

to keep it. We ought to stand behind it, and we ought to keep going.

You will find this hard to believe, I bet, but when I was your age—most of you—when I got out of high school, our country had a lot of problems. The racial problems were more severe than they are now. And we were involved in a cold war with what was then the Soviet Union. And we didn't know for sure that there would never be a nuclear war. And now, for the first time since atomic bombs have been made, there are no nuclear weapons pointed at the American people by the Russian people. I am proud of that.

But this age and time has its own problems. If anybody had ever told me that we'd have as many children born out of wedlock, I wouldn't have believed that. If anybody had ever told me we'd have as many single mothers raising little children in poverty, I would not have believed that. We have new problems and new challenges. And the only answer to it is for people in the community to take responsibility for themselves and for each other and to have the chance to pull themselves up and work their way out. What did you say? That you wanted a hand up, not a handout. That's as good a way to say it as I can imagine. That's what AmeriCorps is all about.

This is a very great country, and there is nothing we face that we cannot do. But we're

going up or down together. And if we're going up together, we're going to have to make sure everybody, everybody has a chance to get a good education, because in a world economy, what you can learn determines what you can earn. And we're going to have to remember that whatever we do and however busy we are and whatever else we've got on our mind, we need to take some time out to serve, to be citizens, to work together to solve our common problems.

Don't you feel better at the end of every day, after you work and you do something for somebody else? When you go home at night, aren't you proud of it? And aren't you making friends with people who are different from you that you would never have known otherwise? And don't you think that will stay with you all your life?

I just want you to make the most of your life that you can, solve as many problems in this community as you can, get that education, and stay with AmeriCorps. I'll stay with you, and together we can save it.

God bless you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:15 p.m. at Fair Park. In his remarks, he referred to Alexis Brisby, AmeriCorps volunteer, and Eloise Medows Rouse, board member, Texas Commission for National and Community Service.

Remarks on Arrival at McClellan Air Force Base in Sacramento, California *April 7, 1995*

Thank you very much. Thank you, Congressman Fazio, Congressman Matsui, General Yates. General Phillips, thanks for having me back. You'll have to start charging me rent if I don't quit coming out here. *[Laughter]* Lieutenant Governor Davis, Mayor Serna, Supervisor Dickinson, Mr. Sherman, to all the others who are here: Let me say, I love coming here. I've been in this hangar before, but I've never had so many young people and students here. I'm delighted to see all of you. Thank you for coming. I'm glad to see the college students, the ROTC students, the City Year students here, the elementary school students. I'd also like to say it is quite wonderful to come to California when

there is no flood, no fire, no earthquake. I just want to be here. I just wanted to come. And when I was here not very long ago, I went out to Roseville, and I had a meeting in a home that had been totally destroyed. And the people who hosted me are here, and I understand they're rebuilding their home. I'd like to ask them to be recognized; they're brave people, Rick Merenda and his wife. Stand up there, and let's give them a hand. *[Applause]*

That was really ungracious of Congressman Fazio to mention the basketball game. *[Laughter]* But since he brought it up, I don't think I'm so brave for coming out. If we had won,

it would really take courage for me to show up here. *[Laughter]*

I am delighted to be here at McClellan. Vic said this is my west coast home. We couldn't very well close this Air Force base; I wouldn't have anyplace to park when I fly out. I don't know what I would do.

I'm delighted to be joined here by the wonderful Secretary of Education, Richard Riley. I thank him for coming out West with me. And I have a lot of Californians on my staff, and a bunch of them came back with me: my Chief of Staff, Leon Panetta, who in his former life, or as he likes to say, back when he had a life, was a Congressman from northern California; and of course, Doris Matsui—Congressman Matsui in our White House is known as Doris' husband because she's a valuable member of our staff; and many others. We have tried to be closely in touch with California.

For the benefit of the Air Force base, I want to make one announcement today. I'm happy to report that Congress has passed my requested defense supplemental appropriations bill which will give us the funds we need to make sure we are adequately training and preparing our personnel in all the armed services. And I know that McClellan and its families are happy about the passage of the defense appropriations bill.

With all these young people here, I want to take just a few moments to talk about their future and ours and how they are bound up together. I ran for President in 1992 because I strongly felt that our National Government was not doing enough to invest in our future and to strengthen the future prospects of America's working families and our children. I believed then—and I still believe it was right—that we were exploding our deficit but reducing our investment in our people. I believed then and I believe more strongly today that the global economy in a technological information age will reward what we know and what we are capable of learning and, conversely, will punish us for what we refuse to learn and for the people whose skills and abilities we refuse to develop.

Now, there is a great debate going on today about what our mission should be as a Nation in the aftermath of the cold war and what the role of the National Government should be in that mission. But to me, it is crystal clear. Our mission should be to ensure that the American

dream is alive and well for every child in this country and every child in this hangar well into the next century.

Our mission should be that we maintain our position as the world's strongest nation and greatest force for peace and freedom and democracy and that we use that to help our own people develop their human capacities. And the role of the National Government, it seems to me, is clear. We must first strengthen our security around the world and here at home. That's why I have worked so hard to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons, to be a force for peace from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Southern Africa but also to pass a crime bill here that will stiffen sentences, put more police on the street, have more prevention funds, and do everything we can to bring down the crime rate and make our streets and our neighborhoods and our schools safer places.

The role of the Government should be to change the Government. It should be smaller and less bureaucratic and less cumbersome and burdensome and more efficient and more flexible for the information age. We have done that. The Congress in the last 2 years has voted for budgets that will reduce the size of the Government by 272,000, to its smallest size since President Kennedy was in office; to deregulate great portions of activity the Federal Government used to do, to give more responsibilities back to the States. We are giving the American people a Government that is less bureaucratic.

But the last two things in some ways are the most important of all. Government's role is also to create economic opportunity and to help people who, through no fault of their own, have sustained economic burdens.

The recommendation from the Secretary of Defense for McClellan is that the airbase should stay open because of the important mission you are pursuing. But you know that California has been very hard-hit by base closings in the aftermath of the cold war's end. I took the position, which I here reaffirm today, that when the United States asked the people of California and the people of the United States all across this country to host our bases, to host our military families, to play a role in winning the cold war—if we have to downsize the military, we have an affirmative obligation to help the communities and the people rebuild their lives and

to have prosperity and strength in the future. That is a part of building economic opportunity.

That's why I fought so hard to have conversion funds, to help people move from a defense-based to a civilian-based economy, and why I have supported bases like McClellan which have used their military technology for civilian purposes to help to strengthen us in the years ahead. That's what the general was talking about when he mentioned the intelligent tutor program—military technology being made available to school districts all across America to teach children as people in the military are taught to develop their skills more rapidly and more deeply than ever before. That is part of our obligation, to give people a chance to make the most of their God-given abilities by creating economic opportunity.

If you look—you have an example right here in Sacramento. Look at what happened with the Army depot and Packard Bell. The world's third largest computer manufacturer has moved onto large portions of the closed base and plans to employ more than 3,000 Californians.

There are many other things we have worked to do, to sell more of your high-tech products abroad, to sell your agriculture products abroad, to open up the California economy in a positive way. And the unemployment rate has dropped almost 2 percent in the last 2 years. We have a long way to go, but we are moving in the right direction. It is the affirmative responsibility of the United States Government to do everything we can in partnership with people to create those kinds of economic opportunities. If everybody has a good job and a bright future, this country's future as a whole will be more secure.

Now, the last thing that I want to say is perhaps the most important of all. I believe it is our responsibility to do everything we can through education to give the people of this country, and especially the young people of this country, the knowledge and the skills they need to compete and win in a tough global economy. We cannot guarantee people a job for life, but we can guarantee them access to education for life. And we ought to do it. Nothing is more important.

When I ran for President, I thought there were too many people in Washington who had rhetorical debates and didn't work on the real people's problems. I thought to myself, if I were living out in Sacramento, for example, and I

listened to what I see on television at night, I might wonder if those folks were really talking about me and my family and my children.

You know, we had trickle-down economics and tax-and-spend economics, and what we really needed was invest-and-grow economics. We once had people who thought the answer to our public's problems was to spend more money on everything. Now we have people who think the answer is to spend less money on everything. The answer is to spend less money on the wrong things and more money on the right things. And the most important right thing is education for our young people and for our adults.

You know, I am very proud of the fact that these Members of Congress behind me have been part of a group of people who supported my initiatives to expand educational opportunities, from Head Start for preschoolers to more investment so our schools could meet national standards of excellence, to apprenticeship programs for young people who don't go on to college, more affordable college loans for young people on better repayment terms, to lifetime training for adult workers. That must be our mission. We must make it clear that in the United States we will tolerate nothing less than the most excellent educational opportunities and the highest standards for all of our people for a lifetime.

You know, I see these young AmeriCorps people behind me who are cheering when I called their name. There are some people who believe we ought to get rid of AmeriCorps. They say it costs a lot of money, and besides that, why pay people to volunteer? Let me tell you what these young people do if you don't know. They can earn minimum wage and work for 1 or 2 years, and for each year they work they can earn money for their college education. They don't work in big national bureaucracies. They work in community service projects. They work side by side with other people. They help in floods and fires. They help to rebuild homes. They help to immunize children. They work with police on the beat. They do a lot of different things all across the country, not based on what someone in Washington tells them to do but based on what community leaders say they should do. And in so doing, they earn money and help build up their communities.

I just came from Dallas, Texas, where I met with an AmeriCorps volunteer who was 52 years old, who was going back working in the commu-

nity to earn money to go to her local community college to get a degree in college. I met a young woman who got off welfare because they gave her a chance to work in AmeriCorps. And she got her GED, and now she's going to use the money to go to college. I met a young woman who was a graduate of one of our finest State universities. But she was born to a mother on welfare, and she thought she owed it to her country, since she had moved from welfare to a university degree, to give up a couple years of her life working in the community to help lift the prospects of other people. That is what AmeriCorps is all about. It is working to educate America.

The other day I was in Florida talking to people about college education. Many of you who have sent or are preparing to send a child to college know that it can be a pretty expensive proposition and that it's gone up quite a lot. There are some in Congress who believe that the way to reduce the deficit is to increase the cost of the student loans. I disagree with that. I don't think we ought to increase the cost of student loans at a time when we want more people to go to college.

Our proposal is different. Our proposal is to let more people borrow money on better repayment terms but to have tougher requirements to repay the loans. If everybody who borrowed money repaid it, we wouldn't have a budgetary problem with the student loan program. So what have we done? We've loaned money to more people at lower interest rates, but we're making more people repay the loans. That's the way to save money in the student loan program, not to cut the program, get the loans repaid.

And finally, to all of you let me say this: There is a lot of talk in Washington about cutting taxes. Now, nothing is more popular. But I would remind you of this: number one, we still have a sizable deficit, even though I have cut it by \$600 billion, and we now have a Government that, except for the interest on the debt that was piled up in previous years, your Government has an operating surplus for the first time in 30 years. We do that.

But our interest payments on our debt are so great we have to keep bringing this deficit down. That limits the size of any tax cut. We have to continue to finance a strong national defense. That limits the size of any tax cut. We have to continue to invest in education. That will limit the size of a tax cut. So we

have to ask ourselves, what kind of tax cut do we need, and who ought to get it?

My view is we shouldn't give a tax cut to people like me, in upper income groups, who did just fine in the eighties and the nineties. We ought to give it to middle class people whose incomes stagnated in the eighties and nineties who need the money. That's who ought to get it. And we ought to give it to people and not just give them a check that they can spend and then the money's gone; the money should be devoted to helping strengthen our families and to support education so that we raise people's income in the short run with a tax cut and in the long run by improving their earning skills. That's why I think the best tax cut would be giving the American people a tax deduction for the cost of themselves and their children for all education after high school. That is the best investment in our future.

Now, I also believe that we ought to have the individual retirement accounts, the IRA's, available to more Americans, and people ought to be able to withdraw from them tax-free to use money for education or for health care emergencies or for a first home or for the care of an elderly parent. That's the sort of tax cut we ought to have.

Now, believe me, my fellow Americans, we can afford that and still reduce the deficit, still increase our investment in education, and still have a strong defense. That is a responsible approach.

So I say to you without regard to your political party, this is a time of great change in our country. I want to work with this new Congress. I agree with them about a lot of things they want to do. But we can't go too far. We can't say that there's no difference in Government spending. Education is different. National defense is different. Things are different. Some things matter more than others. We can't say that everything the Government does is bad and everything that happens in the private sector is good. We need a partnership. And we know if California's economy is going to come back we ought to invest in defense conversion. We ought to do what we can to help the people in this State who have great talents and great resources, who can no longer use them in the defense plants but can use them in the economy of tomorrow.

And most importantly of all, we ought to look around at all these young people and say they

deserve to believe in the American dream, in the promise of tomorrow. They deserve to be able to do whatever their God-given capacities and their willingness to work will let them do. Nothing, nothing, nothing is more important than that.

So, to all of you who have been at this base, who have worn the uniform of our country, who have stood up for the security of the United States, what did you do it for? So that freedom and opportunity might be passed on forever in this country. This is a very great country. There is nothing we cannot do if we do the best we can to do right by the young people who are

here and all over America. That must be our mission. It is mine, and I believe it is yours.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:50 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Ronald W. Yates, Commander, Air Force Materiel Command; Gen. John F. Phillips, Commander, Sacramento Air Logistics Center; Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California; Mayor Joseph Serna, Jr., of Sacramento, CA; Sacramento County Supervisor Roger Dickinson; and Brad Sherman, chairman, California State Board of Equalization.

Statement on the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak)

April 7, 1995

The service reductions announced by Amtrak are tough but necessary choices in the face of stark fiscal realities and, along with the adjustments Amtrak announced last December, represent an urgent attempt to move the passenger railroad toward a stable economic future.

This administration remains committed to the future of rail passenger service in this country and has included significant capital support for Amtrak in its 1996 budget.

To address the pressures Amtrak faces and to promote a more businesslike approach, the

Department of Transportation today transmitted to Congress the "Amtrak Restructuring Act of 1995."

I encourage rail labor, Congress, Governors, mayors, and other constituents to continue to work closely with Amtrak as it works to develop rail passenger service for the 21st century. We look to our partners in Congress to support the "Amtrak Restructuring Act of 1995" and for continued financial support of rail passenger service.

Statement on the Nomination of Dennis J. Reimer To Be Chief of Staff of the United States Army

April 7, 1995

I am pleased to announce my intention to nominate General Dennis J. Reimer, U.S. Army, as Chief of Staff, United States Army, succeeding General Gordon R. Sullivan, who is retiring.

General Reimer currently serves as the Commanding General, U.S. Army Forces Command. In this capacity, he is responsible for over 60 percent of America's Army including Active, Reserve and National Guard units. During his distinguished career, General Reimer served two tours in Vietnam, was the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations during Desert Storm,

and played a key role in the transformation of the cold-war Army to today's power projection Army. He brings to the job of Chief of Staff a clear vision of the national security environment the United States will face through the remainder of this decade and into the next century. This insight will enable him to address the full range of challenges confronting the U.S. Army, including readiness challenges, the impact of emerging technology, expanded mission requirements, and improving the quality of life for our soldiers and their families.