

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:45 a.m. in the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Juliet Garcia, chair,

Franklyn Jenifer, incoming chair, and Terry Hartle, vice president for government relations, American Council on Education.

## Remarks at San Bernardino Valley College in San Bernardino, California *February 14, 1995*

Thank you for that wonderful, wonderful welcome. Thank you, Dr. Singer, for your introduction. I know the Secretary of Education, Secretary Riley, has already spoken. I'm glad to be here with him. And I thank the mayor for being here and Dr. Bundy. And let's give the Etiwanda High School Band a hand. Didn't they do a great job? Great job. Thank you. When I heard them playing "Hail to the Chief" outside I thought they'd transported the Marine Band from the White House here, they were so great. They were great.

I'd also like to recognize a couple of other groups that are here. First of all, I want to thank the members of our national service program, AmeriCorps, who are here. They're over there. And I want to thank a representative group of incredible people who just spent about an hour with me, talking to me about this institution, how it has affected their lives and your community and the remarkable partnerships that are being made and the dreams that are being made to come true. I'd like for all the people who were just in the little roundtable discussion with me to be recognized. They're over here somewhere. Where are they? There they are. [Applause] Thank you. They were great. I feel that I know a lot more about you now because I listened to all of them, and believe me, they put you all in a very good light.

I want to talk to you today about the importance of this community college and education in general, not only to your future but to the future of our country, what it means and what we should be doing about it. I met a lot of folks already here today that represent what I think America is all about, people who are coming together around the idea of education without regard to their race, their income, their background, what country they were born in, what situation they're in now just because they want to make the most of their own lives and make a contribution, live up to the fullest of

their God-given abilities. And I really think that's what we ought to be supporting.

The reason I worked so hard for the national service program that you see all these young people in is because I believe that we ought to be helping young people to find ways to earn money for education and contribute to the strength of their communities at the same time.

I ran for President because I was worried, as we come to the close of this great century, that we wouldn't be able to guarantee the American dream for all people moving into the 21st century and we wouldn't be able to make sure America was the strongest country in the world, and I believe those are the two jobs the President has to do. And I believe the way we should do that is what I have called the New Covenant. We should create more opportunity; we should insist on more responsibility from all of us; and we should work to build our communities at the grassroots level, where the real strength of America is.

Now, there's been a lot of debate in our country now in two separate elections, in 1992 and 1994, about what the role of Government is and whether Government is bad or good inherently. My answer to you is that we need a different kind of Government for the 21st century and that your National Government has three major jobs. One is, we should expand opportunity while shrinking the Federal bureaucracy and the burden it imposes. Two, we should recognize that the Government can't support everybody, but it should work to empower people to make the most of their own lives. And three, we should work to enhance the security Americans feel not only in terms of what goes on beyond our borders but here at home as well. More opportunity, more empowerment, more security; that is what we should be about in the National Government.

Now, if you look at what this national service project does, they're working in the San

Bernardino forest, people who are helping to clean up the forest, maintain it, strengthen it, keep it there for our children and our grandchildren, make sure it's an important resource. Last year there were 89 young people in this program in south Texas who immunized 102,000 infants to help them live, and all of them earned money on their education. Sixteen of these young people work at Berkeley, helping 750 of their classmates to tutor middle-school students. These are the kinds of things that are going on all over America, and I think it emphasizes what I'm saying. For a small amount of Federal money we have increased opportunity with no bureaucracy. This is all done at the grassroots level.

We have certainly empowered these young people to make more of their own lives, and we are clearly going to be a stronger country because we have more people getting an education and more people preserving the environment, making our kids healthier, making our country stronger at the grassroots level. That is what I am trying to do. And I want to talk to you today about what that means for education in general, and especially for community colleges like this one, which are the key to the future of the American economy and the ability to preserve the American dream for all people.

Let me give you an example of what we're trying to do in another area on security, and then I'll come back to education, because I want to make sure that you understand exactly how I'm thinking about this. I welcome the call of the new Republicans in the Congress to cut the Government, but I—now, wait a minute, you all don't get into a partisan fight already; wait until the end of the speech. *[Laughter]* For the last 2 years, we've been doing it without any help. I'd like some help. I'd like some help. But what is the purpose of this? That's what I want you to think about.

Now, there are now over 100,000 fewer people working for the Federal Government than there were the day I took office. We have shrunk the Federal Government. If they don't pass a single law this year, we will reduce the size of the Federal Government by over a quarter of a million because of the budgets adopted in the first 2 years of my term, and we'll make the Federal Government the smallest it's been since John Kennedy was President.

Now, what do we do with the money? What are we doing with the money? We cut, already,

over \$600 billion from the deficit, and we're going to cut more. I've just sent a budget to the Congress that cuts more spending from the deficit. What are we doing with the money? We propose, first, to reduce the deficit and, secondly, to increase investments in the areas that I mentioned, to increase investments that would create more opportunities—jobs; that would empower people more—education; and that would enhance security—things like the crime bill.

If you just take the crime bill, for example, I said when I ran for President—I came to California and campaigned—"Vote for me, and I will reduce the size of the Federal bureaucracy by 100,000 and we'll put another 100,000 police officers on the street." And that's exactly what we've done, except we reduced the size of the Federal Government by 270,000 and used it to pay for police officers, prisons, and prevention. We passed that crime bill last year with a bipartisan majority. After 6 years of partisan haggling and scrapping around and people throwing words at each other, we actually passed a bill. And since October, we have put—but I only was there a year and a half, you understand—*[laughter]*—but since October, we've put 16,000 police officers out, 16,000. And we've got 17 right here in San Bernardino, new police officers.

Listen to this: We did it with a one-page form, eight questions that could be faxed in; nobody had to hire consultants. And of all the communities in America with police officers, every size, including those with just one, one-half of all the communities in America have already applied for help under this program because it's a good program, it works, and there's no hassle in it. That's the kind of Government we ought to have, a leaner, not a meaner Government that makes sense and makes people more secure. We're under budget, ahead of schedule, moving forward.

It took 6 years to pass the bill. I started working on it when I got elected; we got it done. In only 6 weeks of this new Congress, the new majority in the House of Representatives is trying to wipe out the crime bill and pass two block grants, to cut back on the money that goes to police and to prevention, to put it all in one package, send it to the States and say, you all do whatever you want to with it, and to put more money into the prison system. Now, here's the interesting thing—wait a

minute, don't get into a partisan fight, just listen to me make my piece. *[Laughter]* Every police organization in the country, including those that are overwhelmingly Republican, has endorsed our position to leave it alone and let it work. This is not a partisan issue.

So the people in the House said, "I don't care what the police said. I don't care what the people working in the community said. I don't care what the evidence shows. This is what we're going to do. We're determined not to spend any money on prevention. If the States want to do it and not put police on the streets, that's their business. And here's the money, build the prisons, or else." Now, what I believe is that we still have a chance to keep this a bipartisan issue. And I'm going to do my best to go into the Senate and to work with people who understand law enforcement, who will listen to people who are out here on the streets every day trying to save these kids and save our communities and save our streets and keep this bill intact so we can put the police on the street and have the prevention programs.

But I will not—I will reiterate what I said Saturday—if I have to, I will veto any bill that attempts to undermine the commitment that we made last year after 6 years. But it need not be a partisan issue. It ought to be an American issue. And that's what I say to you about education. What are we going to do in this day and time? What is our job in Washington that affects you way out here in the Inland Empire when it comes to education? What is our job when it comes to helping to raise middle class incomes and let people in the under class work themselves into the middle class? What is our job, and what is the problem?

You know, if anybody told me 2 years ago that we would be able, in the space of 2 years, to bring the deficit down over \$600 billion and have a hand in creating almost 6 million new jobs, I would have been very happy to hear that. In 1994, we had the best year for economic growth in a decade and the first year in a long time when all 50 States, including California that's been through so much, had economic growth. What is the problem?

The problem is, a whole lot of people have jobs but their incomes aren't going up. They don't feel secure at work. They're afraid they can't keep their health insurance, or they don't have it now. We had 8.5 million people worried about their retirement until we passed a reform

of the retirement guaranty system late last year. So in this global economy the good news is, there are more people in America becoming millionaires than ever before. That's good news. The good news is, there are more people with an education doing exciting things than ever before. The bad news is, if you don't have the skills you need, you can work harder and harder and harder for less and less and less, right?

So when you have a good news-bad news story, you have two choices. You can tell a joke about it, but if you're President, that doesn't seem to be a particularly good option. *[Laughter]* The other choice you have is to try to make more good news and less bad news. And the only way to do that, I would argue to you, is to make sure we give all of our people access to the education and training they need to compete and win in this global economy, so when they work harder, they'll be rewarded for it and not punished for it. That is what we have to do.

Now, I want you to focus with me just for a minute, therefore, on two big issues, what we ought to do in this year and what we should not do. I think we ought to give some tax relief to hard-working middle class people who haven't felt the benefit of the recovery. But the question is, what kind, and will we pay for it? I do not think we should increase the Federal deficit. That's been a big problem. We've gotten it down. We ought to keep bringing it down, not exploding it.

Secondly, I think that the best tax relief is embodied in what I call the middle class bill of rights because it rewards work and family. It gives tax relief for people raising young children, and it gives tax relief for the cost of all education after high school, which I think is important. You think about it, you can deduct the cost of interest on your home if you have a home. But in the information age, if you don't have an education, you may never get to a home. So why shouldn't we let people deduct their education costs? It's a good investment. We also propose to let more people get an IRA, an individual retirement account, and withdraw from it tax-free for the cost of education. I think that's what we ought to be doing.

And finally, I had a lot of questions earlier about unemployment; one gentleman talked about his father being unemployed. We have scores of different Federal training programs that you have to wonder, are you really qualified

for or not? And what we propose to do is to create a "GI bill" for America's workers by taking 70 of these programs, putting them in one big pot and saying, "If you're unemployed or if you're working for a really low wage and you're eligible for Federal help, instead of having to figure out how to enroll in one of these programs, qualify, we'll send you a voucher. Show up at this community college. We'll send them a check." That's the way it ought to be done.

We're also taking the savings from cutting out all of these programs. In the Education Department alone, Secretary Riley has abolished 13 programs, reduced 38 others, and consolidated 70 more, in the Education Department. We took the savings and put it into more funds for Head Start, more funds for apprenticeship programs for people who don't go on to 4-year colleges.

I met a young woman today, and a police officer who is working with her, who's in one of these programs that we now see people desperately trying to set up all over the country, training young people in high school, giving them work experience, letting them see what it's like, giving them a chance to look forward to a job in the workplace.

You know, not everybody has to go to a 4-year college, but everybody needs to get out of high school and have access to at least 2 years of further education. And one way to do it is to abolish the artificial distinction between learning and work by bringing the workplace into the school, the education into the workplace, and doing it everywhere in America. So we've put some more money into that.

The other thing we have sought to do is to make available college loans on better repayment terms and lower costs to more people, through the so-called direct loan program.

This is an amazing thing. I want you all to—this is an amazing thing. When I became President, I discovered that we were spending about \$3 billion a year in your money because of people defaulting on their college loans. I discovered we were spending a fortune because the college loan program was a guarantee program. So you'd go to a bank, and if you qualified, the bank would give you a note. And if you didn't pay it back, we'd give them the money. So they didn't have much incentive to see that you paid it back, because we were going to give them the money.

And we discovered if we started loaning the money to people directly, these good things would happen if it could be properly managed: We discovered we could loan the money sometimes at lower interest rates and always at lower fees. We discovered that we could give people a lot of options about how they repaid it so that when you get out of school, if you take a job that doesn't pay much money and you've got a lot of loans, you could pay it off as a percentage of your income instead of having to pay an amount you couldn't afford to pay. We discovered we could cut the bureaucratic paperwork and hassle for the colleges by more than half. And we discovered, miracle of miracles, if we didn't have to pay a middleman and we started collecting on these student loans, we could actually lower the cost to the taxpayers.

It almost doesn't make sense: lower costs to students, lower costs to taxpayers. But this plan has already saved in the budget about \$5 billion, and if we can send it to all colleges and universities in the country, it can lower the deficit by \$12 billion and lower the cost of loans to every student in America with a student loan. That's one of the most important things we have done, and we need to do it.

Now, here's the political problem that you need to be a part of. We're having a big debate up there: Everybody wants to cut the size of Government, everybody wants to reduce the deficit, and everybody has got a different idea for a tax cut. But some people in the new Congress believe that one of the ways they can reduce the deficit is by increasing the cost of student loans to people who don't have to pay interest on the loan while they're in school now. You know about the loan subsidy; a lot of you are probably eligible for that. That will add 20 percent to the cost of student loans.

I'm against it. That is not the way to cut the budget. That is not the way to pay for a tax cut, to increase the cost of going to college to people. We need more people going to college at lower cost, not fewer people going to college at higher cost. And I hope you will support that.

The other idea—this is unbelievable to me—is we got this program working to lower the deficit, lower the cost of student loans, and there are some people in the Congress who want to limit the number of students in this country who can get these direct loans to 40

percent of the colleges in America. Why? Because the people that are in the middle who get the money don't like losing it. I mean, it's not a bad deal: I loan you money; you don't pay me back; I get a check from the Government. But it didn't work very well.

Secretary Riley, since he's been there as Secretary of Education, has cut the cost to the taxpayers of college loan defaults from \$2.8 billion a year to \$1 billion a year. We're collecting the loans. We're doing it right, and we ought to keep going.

So what I want to ask you to do is, without regard to your party, and maybe—especially if you have never voted before—I want to tell you something: You've got a big stake in this debate that's going on in Washington. And it is a good and healthy debate in some ways. We do need a less bureaucratic, more creative, more entrepreneurial, more flexible Government in Washington as we move into the 21st century. We do need more responsibility put down to the State and local levels. What's the best institution you know? The community college. No-

body from Washington is telling you what programs to have, what to do, who to sign up for—nobody. You're doing this. It's a community-created institution. We do need to change the nature of the Federal Government. We do have to keep cutting Federal spending.

But the key to our future is whether we educate everybody, so we don't need to cut investment in education. And we do need to do things, I will say again, that enhance security, empower people to make the most of their own lives, and expand opportunity. That is education, education, education. We should not turn back on it.

Thank you very much. God bless you. We need your help. Please support it. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:45 p.m. in the Snyder Gymnasium. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Don Singer, president, San Bernardino Valley College; Mayor Tom Minor of San Bernardino; and Stuart Bundy, chancellor, San Bernardino Community College District.

## Letter to the Speaker of the House on Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Requests *February 14, 1995*

*Dear Mr. Speaker:*

My Fiscal Year 1996 Budget requests \$10.4 billion in supplemental appropriations for the current fiscal year. Much of the request is for emergency requirements, such as contingency operations of the Department of Defense and disaster relief provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. My Budget also proposes to reduce low-priority spending in FY 1995 by \$2.4 billion, primarily to pay for non-emergency supplemental requests.

I was disappointed to receive your February 7, 1995 letter indicating your intent to delay action on several of these emergency requests until the Administration proposes offsets. I am particularly concerned about my request for \$6.7 billion for FEMA Disaster Relief, all of which is properly designated as an emergency, under the terms of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990.

The Budget Enforcement Act established the authority for the President and Congress to ex-

empt certain spending from the statutory caps, specifically for the purpose of meeting emergency, unanticipated requirements. This joint designation by the President and Congress has been used over the last four years to provide critical assistance in response to earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, extreme cold and agricultural disasters, and for other purposes.

President Bush and Congress approved \$10.2 billion as emergency spending in response to Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki in Florida, Louisiana and Hawaii. In fact, from 1991–1992, President Bush and Congress provided emergency funding for 100 accounts, totalling \$12.3 billion.

I worked with Congress to provide \$6.8 billion in emergency funding to aid the victims of the Midwest floods in nine states. I also reached agreement with Congress to designate emergency spending for the Northridge earthquake.