

ognize we got in the fix we're in—20 years in the decline of wages, 12 years in the explosion of the deficit, 30 years in the social problems we've got. We can turn it around. It won't happen in a day. But if we work together and we work hard, every year we can see progress. We can see progress. And we will look ahead to the 21st century as the best years our country ever had because we did our job now to rebuild America.

Thank you for what you're doing. I'll stay with you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. on the main factory floor. In his remarks, he referred to Donald Beall, chairman, Rockwell International, and Robert Paster, president, Rocketdyne Division.

Remarks at the Creative Artists Agency Reception in Beverly Hills, California

December 4, 1993

I want to thank you, Michael, for that wonderful introduction. Even more I want to thank you and Judy for meeting me at the door with your three children, which reminded me what my job is all about. Are they great looking kids or what? *[Applause]* I want to thank you and Bill and Ron for hosting us all here. It's good to be back in this gorgeous building. And I'm delighted to be here with my good friend David Wilhelm and Secretary Ron Brown, who has been to California more than a dozen times in this first year of our administration trying to put together an approach that will help our Government to help you recover economically. I thank Kathleen Brown and Gray Davis and especially my good friend Senator Dianne Feinstein for being here with us. I hope you will send her back to the Senate. I also want to say a special word of thanks to so many of you in this audience who worked for me in the last election, who made appearances for me, who helped to raise funds and helped to make arguments and who stood up for me in the face of some pretty wilting criticism.

I appreciated what Michael said about the fullback Presidency. One of my predecessors, Woodrow Wilson, who interestingly enough I learned had the biggest feet of any President until I came along—*[laughter]*—Woodrow Wilson was a great scholar, and he wrote a book, a much criticized book, about George Washington. But he said that the most important thing about George Washington when this country was getting off the ground was he never knew when he had been defeated in battle. He did not have enough sense to know when he was beat, so he just kept on going.

Well, there's something to be said for that. We measure out our lives too many times in short durations. And we measure defeat in the moment instead of over the long run. I did not run for this office for so long and under such difficult circumstances either to squander the opportunity to change this country by not trying to or by giving up in the face of opposition or even my own mistakes. For it is clearly true that in a time of great change with unprecedented challenges, if you try to do a lot of things, every now and then you won't do the right thing. But I think if your ears and eyes are open and your heart's in the right place, better to make a mistake and correct it than to sit on the sidelines and not try to change the country.

I came to California today to meet for a period of what turned out to be about 3½ hours, which is why we're a little late tonight, with a lot of community leaders from all walks of life to talk about what we had done together in the last year and what we could do in the year ahead to help to rebuild this economy and to rebuild hope and opportunity and community here. And afterward I went into the plant where we were at Rockwell and talked to a lot of folks who were working in the plant and gave an account of this last year. I don't want to do that tonight except to say that when I was upstairs meeting some of you, it was interesting to me what was mentioned going through the line. Some people said, "I'm really glad you fought so hard for NAFTA and passed it." Others said, "I'm glad you're trying to get a new

world trade agreement through GATT, but I'm glad you're fighting for the interest of the entertainment industry while you're doing it." Many said, "Thank you for the Brady bill." And some talked about the speech and encounter that I experienced on World AIDS Day.

But everybody who talked to me at least had a sense of possibility, a possibility of change, a possibility of improvement, a possibility that we were really doing things again. I ran for President because I thought this country had two great problems. I thought we were going in the wrong direction economically and otherwise, and I thought we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together. I ran because I wanted this country to go into the 21st century still the greatest country in human history and because I want every person who lives in this country to have a chance to live up to their God-given potential, something most of us in this room have had to such an extreme degree that we almost take it for granted that it's there for everyone.

And in the last year we have made a good beginning. Michael was kind enough to read the list of most of the important initiatives. This economic program to bring the deficit down and keep interest rates down and inflation down is very important. We've had a 14-year high in home sales. We've got the unemployment rate going down. We've got more private sector jobs in 10 months than in the previous 4 years. We are moving in the right direction even though, to be candid, most Americans haven't felt it yet, especially here in California. Plainly the direction is the right one.

We've tried to help families put their lives together and help people who are working and who have children succeed as parents and as workers, one of the biggest challenges in America today, one we all face, many of us. But since most parents have to work and most workers are parents, we can't go where we need to go unless we are committed to the proposition that people ought to be able to succeed in both roles. That's why the family leave law was so important.

Perhaps the most moving experience I've had inside the White House occurred a couple of Sundays ago, maybe about six now or eight. I came in from my morning run, and there was a family there, a father, a mother, three children. And I noticed the middle child was in the wheelchair. And I went over and shook

hands with them. It's very unusual for people to be touring the White House on Sunday morning, but this little girl was part of the Make-A-Wish Foundation. And she was desperately ill, and she wanted to see the White House and meet the President, so they brought her in there. And I shook hands with them, and I was a little embarrassed to be in my jogging outfit so I went up and got cleaned up, and I came down looking like a real President—[laughter]—and stood there to shake hands with the family and to take a picture. So we took a proper picture. And I was walking off, and the father grabbed me by the arm really strong. And I turned around, and he said, "Just in case you think what you do doesn't matter around here," he said, "my little girl is probably not going to make it. But I have been able to take time off from my job to spend time with her. It's the most important time I've ever spent in my life, especially if she doesn't make it. And because of that family leave bill, I could take that time off without fear of losing my job and hurting my wife and my other two children. Nobody should ever have to make that decision, and now we don't. Don't you ever think what you do here does not have an impact on people where they live."

I say that to make this point: In the end, the true test of our endeavors is whether they enrich the meaning of the lives of the people who live in this country. In the end, all the statistics and numbers and did you pass more bills than anybody else and all that sort of stuff—really matters that were they the right bills, and did they affect people, and are they moving people both forward and together.

And I came here tonight really to ask for your help for this reason: I believe that we can move this economy in the right direction, even though the decisions are unbelievably difficult when you're trying to reduce the deficit and increase investment where you need to increase it at the same time. I believe we can get a good set of trade agreements to expand global trade. I believe we can have a good technology policy. I believe we can redo the unemployment system and have a good training system in this country again. I believe, in short, that we can make the kinds of changes, public changes we need to make to move this country forward.

But we have to face the fact that millions and millions and millions of our fellow Americans are caught not only in an economic under

class but almost in an outer class totally apart from the life that the rest of us take for granted. And it is because they are the ones who have been hardest hit by the combined force of a loss of economic opportunity, the destruction of community support, and the erosion of family itself. And the vacuum that is created has been filled for all too many of them by organized violence, organized around guns and gangs and drugs, with no offsetting forces.

And as Michael implied, some of that has been aggravated by the fact that there are not sustaining forces in our culture which tend to offset that. As I told the ministers in Memphis a few weeks ago at the Church of God in Christ convention, when they invited me into the pulpit where Martin Luther King gave his last sermon, there are problems this Nation has that cannot be fixed by the passage of a law or by an official decree from the President of the United States. They require us to change from the inside out and to change family by family, community by community.

I have a good friend with whom I grew up at home who wrote me of a conversation she had with some other people who were bemoaning the fate of all these kids in trouble, and this person said, "Well, how in the world are we going to save these kids?" And my friend said, "We're going to save them the same way we lost them, one at a time." If you think of that, society is largely organized around work and family. We have too many people today living in this world without either. And nature—and to be sure, they represent nature—abhors a vacuum. And that vacuum is being filled by all kinds of forces which are fundamentally destructive of those people ever becoming what they ought to be.

Now, we are trying to deal with that as much as we can through public policy, through the Brady bill and through Senator Feinstein's effort to ban assault weapons and through—[*applause*]*—*that's worth an applause—I met your distinguished police chief for the first time tonight, even though I've been bragging on him for years now—through the effort to provide another 100,000 police officers in properly trained, properly deployed in community policing settings throughout the country, because that will actually diminish crime and provide alternative role models for young people.

There are a lot of other things we are trying to do. But I am telling you, the fact is it is

awfully hard to put lives back together in an environment in which there are no lives organized fundamentally by work, by family, and by other community organizations that shape values and behavior; when impulses govern the lives of young people who cannot even fully understand the implications of what it means, often, to pick up a gun and pull the trigger; and when madly we permit many of these children, who themselves were never even given the fundamental basics of self-esteem and self-control and respect for others, weapons that make them better armed than the police who are supposed to be patrolling their streets.

But the fundamental problem is what has happened to all of them inside and what does not happen to them day by day. One hundred and sixty thousand kids in this country stay home from school every day because they are afraid of being shot or knifed on the way to school or in the schoolhouse.

Now, what's all that got to do with you? First of all, you have the capacity to do good, culturally, to help to change the way we behave, the way we think of ourselves. You have clearly, many of you, reinforced the awareness of our obligations to our environment, and we have begun to change in fundamental ways. Look at the way we changed our ideas about smoking in recent years, culturally, not because laws made us do it but because as a people we just decided to move in a different direction. You've helped to battle world hunger and make people more realistic as well as caring about AIDS, and you've promoted world peace. And through the people at MTV and others who have promoted the motor voter bill, you've really advanced the civil rights cause by opening up a franchise to young people and to many who would otherwise not have registered and voted.

Now what we have are people who are vulnerable to cultural forces that the rest of us find entertaining, that are not in and of themselves bad when made part of a culture that is organized by work, by family, and by other institutions. I love television. I saw two or three of you tonight and quoted about some time I'd seen you on television recently. I love that. I am a movie-goer almost to the point of compulsion, have been since I was a small boy.

But you think of it, all of us who love that. How is our life organized? We spend most of our time working. We spend a lot of our free time, most of us, with our families. We have

other ties to a community which shape our values, our conduct, our priorities, what we do with our money, how we think about our obligations. But what might be entertaining to us—a violent, thrilling movie or television program, a torrid but fundamentally amoral use and manipulation of people in what may be for us just an entertaining 30 minutes or an hour—if it's 10 or 11 hours a day of relentless exposure into the minds of people who have never been taught to understand the consequences of their action, never had any kind of internal structure motivated and driven by seeing their parents go to work every day and having a regular relationship with family and having other institutions, then these things can unintentionally set forth a chain reaction of even more impulsive behavior, even more inability to deal with conflict in nonviolent ways and to pass up the aggressive influences and impulses that all of us feel but most of us learn at some point in our lives not to act on. And it all gets worse if the void left by the loss of family and work and other institutions is filled by gangs and guns and drugs.

So, what I ask you for tonight is not to wear a hair shirt and say, "Mea culpa, I wish I hadn't done this, that, or the other thing," but to recognize that what may be one person's moment of entertainment, even exhilaration, the taking your mind off the pressures of the day, can, when multiplied by 1,000, have a cumulative impact that at the very least does not help to bring a whole generation of people back from the brink. I'm telling you, if we don't find a way to deal with this, the rest of these endeavors ultimately will fail. We will not be able to make a strength out of our diversity. We will not be able to restore the ladder from poverty to the middle class that can be climbed through work and education. We will not be able to put our people back together again and use our money on education and opportunity instead of crime and jail.

So what I ask you to do is to join a partnership with me, not to stop entertaining or even titillating, not to stop frightening or thrilling the American public, but to examine what together you might do to simply face the reality that so many of our young people live with and help us as we seek to rebuild the frayed bonds of this community, as we seek to give children nonviolent ways to resolve their own frustrations, as we seek to restore some structure and some

hope and some essential dignity and purpose to lives that have been dominated by chaos or worse.

We must do this. Make no mistake about it. No society, no society can prosper allowing huge pockets of people to go on forever without the opportunity to work, allowing huge pockets of children to go on without the opportunity to get a decent education, allowing huge sections of cities to be no man's lands, where the law of the automatic assault weapon controls. We cannot do well if we permit that to happen. We need every last dollar we can to invest in growth and opportunity and positive good things. And we have to use every means at our command.

There are few things more powerful in any time and place than culture. The ability of culture to elevate or debase is profound. You know it, and you sense it in the power you have when you do something you're really proud of. Does that mean we should never have any violent movies? Of course not. I think, to mention one, "Boyz N the Hood" was a great movie because it showed the truth about what happens when chaos is replaced with destruction. I know the young man who made the movie is here tonight. But I ask you to think about this. We have got to do this for our country. Together, so many of you have more influence over different kinds of people that you will never meet, that you're not aware of, than a President's speech can bring to bear.

For 30 years the American family has been under assault. The assault attacked black families first because they were most vulnerable economically. The same thing is now happening to other families. More and more children are born out of wedlock; more and more children are being born without parents; more and more children being abandoned; more and more kids growing up in violent neighborhoods. The racial differences were largely determined by who got hit first because of economic vulnerability. But now it is happening to everybody. So 30 years of family assault, 20 years where most working people had stagnant wages, 20 years of developing huge pockets where no one had a job—there have always been poor people in this country, but most of them have always been able to work—12 years in which we exploded public debt by consuming in the present instead of investing more in the future, these things happened over a long period of time.

Meanwhile, we want more and more entertainment, more and more instantaneously, as Michael said. We want more and more news, more and more instantaneously. Just give us the thing and let us focus on something else. For all of us who have highly structured, successful lives where our attention is diverted to the big fundamental things in our life, this works fine. For people living in chaos, it is a disaster.

And so I ask you, while you entertain the rest of us, let us together do something to rebuild the bonds of community, to restore the spirit of these children, to give people a chance to build whole lives around solid values so that they, too, will have internal structures that will

permit them the luxury of the diversion some of us call entertainment.

We must rebuild this country fundamentally. And we have to have the support of people who can shape our culture to do it. It is our job, and if we do it, we will be proud we did.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:48 p.m. at the Creative Artists Agency (CAA). In his remarks, he referred to CAA chairman Michael Ovitz and his wife, Judy; Bill Haber and Ron Meyer, CAA partners; David Wilhelm, chairman, Democratic National Committee; Kathleen Brown, California State treasurer; and Gray Davis, California State comptroller.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain

December 6, 1993

North Korea

Q. Mr. President, the IAEA has apparently rejected the North Korean response. Do you agree with that rejection?

The President. Well, what the IAEA has said is that they didn't think it was entirely adequate. But we have to go back and respond to them and we—at least they came forward, they reacted to our initiative. And we're consulting with the South Koreans now. We'll have a conversation with them and see what happens.

Q. Was it inadequate in your eyes—

The President. Well, obviously they didn't say, "We liked everything the United States said," and yes. So we were hoping that we could move more quickly, but I'm not entirely discouraged. We're talking to the South Koreans, and then we'll go back to the—

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Q. Do you think the GATT agreement will be reached today in Brussels, Mr. President?

The President. I don't know. I just spoke with Ambassador Kantor right before the Prime Minister came in, and they've made some more progress. There are still a couple of sticking issues. We'll just see.

Q. On agriculture?

The President. I think they're doing quite well on agriculture. We'll have to see.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Meeting With Haitian Leaders

Q. Mr. President, are you going to be meeting with President Aristide and Prime Minister Malval today? And what will you want to be discussing with them?

The President. I don't think we'll have a final decision on that until sometime after noon. So I can't say yet. But we'll let you know as soon as we know for sure.

Spain

Q. Do you forecast many differences between the social security system between Spain and the United States?

The President. Are there many differences?

Q. Yeah.

The President. Well, there are some, but I'm really looking forward to my conversation with the Prime Minister about it. All the countries, in Europe, Japan, and the United States, we're all having many of the same troubles. We're having troubles creating new jobs and growing the economy.

I think Spain clearly would benefit from any initiative we can all take to increase economic