

Message to President Arpad Goncz of Hungary on the Death of Prime Minister Jozsef Antall

December 13, 1993

Dear Mr. President:

Please accept and convey to the Hungarian people my sincere condolences on the sad occasion of Prime Minister Antall's death. The Prime Minister's passing is a loss not only for Hungary but also for democratic nations around the world.

As Hungary's first post-Communist Prime Minister, Mr. Antall will be remembered for his strong leadership and commitment to freedom during these historic times. He was a friend to the United States and an active partner in the international effort to deepen and secure

democracy, stability and economic reform in Central and Eastern Europe. His loss will be greatly felt in Europe and here in the United States.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Prime Minister Antall's family and the people of Hungary at this difficult time.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this message.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan in New York City

December 13, 1993

Thank you. Thank you very much, Senator Moynihan and Liz.

You know, before I met Pat Moynihan, I actually thought I knew something about government. Now I just feel like I'm getting a grade every time I talk in front of him. *[Laughter]* It's not always a good one.

I am honored to be here with Liz and with Pat, honored by the partnership that they have kept and the faith they have kept with the American people as well as with their own family for 40 years, deeply honored to have the chance to serve as your President while Senator Moynihan is the chairman of that committee which makes a quorum if he's there and I, his messenger, are there—I'm his messenger, I think. *[Laughter]*

A few months ago, when the fate of our economic plan was hanging in the balance and we didn't have a vote to spare, there were people in Washington who said, and I quote, "The very survival of this President now rests squarely on the shoulders of Daniel Patrick Moynihan, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee." Thank God he didn't shake me off. *[Laughter]* We made it here tonight.

And tonight, if this were a normal time, I would come and talk about the things that we

often talk about: about the new GATT round that Senator Moynihan mentioned, about the fact that the economic program we passed which was so controversial has now been largely shorn of its false myths, the front page of the Wall Street Journal today saying that they said there were no spending cuts in it, but guess what? They cut a lot of spending, they cut a lot of entitlements, they cut and cut and cut. That's the Wall Street Journal, hardly the house organ of my administration—*[laughter]*—saying that. And of course, the markets have largely spoken with lower interest rates and inflation and higher rates of investments and a 19-year low in late home mortgage payments, millions of Americans refinancing their homes, more jobs in the private sector in 10 months than in the previous 4 years. I'd like to talk all about that. I do believe that by and large our country is going back in the right direction economically. And with all of our difficulties, and Lord knows they're plenty, we are now the envy of the other advanced industrial countries. In Europe and Japan they're having far worse troubles than we are at this moment. Not that I wish that on them; if they were doing better we would be,

too.

I'd like to talk about how the image I had of Senator Moynihan—and even after working with him a little bit, but before I became President—was different than reality, something I'm very sympathetic with. You know, I thought, "Well, Moynihan has got an IQ of 300; he can't be bothered with the dirty details of practical politics. But if I hang around long enough I'll get four or five things that we can move the world with." And then he started wearing me out about Penn Station and New York's Medicaid match rate, and Lord knows, there is nobody who works me worse in an old-fashioned way for his constituents than Daniel Patrick Moynihan and does a better job of it. So I could give a speech about that, you know. But tonight we have to talk about what Mr. Chairman mentioned. The Washington Monthly once described Pat Moynihan's career as one long and exhilarating assault on conventional wisdom. He told us more than a decade ago what would happen if we kept increasing spending and cutting revenues at the same time. And sure enough, we quadrupled our debt in 12 years.

A decade before its collapse, Senator Moynihan said the Soviet Union was doomed. He also wrote a very powerful prediction and later turned it into a book called "Pandemonium," about what would happen when you strip the veneer of communism off those troubled lands.

But long before I ever ran for President on my platform of opportunity and personal responsibility and renewing the bonds of community in this country, he had been warning us, as you heard tonight, reading from that stirring article now 28 years old, which could have been written last week. He has been for a generation the champion of the American family, not one of those politicians who use slogans like "family values" to divide us but who really tried to live out those values and to find ways to vote for programs and push ideas and change actions that would help ordinary people in this State and this Nation to keep their own families together and to raise their children and to be rewarded if they worked hard and played by the rules.

I have read over and over and over again that wonderful passage which Senator Moynihan quoted to you tonight. I can tell you what most of you already know. One of the things that impresses me about it, coming as I do from the kind of family I come from, is that that passage was written 28 years ago not by a trust

fund baby telling people on food stamps how to live but by a son of Hell's Kitchen, a onetime longshoreman, a person who knows what it means to see chaos and difficulty and adversity firsthand.

Here's what I think we're up against today. I believe that in every traditional way I could do a good job as your President, and the Congress could continue to support me. And notwithstanding the press reports to the contrary, it has now apparently been established that they have supported me more faithfully than they have any President in his first year in 40 years, since they've been keeping these statistics. I'm very grateful for that. We can work on increasing the growth rate. We can work on bringing the deficit down. We can work on rebuilding the training systems of our country. We can pass a new health care program, and Lord knows we need to. We can do these things. But unless, unless we face the fact that year in and year out we are losing an enormous percentage of our people to our common future and that they, in turn, are making the rest of us much more miserable and less free and less hopeful in our own lives, this country will not become what it ought to be.

I look into these places that break our collective heart, and I see the collapse of economic opportunity, the collapse of families, and the loss of supporting community institutions that used to bind up the wounds of so many individual kids in trouble in every community that had them when I was a boy. I wonder which came first. I don't think it's relevant anymore to know what was the chicken and what was the egg. I do know that back in April Senator Moynihan said that, in talking about the differences here between 1993 and 50 years before, he said, and I quote, "In 1943 the illegitimacy rate in New York City was 3 percent. Last year it was 45 percent—a lot of poor people here in 1943."

When Pat Moynihan wrote the article that he just quoted from a few moments ago, the illegitimacy rate among white Americans was 1 in 20, among African-Americans, was 1 in 5. Since that time, in 28 years, the rate among black Americans has tripled, the rate among white Americans has quadrupled, most all of it concentrated among people who are very poor, not very well educated, and in what I have come to call an increasingly outer class, estranged from the rest of us. If we keep going

at this rate, within a decade more than half the children born in this country will not be born into a family where there is or has been a marriage.

Now, he's been talking about this for 28 years. What else has happened in 28 years? Well, for 20 years, because of the pressures of the global economy and because of our inadequate response to them, the wages of middle class Americans have more or less been stagnant. But every year there are more and more people who are poor, people who are not working, and people who are working and still poor. And that's what I meant when I said, you take the most troubled neighborhoods in this country, most people who live in them work hard for a living, don't break the law, doing the best they can, and in some ways, are the real heroes in this country because most of them are working hard and still just barely getting by. And they deserve our honor and our respect.

But the economic opportunities that once beckoned people to our cities have long gone for many middle class people who didn't have a lot of education. When you lose both family and work, the two things that most of us organize our lives around, you create a vacuum in any society. And, as with any other vacuum, nature abhors it; it will be filled. People cannot live in total chaos. Some alternative organizations will take root. And what has happened in our country is that in places which we have permitted to be without family and work, where the community organizations have folded up tent and left behind them, where very often only the churches are there standing alone against the deluge, and the people in the social services overpowered, and the police outmanned, what happens is that gangs take root as a form of social organization and drugs take root not just as a form of self-destruction but as an economic endeavor. And then, as an enforcement mechanism, violence comes along in even greater amounts.

And now, because we have permitted, by a flight of, in my view, collective insanity, even teenagers to be better armed than police in most of our big cities, you see a dramatic increase just in the last decade in the death rate of young people who are shot. Why is that? Because they're more likely to be shot by assault weapons like the kind that was used on the Long Island Rail Road a few days ago. A study came out right after that horrible incident,

chronicling one of our biggest cities in the Middle West, saying that 100 percent of the increase in the death rate from gunshot wounds among teenage boys was due to the use of assault weapons with rapid cartridges, so they had more bullets in their bodies. It wasn't very complicated.

So I would argue to you we have, first of all, seen a vacuum develop. It happened over a generation, and anybody that tells you it can be turned around with a lot of words or even good actions in a moment is wrong. There are good people out there now standing against the tide, doing their best. I call to your attention the article on the cover of the New York Times Sunday Magazine yesterday about that brave policeman. Gosh, I'd like to meet that guy. If you haven't read it, you ought to go read it, talking about how one person still can make a difference in restoring some sanity and safety and reinforcing values in people's lives.

And so we come, those of us who are in Washington running your business, Senator Conrad and Senator Lautenberg, Chairman Moynihan and I, we come to work every day knowing that we almost have two tasks. We've got these rational challenges: get the deficit down, get investment up, train the work force better, expand trade, do things that will work. And for most of us it will really work. But knowing that underneath that there is this erosion taking place where a lot of people are just being lost, to themselves and to the rest of us. Those kids that were singing to us up there tonight, they sang "God Bless America," they sang the national anthem, and they deserve for it to be true. They deserve for it to be true.

I don't want to get into a lot of programs tonight. We got the Brady bill done. We've got the crime bill coming up. It really does make a difference how many police are on the street if they are well trained. We have to do more on the drug front. We have to deal with health care, in part because this crime and violence is a public health problem. But I don't want to talk so much about programs. It is just to ask you to leave here tonight, if you are really going to give your money to reelect this man, which you must do because he is a national treasure, you should leave here tonight determined to do what you can to create a political constituency to make it possible for him to make the ideas that have been popping in his mind for a generation real in the lives of our people.

In other words, what I'm asking you to do

tonight is you don't have to agree that whatever we decide to do on the assault weapons ban is right around the edges, or whatever. But you should leave here tonight far more intolerant than you came here of some of the conditions which obtain in this country. Last winter Senator Moynihan wrote, and I quote, "We have been redefining deviancy so as to exempt much conduct previously stigmatized." We have been, quote, to use his phrase, "defining deviancy down," below the threshold of acceptability. Then he said in more blunt language, "We're getting used to a lot of behavior that is not good for us."

Now, just today there was a Justice Department study that says 20 percent of the students surveyed in certain schools in high crime areas carried guns to school on a regular basis, and 83 percent of juvenile offenders have used or carried guns prior to their arrest. That is just one example. We tolerate all kinds of things nobody else would put up with. Why, if we are so smart, would we tolerate, for example, having the only advanced country in the world with a health care system that spends 40 percent more than everybody else and covers fewer people and instead of spending it on pharmaceuticals or doctors or nurses, spends more and more of it on paperwork than anybody else? Why would we do that? Why do we put up with that? Why aren't we free enough to know that we have got to invest in policies that will promote work over welfare and family over solitude and community over division? We know better than this. And we have just become so callous because, basically, this country has worked pretty well for the rest of us. But I'm telling you, it's coming back on the rest of us.

Tonight before I came down here, I called and asked if those three men who had the guts to go subdue the man who did the shooting on the Long Island Rail Road would come up and see me before I came down to the dinner. I just wanted to see them and talk to them and ask them how they were feeling and figure out, why did these guys do this, take responsibility? Suppose the guy had gotten the clip in the gun quicker. You know, it looks now like they couldn't have been hurt. Do you think they knew that then? In the flash of an eye were they all that certain that they couldn't have been shot? I don't think so. They did something. They took responsibility. And they came from fine families. One has four children; one has three

children; the other, a younger man, brought his parents and his brother and sister. They had a lot to lose. They acted. They took responsibility. They saved lives. We ought to be proud of them.

So they started talking about how each one of them made the decision, almost simultaneously and not together, to do this. And finally they just knew it was insane not to act. And so they took some chance, and they acted. And all three of them said to me, as they looked around at their families, that they now realized how fragile this country was and how no one was safe from violence but how they all had to have an interest in what happened to everybody else. And they volunteered; they said, "You know, Mr. President, if you're going to really try to do something about crime and violence, you think there's something we can do, call us. We'd like to help." In the moment of that encounter they all of a sudden realized that by a simple act of heroism, they had also come to an understanding which now imposed responsibilities on them they didn't feel before they did it.

And that's what I ask of you. Do you really like Senator Moynihan? Do you really admire him? If you really agree with all of the things that he's written, if you think the time has come to stop worrying about what you feel is politically correct and just say what you believe and try to get this country back together again and start saving these children again, then you must become more intolerant of things that we take for granted. We cannot permit this country to continue to waste the lives of a whole generation of children.

I just want to make one more point. I ran for President because I thought the country was going in the wrong direction economically and because I thought we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together. I think we've done a good job of beginning to change economically. And I can't make us come back together all by myself. This has got to be a deal we do together. I am not giving you a bunch of negative talk. I am a congenital optimist. But I don't believe public officials serve the public interest by giving happy talk when hard news is called for or by using tough facts to divide people instead of unite them.

So in the intolerance I ask for, I ask for your intolerance of conditions, not of people. Remember those kids you heard singing tonight

when you go home. There's just millions of them out there, and they're bright and good. They can do anything that they have to do to take this country into the 21st century, if we can simply do what we have to do to stop some of the crazy things that we have permitted. Don't expect it to happen overnight. This family degeneration has happened over 30 years. The wages have been stagnant for 20 years. The deficit has been exploding, and investment in productive things have been declining for 12 years. We do not have to do it overnight. But we

must become intolerant in a consistent way, in a compassionate way, and we must believe that what worked for so many of us will work for tomorrow's children, too. If we believe that and we act on it, then our intolerance can give our country a new birth.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 p.m. at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Elizabeth Moynihan, the Senator's wife.

Remarks on Presenting the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards *December 14, 1993*

Thank you very much. Secretary Brown and former Secretaries of Commerce, Members of Congress, members of the Baldrige family, and the honorees and all their supporters waving the flags and the signs in the back. It's kind of nice, after all of the speeches I've given and all the crowds I have to see, those kinds of signs waved at me when I speak.

Before I present the Baldrige Award today I would like to talk just a moment about the progress of the GATT negotiations which Secretary Brown mentioned. Today the United States negotiators have achieved a breakthrough in the talks to conclude a new round in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. We are now on the verge of an historic victory in our efforts to open foreign markets to American products.

I do want to make it clear, however, that the negotiations are not concluded yet. Thorny issues remained, and I have instructed our negotiators to push very hard for our objectives as they conclude the remaining details. I've made it clear that I will not accept a bad GATT but that we will not spare any effort to fight for a good one. Now the United States and the European Community are in a position to work shoulder to shoulder to push for concessions from other nations in the final hours.

The stakes are immense. This would be the single largest trade agreement ever. It writes new rules of the road for world trade well into the next century. It would cut other countries' tariffs for our goods, on average, by more than

one-third. When fully phased in, it could add as much as \$100 billion to \$200 billion to the United States economy every year. It opens foreign markets to our manufacturing and agricultural products and for the first time covers services. It does all of this while preserving our sovereignty and especially our ability to retaliate against unfair foreign trade practices.

With NAFTA, our Nation chose to take the new world economy head on, to compete and win and not retreat. Our willingness to lead set the pace for other nations of the world. Americans have reason to be proud; we're on the way to making this world change in a way that works for us. I know that all of you join me in wishing our negotiators well and hoping that we can conclude a successful agreement. We have another day.

I'm delighted to be here in this wonderful auditorium again, the same place where we signed the historic NAFTA legislation just a few days ago. A lot of people thought that that fight would end up in defeat. But I felt if we stuck by it, if we just kept arguing that a wealthy country can only create jobs and raise incomes by increasing the number of its customers for goods and services, in the end we would prevail. And we did, thanks in large measure to an enormous bipartisan coalition of people from all over America and to the efforts of Secretary Ron Brown who worked very hard on it as well as Mickey Kantor and so many others. I'm honored to be with you again for this happy occasion because, like NAFTA, the Malcolm Baldrige