asked the Vice President to embark on a risky adventure, to see if we could make the Government work better and cost less, to serve our people better, and to, as important as anything else, rebuild the confidence of the American people in this great public enterprise.

Our Founders clearly understood that every generation would have to reinvent the Government, and they knew that long before the Government was nearly as big or cumbersome or bureaucratic or far-reaching as it is today. Thomas Jefferson said, laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of human mind as that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made and new truths discovered and manners and opinions change. With the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the time.

That is what the Vice President and this group tried to do, to listen and to learn from people who best understand how to make Government work better. This report reflects the practical experiences of Federal employees whose best efforts have too often been smothered in redtape, business people who have streamlined their own companies, State and local officials who are reinventing government at the grassroots, and concerned citizens who deserve and demand more value for their tax dollars.

To meet the challenges of the global economy and to better use new technology, our most successful companies have been through this process, many of them starting more than a decade ago: eliminating unnecessary layers of management, empowering frontline workers, becoming more responsive to their customers, and seeking constantly to improve the products they make, the services they provide, and the people they employ.

Meanwhile, I have seen too little of this happen nationally. I do want to say that there are many reasons for this. Government, as we all know, has too often a monopoly on the money of the American people and on those who have to be its customers. Government also does not have the pressure from time to time to change that the private sector does, so that what we have today, as the Vice President said, is a lot of good people trapped in bad systems. We still have a Government that's largely organized on a top-down, bureaucratic, industrial model when we're in an information age. And very often, it is just easier to keep on doing what you have been doing.

I want to say, though, that we not only have the models that the Vice President mentioned—the terrific work done in Texas by Governor Richards and the comptroller, John Sharp, who's here with us today; the work that I started when I was Governor of my State, and we had the first comprehensive statewide quality management program in the country—but also we have something else to be even more hopeful for and that is that in spite of all the obstacles, there are stunning examples of Federal employees succeeding in this environment. The thing I want to encourage all of you to do is to actually read this report. It's not very long. It is fun to read, and it will reassure you that there are people out here who are making productivity improvements, who are giving you value for dollar, who are trying to save money, and who are proving, most important of all, that we can do this on a sweeping basis all across the Government.

Make no mistake about this: This is one report that will not gather dust in a warehouse. I will challenge every concerned American to read it. I will discuss it in great detail with the Members of the Congress. I will ask people to help us to pass those programs which have to be passed through Congress and to implement those things which must be done by the

executive branch. This program makes sense. It's going to work. We're going to do it.

There are a lot of places in this report where it says "the President should," "the President should," "the President should." Well, let me tell you something, I've read it, and where it says "the President should," the President will.

You know, everybody knows that we've got a big budget deficit. Most of us know we, ironically, also have got an investment deficit. The two are not unrelated. We don't have enough money to invest in the growth of the economy and the development of our people because we've spent too much money on other things and because we have refused to change. The key to remedying both the budget deficit and the investment deficit is to overcome the performance deficit in the Federal Government. And we intend to make a beginning on that.

There's no reason that we can't have a post office where you always get served within 5 minutes of the time you walk up to the counter; why you can't have an IRS that always gives you the right answer and takes your phone call; why you can't have a Government that pays no more for a hammer or a pair of pliers, or more importantly, for a personal computer than you'd pay at a local commercial outlet.

The Vice President and I are going to work with the Cabinet to find ways to make the Government more responsive and to implement this report. We're going to rely on the innovations of our leaders in the Cabinet. For example, under Secretary Cisneros' leadership, the Department of Housing and Urban Development is finding new ways to empower citizens not to expand bureaucracy. The Department is determined to eliminate 75 different rules and statutes that make it more difficult to build housing and to redevelop communities and determined to do more to help people who live in public housing have control over their own destinies instead of being controlled by mindless rules and regulations and decisions made by people an awful long way from where they live.

We have other community initiatives that we are supporting for States and cities and towns: community policing, citizens patrols, and other special programs to keep young people out of trouble. All those things have to spring up from the local level, and there shouldn't be Federal rules and regulations getting in the way. States and cities and towns applying for funds for community development and assistance to the home-

less will be required now to submit only one application and one report, not the seven that have been required.

Under the Attorney General's leadership, the Justice Department is finding new ways to collect more than \$14 billion that delinquent debtors owe the Government. Those who are able to pay, should. About 20 percent of the money owed the Federal Government today is delinquent. It's time we collected on the bills.

Under Secretary Bob Reich's leadership, the Labor Department will offer one-stop career service centers to help their customers make better use of the presently bewildering array of 150 different employment and training programs. There is a gripping story in this report of someone who lost their job in a company because of global competition, then got hired again by the same company and lost this job a second time because of cutbacks in the defense budget. If the person had quit the first time, they could have gotten job training under the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act, but because they quit and went back to work, which was the right thing to do, and lost their jobs a second time before there was a defense conversion plan in place to train people who lost their jobs—the second time, the same guy couldn't get any job training.

I could give you lots of examples of that. We are going to fix that. We're going to put these programs together and recognize that all Americans need job training. The Labor Department ought to provide it. Instead of providing people to push papers around to figure out how to keep people out of 150 different programs, there ought to be one that all Americans can participate in.

Under Secretary Mike Espy's leadership, the Agriculture Department is concentrating on six key functions: commodity programs, rural development, nutrition, conservation, food quality, and research. This will allow the Agriculture Department to consolidate from 42 to 30 Agencies and cut administrative costs by more than \$200 million a year.

This just isn't about changing our Government; it's about changing our country. We reinvent the Government. We're doing something that is essential to reviving our economy, restoring our confidence in Government, and therefore, permitting us once again to be one American community.

Last month, we passed an important milestone when Congress passed the economic plan that

will begin to pay down an enormous deficit we inherited, cut wasteful spending, and make investments we need in our people, our jobs, our educational and technological future.

In the weeks ahead, we have other challenges to face from reforming our health care system to provide security for every family, to opening new markets for our products and services abroad so that we can start creating jobs again. But to accomplish any of these goals, we have to revolutionize the Government itself so that the American people trust the decisions that are made and trust us to do the work that Government has to do. The entire agenda of change depends upon our ability to change the way we do our own business with the people's money. That is the only way we can restore the faith of our citizens. An effective Government can offer people opportunities they need to take greater responsibilities for their own lives and to rebuild their families, their communities, and our beloved country.

We ask the support of Americans from every walk of life, from every party, from every region. The Government is broken, and we intend to fix it. But we can't do it unless we all understand that this isn't a Democratic goal or a Republican goal. This is an American imperative, and we all need to be a part of it.

I look forward to the day when every American can cite some example that he or she has personally experienced in this revolution in the way Government works, a program that is paid for not by stopping something worthy or raising new money or increasing the deficit but by stopping something that didn't need to be done anymore. I look forward to a day when you call the IRS and ask a question, and they give you an answer, and you know it's the right one; when you ask your children what they think about the Government and they can all cite something the Government has done to make their lives better and done in a good and efficient way.

If that happens, we'll all be in debt for a long time to the Vice President and his staff and to all the others who participated in this report. I think they did a great job. Now it's time for the rest of us to do a great job and implement the recommendations so that we can change the way the American people feel about their Government and change the role that the Government plays in our lives for the better.

Thank you very much. God bless you.

Q. Mr. President, why do you think this is going to be any more successful than other attempts that have been made in the past and failed?

The President. I think there are two or three reasons. First of all, frankly, this is a better report. It's not just a report in which one group of Americans tells another group of Americans, "Here are big things we don't need to do anymore. Let's just stop doing." This is a report which says, "The whole way the Government operates is incompatible with the world in which we're living, and we can change it."

I think if you read it, this is qualitatively different from past reports. This is a real generational change in the attitude about what should be done in Government and how it should work. So I think that will make a big difference.

Secondly, I think there is more public support for this than there has been in the past that runs across all partisan lines, Republicans, Democrats, independents.

And thirdly, there is a President here who will do more than talk about it. I intend to do what I can to implement it. I've asked the Vice President to give me a set of recommendations, starting immediately about which things we can change by Executive order, which things we need to go to Congress with, and how we're going to go to Congress with these recommendations and push them through. So it's a very different thing.

Finally, I think there's a lot more support in the Congress than there has been in the past. I think a lot of people in the Congress now realize that if we're going to close the investment deficit, if we're going to close the budget deficit, we've got to close the performance deficit in Government, that it just doesn't work. And the harder they work—and let me just say this: The Congress, for example, has spent about 40 percent more time on the job this year than they did last year. But you can work hard and hard and hard, and if the American people don't have confidence in the ulti-

mate enterprise, it's still hard for the Members of Congress to get credit for the work they're doing because the ultimate product is not going to function very well. So I think those are the reasons that this won't be like past reports.

Q. Do Members of Congress know about this yet, Mr. President, and what are they telling you back when you tell them about this proposal?

The Vice President. Let me respond to that. We're getting a lot of tremendous support from the Congress. Let me point out that some of the pioneers in this effort have been in the Congress. The chairmen and ranking members of the two principal committees on how the Government operates are all very supportive.

There will be some opposition. You know that, and we couldn't change what needs to be changed without running into opposition. But the ground has shifted. The world has changed. The American people are demanding that we change the way the Federal Government operates. It doesn't work well now. It costs too much money; it performs very poorly. We want to make it work better and cost less by implementing the recommendations of this report. We fully intend to do that.

Q. What about—get Congress to go along with the biennial budget? Will you be able to get Congress to go along with the biennial budget?

The President. I hope so. Well, in times past, over a majority of the Congress has supported a biennial budget. It can't be very satisfying for them to have to spend all their time doing that when they can spend more time evaluating how these programs work.

Q. What about the unions, Mr. President?

The Vice President. They've been very supportive. They've been very supportive. All three of the principal ones have endorsed it.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:20 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. The exchange portion of this item could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.