

I commend the House of Representatives on one part of the bill that enjoyed true bipartisan support—tough measures on child support enforcement, including refusing drivers' and professional licenses to deadbeat parents who refuse to pay child support. The House passed every major child support element of our welfare reform plan, which will enable us to mount the toughest child support enforcement crackdown

in history. It is time to demand responsibility from parents who bring children into the world, not let them off the hook and expect taxpayers to pick up the tab for their neglect.

Welfare reform can and must be a bipartisan issue. I look forward to working with Republicans and Democrats in the Senate to pass real welfare reform that will make work and responsibility the law of the land.

The President's Radio Address

March 25, 1995

Good morning. This morning I want to talk about how much we can accomplish when we work in a spirit of cooperation. Once again, this week demonstrated that Democrats and Republicans can come together to break gridlock when they put the American people first.

Our mission here is to keep the American dream alive for all our people; to grow the middle class and shrink the under class; to promote the mainstream values of work and family, community, and looking out for the future of our children; to reform Government to meet the challenges we face. There's a great debate here about how to change Government. On one side is the old view that big one-size-fits-all Government can fix all our big problems. On the other is the view that Government is the source of all our problems. In the real world that's a false choice.

We must go beyond the old way of big Government and the new rage of no Government to the idea of Government as a partner, a partner that works to expand opportunity while shrinking bureaucracy, to empower people to make the most of their own lives through education and training, and to enhance our security on our streets and around the world. That's what I believe. And I believe most Americans feel that way, too.

In short, I believe that Federal Government must be a savior—or cannot be a savior but must not sit on the sidelines. For our future we need a Government that helps us to create more opportunity but demands more responsibility from all our citizens. That's what I mean by the New Covenant: opportunity and responsibility.

Despite real differences between Republicans and Democrats, we see progress on three proposals I have supported for many years, proposals that I advocated when I ran for President. All of them impose more responsibility on the Federal Government. And it's high time.

First, Congress passed a bill, which I was proud to sign, requiring Congress to live by the laws it imposes on the private sector. Second, last week in the Rose Garden right outside the Oval Office where I'm speaking now, I was pleased to sign another bill which for the first time limits the ability of Congress to pass laws which impose unfunded mandates on State and local Governments. As a former Governor, I know this bill will make a big difference in the ability of State and local governments to improve the lives of our people without having Washington tell them how to spend the tax dollars you send them. Third, last week the Senate passed a line-item veto. I have favored this power for Presidents, no matter what their party, for a long time. It will bring more discipline to our spending process by enabling Presidents to veto particular projects which are unjustified but which today can be hidden in comprehensive bills the President has to sign. Now that the line-item veto in some version has passed both Houses of Congress, I urge Members from both parties to resolve their differences, pass a unified bill, and send it to me. Then the line-item veto can put our people ahead of pork.

Last week, we saw some progress on another crucial issue, welfare reform. We saw that we can find common ground, but we are not all the way there yet. In my radio address last

week, I talked about the need to have tougher child support enforcement, to demand that parents take responsibility for their own children and not let parents off the hook or make the taxpayers pick up the tab for their neglect. If all the child support in America that is owed was paid, we could move 800,000 families off the welfare roll.

I'm pleased that Members of the House in both parties responded to my position on tougher child support enforcement. They voted by 426 to 5 to adopt a provision from my welfare reform bill that calls upon States to deny driver's licenses and professional licenses to deadbeat parents, people who owe child support and can pay it but don't. The House has now adopted every major child support element in my welfare reform bill. If the Senate will follow suit, we'll mount the toughest crackdown on deadbeat parents ever and will help more children, too.

But we have to do more to promote responsible parenting. Other provisions of the House bill would actually make it harder for many people to get off and stay off welfare. And the bill doesn't really do anything to promote work; indeed, it removes any real responsibility for States to help people gain the training and skills they need to get and keep jobs. It even cuts child care for working people struggling to hold down jobs and stay off welfare.

I commend the Democrats in the House for voting unanimously for an alternative bill spon-

sored by Congressman Nathan Deal of Georgia because it was tougher on work requirements, better for children, and did more to promote responsible parenting. I'm looking forward to working with Republicans and Democrats to really end welfare as we know it, making sure people earn a paycheck, not a welfare check, that they move from dependence to independence.

I also want to caution the Members of the House to try to tone down the rhetoric. It got a little rough last week and a little too personal and partisan. After all, all Americans want to change the welfare system; no American wants to continue a system that doesn't promote work and responsible parenting.

In everything we do we must be working to expand the middle class, to shrink the under class, and to promote these values of family and work, community, and looking out for the future of our kids. I hope we'll be back in the Rose Garden while it's still spring to sign even more bills into law that help us to do those things. Guided by the values that have always kept us strong, we can work together to help all our people earn a fair shot at the American dream.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Interview With Tony Bruno and Chuck Wilson of ESPN Radio March 25, 1995

Mr. Bruno. As we continue on ESPN Radio, Tony Bruno and Chuck Wilson with you. And I've always wanted to do this, Chuck, when introducing a guest, but we've never had the opportunity so far.

Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton.

Mr. President, thanks for joining us on ESPN Radio. This is not a joke. People will think because I like to clown around that we're pulling a fast one on the American public, but we are not. And we appreciate you joining us.

The President. I'm glad to do it. And I'm glad to be in a conversation where the American

people think someone else is pulling a fast one on them instead of the President. [Laughter]

NCAA Basketball Tournament

Mr. Wilson. Mr. President, we have had an opportunity to see an outstanding NCAA tournament. I know you're a big basketball fan, and your Arkansas Razorbacks, they're still alive.

The President. They're an amazing team. You know, everybody they've played this year it seems has played their very best game against them, and in every game it seems they have a few minutes of mental lapse where they let the other team get back in. But they've got enormous heart. I'm really proud of them, just