

Now, for 60 years Presidents of both parties have tried to do something to fix this health care system, to solve its problems without hurting what's best about our health care system. We don't need to wait any longer. The committees in Congress are well on the way to passing a bill that will make the health care nightmares detailed in these letters a thing of the past.

Of course, there will be obstacles ahead. There are genuine disagreements. It's a complicated subject. But we can surmount these obstacles. We know there are models today that are like what we're trying to do, models of managed competition in places like Minnesota, where 91 percent of the people have coverage, it's of high quality, and the cost increases are much lower than they are in the rest of the country or models like the new small business cooperative in California, where over 2,300 small businesses, representing 40,000 employees, have joined together to buy health insurance that's lower in cost for the same or better coverage for everyone.

In 1935, Congress passed Social Security after much of the same debate we read about today in the press, people saying that it would wreck the economy, that it would be terrible, that it was not the right thing to do. But from that

day forward, older Americans knew they could face retirement in old age with dignity.

In 1965, Congress passed Medicare, guaranteeing that people over 65 would never again be bankrupted by medical bills they couldn't pay. Again, there were those who said it would just be a terrible thing for the country. Now we're all proud of the fact that older Americans are less poor than the rest of us and don't have to worry about their health care.

We're closer than ever before to making 1994 the year that Congress makes history once again by guaranteeing Americans private health insurance that can never be taken away. Let's work together now to tone down the divisive rhetoric, to stop the shouting, to start talking with each other, listening to each other, and working with our sleeves rolled up and our heads and hearts engaged in the job.

We can get this done this year. We will get it done this year with your help. Tell the Congress to move, and move now. We can do it. America needs it.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at approximately 3:25 p.m. on May 20 in the Costas Sports Center at the University of California-Los Angeles for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 21.

Remarks to the Community in Sacramento, California *May 21, 1994*

Thank you very, very much, Congressman Fazio, for those fine words and for your leadership. Thank you, Congressman Matsui, for your fine words and for your leadership, especially on areas of global trade and other things designed to help the people of northern California. I'd also like to recognize over here to my right the presence of another Member of your congressional delegation, Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey. I'm glad to see you here, and thank you for coming. Senator Feinstein, thank you once again for making it clear that you have no ambivalence on the question of McClellan Air Force Base and its future. I'm glad to be here with Mayor Serna and to be working with him, and I appreciate his statements about our partnership. I appreciate the leadership that

Secretary Widnall has shown in the Air Force, and I'm glad to be here with General Phillips and General Thompson. I thank them for welcoming me here for a second time to McClellan Air Force Base. I'd also like to recognize in the audience a good friend of mine and your State insurance commissioner, John Garamendi and Mrs. Garamendi. I'm glad to see them over there.

Ladies and gentlemen, I had a wonderful trip to McClellan Air Force Base the first time I came to celebrate the work that you are doing not only to defend our Nation but to help us to convert to a post-cold-war era in which many of the fruits of defense progress and defense technology can be used to benefit a growing commercial economy in America. Today I come

to celebrate the spirit of Sacramento and the spirit of McClellan as we honor the men and women who wear the uniforms of the American Armed Forces.

In just 2 weeks it will be my proud duty to travel to Europe to represent our Nation as we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Rome and the landing of the Allied forces in France on D-Day. Sacrifice, planning, determination, and sheer bravery carried the day then, and it still counts today. We deeply appreciate what our forces did in the cause of freedom in World War II. Were it not for them and their efforts, we would, none of us, be here today. But I want to say we also appreciate very much what those of you who wear our Nation's uniforms do to keep us free and strong and to promote the cause of freedom around the world today. We honor your patriotism, your service, and your sacrifice. And we all recognize that that sacrifice often extends to your families as well, who have to endure long periods of separation and sometimes, still, the loss of life. Every day, all across our land and all around the world, people who wear the uniform of this country put their lives at risk. As we have seen in the last year and as we see every year, the simple work of maintaining preparedness and the training involved in it, often itself is life threatening.

I'm especially glad to be here at McClellan to sign the proclamation for Armed Forces Day today because of the special role that McClellan is playing in America at the end of the cold war, the special role in helping us downsize our defense forces without becoming weaker, the special role in helping us convert so many of our resources from defense to domestic economic purposes.

Beyond the building and maintenance of military equipment, McClellan has been a pioneer in high-tech fields from microelectronics to hydraulics. This is the only place in the United States where aircraft can be thoroughly inspected without dismantling, thanks to the non-destructive facility here.

This base has also led the way in promoting partnerships with the private sector in technology transfer and what we now call dual-use of technology. These help with concerns like the environment, and they create jobs for our people. The work to develop a new low-emission metal casting process, for example, will help automakers comply with the Clean Air Act, mak-

ing us all healthier and creating more jobs. I thank you for that.

I think we all know that the important work of rebuilding our economy is also part of our national security. On that I can report to you confidently that our Nation is moving in the right direction.

In the last 15 months our economy has produced 3 million new jobs. The deficit is going down. Interest rates are stable. The stock market is up. Consumer confidence is up. When the Congress passes the budget that I have presented before them, we'll have 3 years of declining deficits in the Federal budget for the first time since Harry Truman was President of the United States of America.

Still the Congress is working with me to find ways to increase investments in areas where we need more investment, even as we eliminate over 100 Government programs and cut a couple of hundred others, building a system of lifetime education from the expansion of Head Start to lifetime learning to opportunities for young people who don't go on to 4-year colleges, to lower interest rates for college loans and better repayments terms, to national service payments for young people who want to pay their way through college by solving the problems of the country here at home.

The Congress has provided more funds for technology reinvestment projects, like the ones you're participating in here. One-fourth of them have gone to the State of California to try to help those people who won the cold war for us not be left out in the cold as we enjoy the peace.

When this budget is fully enacted over the next 5 years, the size of the civilian work force for the Federal Government will be the smallest it has been in over 30 years, and all the savings will be used to go into a trust fund to help make our streets safer, to pay for tougher punishment for violent criminals, prevention opportunities for young people to keep them out of trouble, and 100,000 more police officers on the streets of the cities of this country to help protect our young people.

We are trying to adapt to the changes in this changing world. But let me say on this Armed Forces Day, while the size of our military must be adjusted, we must not adjust our attitude about quality or readiness. We must remain the world's best prepared, best trained, best equipped, highest morale fighting force. I

say that because as we enter the next few weeks of budget negotiations, Congress must work to get our deficit down while keeping our guard up.

I have to say, too, to you my friends, since it has been mentioned by others, that the biggest long-term threat to deficit reduction is also perhaps the biggest long-term threat to defense readiness, that is the soaring cost of health care. Because while your Federal spending is going down in defense and down in domestic spending for the first time since 1969, the cost of Federal health care programs are going up at 2 and 3 times the rate of inflation. And still there are 37 million Americans without any health insurance.

We spend, as a nation, 40 percent more of our income on health care than any other nation, and we don't cover everyone. We have small business people, hundreds of thousands of them, who don't provide any coverage or provide some coverage and wish they could do more. But they must pay rates 35 to 40 percent higher than those of us who are in Government or are insured by big businesses do. We have 81 million Americans out of a nation of 255 million who live in families where someone has been sick, and so they're insured with what are called preexisting conditions, which is a fine way of saying they pay too much for their insurance or they can't get insurance or they can never change jobs because if they try to change, their future employers won't be able to insure them.

I say to you, my fellow Americans, this is unacceptable. It is a threat to the deficit, it is a threat to the defense, it is a threat to the national security of the United States to leave our people in this fix.

I do not pretend that this is an easy issue. If it were it would have been solved a long time ago. I do ask the Congress to act and to act now, this year, to guarantee private health insurance to all Americans; to provide a choice of doctors and plans to American citizens; to allow, as California is now doing, small business people, farmers, and self-employed people to join in big co-ops and to buy insurance on the same competitive basis that big business and Government folks can do so that they can afford to purchase health care without going broke.

I thank the California Medical Association for their endorsement of these principles as well as the notion that we should not discriminate

against people because someone in their family has been sick.

These are things that we ought to do. We can do it without interfering with Medicare for the elderly. We can do it while phasing in prescription drug and long-term care benefits to the elderly and disabled, but we must act this year. I believe that you hire people to serve in the Presidency and in the Congress to make the same tough decisions that our military leaders have to make when called upon to do it. There are not always easy answers, but usually there are answers to problems when they have to be faced. There are answers to this problem, and we owe it to you to face it. In the future our deficit reduction depends on it, our defense readiness depends on it, the health and strength of our Nation depends on it, and we should act this year.

Finally, let me say one special word. Behind me sits what I have been told is the only fully restored and flyable B-24 Liberator in use today. It had a storied career of service since it rolled off the assembly line in Fort Worth, Texas, in August of 1944. It's 2 years older than I am. *[Laughter]* It was part of the massive homefront production during World War II. The *All-American*, as she's known, is named in honor of the 15th Air Force B-24 that set a record for downing 14 enemy fighters in a single raid over Germany on July 25th, 1944. But her name also signifies the all-American builders who produced the plane, the flyers who manned the missions, the crews that kept them in the air. This plane stands for the all-American team to help to win the war that we will honor when I go to the D-Day celebration.

This is a time when every American of every generation should pause to remember and honor the sacrifices of the airmen, soldiers, and sailors of D-Day, who through their individual acts of glory and valor and their common efforts changed the course of history.

One aircraft of World War II stands behind me today, but we should be mindful that exactly 50 years ago the largest air attack ever staged was being readied to support the allied landings on Normandy. Over one million American airmen were stationed in England during World War II. On D-Day the allies sent 3,467 heavy bombers, 1,645 medium bombers, 5,409 fighters into the skies above the English Channel and the coast of France. They gave General Eisenhower and the planners of Operation Overlord

virtual allied supremacy for the landings. On that day, 113 aircraft did not make it back.

Two weeks from today at the American cemetery outside Cambridge, England, I will stand with crew members of other B-24's and B-26's, B-17's, P-38's and P-47's, the veteran airmen of D-Day. Thirty-nine hundred and twelve Americans, many of them aviators, are buried there in Cambridge, their graves aligned in a gentle arc on a sloping English pasture. They rest in peace far from home, as do thousands of other Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice during World War II, buried in American soil overseas with names like Nettuno and Colleville. But in every city, in every neighborhood, in every living room where we cherish the fruits of freedom and democracy, they are with us still.

They would be very proud of the men and women who wear our uniforms today. They would be proud that nuclear weapons in Russia and the United States are no longer pointed at each other for the first time since the advent of the nuclear age. They would be proud of the contributions of Americans to peace in the Middle East and democracy in South Africa. They would be proud that the power of our example has helped to encourage people in Cen-

tral and Latin America, all over the hemisphere, to embrace democracy. Now all but two nations to our south, all but two, are today governed by democratically elected leaders.

So I say to you, my fellow Americans, today as we cherish the memories of those who fought in World War II and as we salute today's men and women of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard, the sentinels of our peace and freedom, let us cherish our memory but also remember our mission: to meet the challenges of today at home and abroad, to keep America forever strong and forever young.

Thank you very much, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. at McClellan Air Force Base. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Joe Serna of Sacramento; Secretary of the Air Force Sheila Widnall; Maj. Gen. John Phillips, commander, McClellan Air Force Base; and Lt. Gen. Dale W. Thompson, Jr., vice commander, Air Force Materiel Command, Wright Patterson Air Force Base, OH. The Armed Forces Day proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Message on the Observance of Armed Forces Day, 1994 *May 21, 1994*

Greetings to the men and women of the Armed Forces stationed around the world as we celebrate Armed Forces Day, 1994. On behalf of the American people, I am proud to extend heartfelt appreciation for your tremendous service to our country.

Each of you who wears our nation's uniform makes an invaluable contribution to the safety, security, and well-being of the United States and of the entire world. Some of you serve here at home, while others are posted the world over, but all of you work to guard our precious freedom and to further the goals of peace and democracy. In addition to these traditional mili-

tary roles, you have set a new standard of excellence for international humanitarian efforts—bringing food, shelter, and medical relief to people in desperate need.

On this important day, I am honored to salute the hard-working individuals serving in the Army, the Marine Corps, the Navy, the Air Force, and the Coast Guard. America owes you a debt of gratitude for all that you have done for our Nation and for all that you continue to do to protect the blessings of liberty we cherish.

BILL CLINTON