

June 5 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1995

have been some very imaginative plans to try to use some of these facilities for other purposes and bring back employment and new opportunities in the community. But this was put into place long before we got here, and according to the law, it's going to continue for a while.

The President. But let me answer the security concern the lady raised. Defense spending peaked in about 1987 and since then has been cut about 40 percent. We have suggested that we add back a few billion dollars so we can get our training and our readiness up and support a good quality of life so we can keep first-rate people in the military, because it's the people that make it go.

The answer to your question, ma'am, is that we actually have more base capacity than the number of our men and women in uniform would justify. So we have to bring down the bases a little more so that they're basically in line with the size of our forces. The size of our forces now will enable to meet our security needs and meet our strategic objectives. But we can't cut it a lot more. We should stay about where we are.

Mr. King. Barbra Streisand is here tomorrow night. And are you both fans of hers? Do you like her speaking out on politics, by the way?

The President. I think she's—just as—if we have a right to speak out on entertainment, I think she has the right to speak out on politics. [Laughter] I think that she should do it.

Mr. King. David Letterman is here on Friday.

The Vice President. Tell him I said hello.

Mr. King. I will. Do you plan to return to that show?

The Vice President. I hope to sometime.

Mr. King. Would you recommend the President even appear with David?

The Vice President. I'm going to let him make that decision. [Laughter]

The President. But you know, since we got this procurement reform passed, there are no more of those \$10 ashtrays and \$500 hammers. So he's got no gig anymore. [Laughter]

Mr. King. Thanks, guys. You don't want to do a Brando close, do you? [Laughter]

The Vice President. Just a handshake. [Laughter]

Mr. King. Just a handshake.

The President. We've enjoyed doing the show.

Mr. King. Oh, let me—here—President Clinton does Brando. Do it once.

The Vice President. You missed it.

The President. It's been great being on your show, Larry.

Mr. King. Thank you.

The President. You're a good man; you've got a real future in this business. [Laughter]

Mr. King. Thank you. Thank you.

The President. Good night.

Mr. King. Good night.

The Vice President. Good night.

NOTE: The interview began at 9 p.m. in the Library at the White House.

Remarks to the National Governors' Association Summit on Young Children in Baltimore, Maryland June 6, 1995

Thank you very much. To Governor Dean and Governor Leavitt and all of the Governors who are here, Governor Glendening and Mayor Schmoke and Congressman Cardin: I'm glad to be back in Baltimore. I'm going to have to register as a citizen and begin to pay taxes if I don't stay out of your State a little more, Governor.

I am delighted to be here in Baltimore because Baltimore was one of the six cities which won a highly contested race for the empowerment zones in our country. And I congratulate

Mayor Schmoke on that, and I look forward to his work, along with the Governor and others, in making Baltimore an even stronger and greater city as a result of that.

Governor Dean, I want to thank you for your leadership of the Governors' Association. I don't think I ever enjoyed any job more than being chairman of the Governors' Association, although it was not always easy to please all the Governors. I think it's still not always easy to please all of the Governors. [Laughter]

I'm delighted to see so many representatives of State government, county government, local government here. My good friend Representative Blue from North Carolina, it's nice to see you here; Representative Campbell; and Commissioner Franke, thank you for your work, sir.

I thank all of you for coming here to meet about the fate of our children. This has been a concern of mine, as the Governor said, for a long time and, of course, a profound concern for my wife. When I met her, she was spending an extra year in law school to do 4 years instead of 3, so that she could devote a year to the study of the laws that affected our children. And I might say she then predicted a lot of the more disturbing trends which we've seen unfold in our country over the last 20 years.

Hillary is working on a book now about children's issues and the responsibilities we owe to them, and she picked the title of the old African proverb, "It takes a village to raise a child." I want to come back to that a little bit during my remarks because I think there is a great difference of opinion about that in the United States today. I began with the premise that the first responsibility for children lies with their parents, but that since all our futures are bound up in theirs, the rest of us share a responsibility in the United States and in our States and in our communities for their welfare. I do believe, in other words, that it takes a village to raise a child, especially when you consider the facts of life that children face today.

I ran for this job because I wanted to ensure a better future for our children, to ensure that instead of losing so many of our children and seeing so many of them grow up with the American dream beyond their grasp, that they could be rewarded for their work and that the values that we all share of work and family and community would be stronger, not weaker, when they came of age.

I realized that people my daughter's age were in danger of growing up to be the first generation of Americans to do worse economically than their parents but, perhaps even more important, to live in a country that was less supportive of the kind and quality of life that most people in my generation took for granted.

The recent report of the Carnegie Corporation tends to corroborate a lot of those disturbing trends with statistics you all know well. In "The Quiet Crisis," they say that still, after years of effort, compared to other industrialized

countries, our infant mortality rates are higher, our low-birth-weight baby rates are higher, our teen pregnancy rates are much higher, our childhood immunization rates are lower, and of course, our children are subjected to far, far higher rates of violence in the United States than they would be in any other country in the world.

If we are going to rescue our children's future, we have to do a number of things. We have to grow the middle class and shrink the under class. We have to support policies that reinforce work and families and communities. We have to change the way the Government operates so that it promotes independence, not dependence, opportunity and not bureaucracy. We have to give our youngest children things that they can't guarantee for themselves.

If you believe it takes a whole village to raise a child, it means that the Government has a responsibility, working with people in the private sector, to guarantee children who can't get it for themselves health, safety, and education, and then when they get older, to empower them to make the most of their own lives. To do that, I believe we need not another ideological war but a passionate and practical commitment to what we know will work. The whole issue of welfare is at the core of that.

But let me just say for a moment, for the last 2½ years a great deal of what I have sought to do has been centered in that conviction, that we have to have a passionate and practical effort to go beyond ideological wars right to the heart of what will make life better for our children. We've worked hard to strengthen families and to give children a better start.

The earned-income credit will now provide a tax reduction for working families with children with incomes below \$27,000 an average of \$1,000 a year. That's a pro-family policy. We should continue that, not reverse it.

The family and medical leave law, more than anything I've done as President, has caused ordinary citizens to come up to me and say, "Thank you. I had a sick child. I had a sick spouse. My wife had a baby. We were able to continue to work and to provide for ourselves. We were able to be good parents and successful workers." That, it seem to me, is the kind of thing that we ought to do.

Secretary Shalala, who is here, has worked very hard to expand immunization so that all our children under the age of 2 will be properly

immunized by the turn of the century. We have expanded Head Start dramatically. The Goals 2000 program in which many of you have participated—most of you have—emphasizes grass-roots reforms to achieve national, indeed, international standards of excellence.

When children are more independent, we have given them access to lower cost, better repayment terms for college loans with tougher requirements to repay them. We've worked with you for more apprenticeship programs for the young people who don't go to 4-year colleges and universities, through the school-to-work program. And of course, many of you have been very active in the national service program, AmeriCorps, which gives our young people a chance to give something back to their communities and earn more funds to go on to school. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Senator Mikulski of Maryland for her work on national service.

The crime bill was an important part of this because it emphasized not simply more punishment and more prisons but also protecting children through 100,000 more police officers on the street and through prevention programs that give our young people something to say yes to as well as something to say no to.

We were able to do those things and still reduce the deficit. The new majority in Congress uses 7-year terms. We use—the deficit is going down by a trillion dollars over 7 years, thanks to the '93 and '94 budgets. More than 6.3 million new jobs came into our economy. But we did it while saying that it takes a whole village to raise a child; that children deserve education, health, and safety; that families should be strengthened and supported; that work should be exalted; and that parents have to be able to succeed in the world we are living in, both as parents and as workers.

One thing we did not do is to pass comprehensive welfare reform. And that is now what is before the Congress. And that, more than anything else in this debate, captures a lot of the philosophical arguments that are at the core of what is going on in our national discussion today.

I don't think there's any question that I believe we ought to reform the welfare system. I was proud to represent the Governors when the Family Support Act was written under President Reagan's administration with strong bipartisan support. I realize what the shortcomings

of it are, especially since it was never properly funded. And therefore, I have now given, the Secretary and I have, 29 of the 50 States exemptions from Federal rules and regulations to pursue your own path to welfare reform to move people to work. Nothing like that has ever been done before.

In Missouri, Vermont, and Wisconsin, Governors Carnahan, Dean, and Thompson are using their waivers to impose time limits and to require work. In Ohio and Oregon, Governors Voinovich and Kitzhaber are moving people to work by using money now spent on welfare and food stamps to subsidize private sector jobs. Others are doing other things that are very important. Every Governor I've ever spoken with, without regard to party, understands that welfare reform is important and must, first and foremost, be about work.

Unfortunately, to my mind, the welfare reform bill in Congress—or the debate—has not focused as much as it should have about work. And I believe that in important respects, the tenor of the debate not only in the House but also in the Senate puts both children and States at risk. The House bill, clearly, was too tough on children and too weak on work. Finally, after a lot of efforts, the House did agree to be tough on deadbeat parents, something that everyone among the Governors agreed it needed to be done. The Senate Finance Committee reported a bill out the other day that clearly is a step in the right direction in many areas but, I believe, still misses the point on work and on children.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the current Senate Finance Committee bill will not succeed in moving people from welfare to work. The Congressional Budget Office—and the person who wrote the report was generally acknowledged to be one of the preeminent Republican experts on welfare reform—concluded that only six of our States would be able to fulfill the bill's work requirements in the year 2000 with the bill's funding provisions. Forty-four States will fail. Six out of fifty in baseball is a .120 batting average. You can't play for the Orioles with that batting average; you can't stay in the minor leagues. And you sure won't elevate children or end welfare as we know it.

The reason the Senate bill failed on the standard of work seems to me is clear. It takes away the tools that States now use to move people

from welfare to work: child care, job training, greater incentives for job placement.

I very much want to work across party lines to solve this problem. But if we're going to end welfare as we know it, Congress must pass a bill that meets some basic principles. First, we have to require people who can work to go to work and make sure that they have the child care to do it so that they don't have to hurt their children to do the right thing as citizens. It defies common sense to insist that people go to work when they have very young children if doing so will actually cost them money.

Second, the legislation should have real work requirements, but it ought to be backed up with the resources necessary to get people into jobs and keep them there. According to the CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, it would cost you, the States, \$10 billion a year by the year 2000 to meet these requirements just in the Senate bill. And yet, this bill asks you to meet these requirements with less money than you have now.

Now, I was a Governor long enough to remember what an unfunded mandate is. A lot of you—Governor Voinovich was in the Rose Garden celebrating when we signed the unfunded mandates bill; I strongly supported it. Just because this doesn't say it's one doesn't mean it isn't by another term. So I think we have to look at this forthrightly.

The third thing that I think is important is that welfare reform should have real incentives to reward the States who do succeed in putting people to work, not for cutting them off. The current bill gives States an incentive instead to save money simply by throwing people off the welfare roles. The House bill even gives States what the Catholic Church has called an illegitimacy bonus, an incentive for more people to have abortions. That is not welfare reform. If we're going to change the culture of welfare, we have got to reward success, we've got to depart from the status quo. I want a performance bonus but one that will force the welfare bureaucracy and the welfare recipients to focus on work.

The fourth thing I believe is that the legislation should protect States so they can continue to move people from welfare to work even when there is an economic downturn, extraordinary population growth, or unpredictable emergencies. In their current forms, these bills could really hurt the high-population States, the

growth States, like Florida and Utah and others, and could put every State at risk in the next recession or profound natural disaster.

Finally, let me say we ought to protect our children. If you believe it takes a whole village to raise a child, we should avoid mean-spirited restrictions on benefits to children. We should avoid cuts in child nutrition and adoption and child protective services. We should give States more flexibility, but we should also make sure States continue to fulfill their responsibilities. The proposed legislation contains no incentives or requirements for States to maintain their own funding for cash assistance or for child care or work supports.

Now, I know that if you believe in the pure theory of State experimentation—and you know that I believe a lot of that, because if you just look at what's in these 29 waivers, I have pretty much gone along with anything the States wanted to do to move people from welfare to work. So you might argue that, in theory, if we believe that States ought to have great flexibility, why don't we just give them a block grant without any requirement for local maintenance or anything of that kind? But the serious danger there is that this will become a race to the bottom. It's always cheaper to cut people off welfare than to move them to work. It will always be cheaper to lower benefits than to figure out how to reduce the caseload by moving them to work.

We already do less for young children than most of our major competitors—perhaps all of our major competitors—throughout the world. And I just believe that we cannot allow welfare reform to be a race to the bottom.

Let me say again, I know in theory it's right, but let me remind all of you, I served for 12 years as a Governor. I served in good times and bad times. I know that the last 2 years, this is the second year in a row when in all probability all 50 States will have economic growth. That is a highly unusual circumstance over the last two decades.

And I'm just telling you, I've been in enough State legislatures in my life, not just in my State but all around this country, to know what's going to happen. If you put this welfare reform block grant with less money and no local maintenance requirement up against the Medicaid cuts and the education cuts and the other things that are in this budget, you tell me how the poor children of your State are going to fare when

they have to deal with the nursing home lobby. And I'm not complaining about the nursing home lobby; you just tell me how they're going to fare.

You know, everybody wants to cut Medicaid to shreds, because they say that's just a poor person's health care. You know as well as I do almost 70 percent of that money goes to the elderly and the disabled. And they're all coming to see you and your State legislators.

Now, how are they going to do? How are these poor children going to do? How are they going to do against some of my favorite lobbies—the education lobbies? How are they going to do? Not very well. How are they going to do against a lobby that no one can say no to, the prison lobby? The crime rate goes up, and your legislature stiffens sentences, and people don't want you paroling folks that have no business on the street. And the only way you can get this Federal money for prisons is if you promise to leave people in longer and ignore your own parole laws. When you have to match that money or build prisons on your own, how are you going to stand up and say, "Well, somehow we're going to keep doing what we used to do for poor children?"

And you can walk away and say, "Well, what we used to do doesn't work, so maybe we shouldn't do anything." But the truth is we do less—I will say it again—we do less for children than the countries with which we compete.

And this is not a partisan issue, at least it never has been before. Everything that happened in the last 2 years on Head Start, on every education initiative we did, on the family and medical leave, every single thing was a bipartisan issue, everything.

Now, I think there are two big debates that are undergirding this welfare debate, and I'd like to just put it out on the table today. One is the debate about what causes people to be on welfare. Is it economic and politics, or is it culture? That's really what's behind all this debate about what's in the movies and in the rap lyrics and all.

And by the way, I think it's a positive thing. You know, Mrs. Gore was talking 18 years ago about the dangers of destructive entertainment forces on children. I've been challenging Hollywood and the television networks to reduce violence for years. I don't mind this debate. I think this is a good debate.

But the truth is, it's not either/or. You see, there was one young girl interviewed in a movie line last week—asked her, what do you think about this debate in Washington about whether movies were causing the breakdown of families. And she said, "Well, my father's working three jobs. I'll tell you, that's not good for our family. I wish he'd just come home and spend some time with me."

On the other hand, people who deny that culture is a force are wrong. The States in this country with the lowest incarceration rates also have the highest high school graduation rates, and they often don't spend the most money. There are almost no poor children in families with two parents in the home. So if I could just wave a magic wand and make this problem go away, I would never have another kid in a home where there weren't two parents until the child reached a certain age so that then the child could take care of himself or herself. That would be a wonderful thing if that could be done. And in that sense, there is a cultural component to all this.

So the people that are out there exhorting parents to be more responsible, and especially male parents to be more responsible, people like this Promise Keepers group, they deserve our support. They deserve our support. There is a cultural element in all this. But to say that there is no national responsibility on the economic and political side, I think is just plain wrong and defies the experience of every, single, solitary country in the world. And I might add that all the people that are out there working in the private charities, go interview them and ask them if they think that we can just walk away from this.

So I would say, this cultural debate is a very good thing, and we ought to have it. But there is plainly a political and economic root to this. If you look at rising poverty and stagnating middle class incomes in this country, it is clearly the result of international economic trends sweeping all advanced countries and national economic policies. And all those things are reinforced, one with another.

We are on the verge of having a 40-year low in the minimum wage. Why would somebody who was on welfare who had two kids, who at least had health care from Medicaid and they've got food stamps, go to work if we won't even raise the minimum wage to keep it up

to where it was 10 years ago—in fact, we're going to let it go to a 40-year low?

So I implore you, Governors are supposed to be the places where people look at the real world and they get away from all this theory and look at the practice. There's a political and an economic element to this problem, and there is a cultural element to the problem. That is one big deal. I think there is a public responsibility and there is a private responsibility, both, not either/or.

There's another debate going on here which is, what is the most important thing we can do to help grow the economy and stabilize the society? And on one side of that debate there are those who say the most important thing we can do is to reduce the deficit and shrink the Government, and nothing else really matters because the Federal Government would mess up a one-car parade.

And on the other side of that debate are not people who say we need a big Government, we need an expanded bureaucracy; that debate is not existent in Washington. You look at the record. We have reduced already, with the two budgets already adopted, the size of the Federal Government by 270,000. Congressman Cardin's already voted to do that, to bring the Federal Government to its smallest size since President Kennedy was President. We've had dramatic changes in regulation. The 29 States with the waivers from Federal rules on welfare is just one example. The deficit has been brought down three times in a row for the first time since Mr. Truman was here. Nobody is for a higher deficit. That is not the issue.

The issue is, are there any other responsibilities of the National Government? I believe there are some. I think we have to help people who cannot help themselves through no fault of their own, not because they're irresponsible but through no fault of their own, like little children who are poor. And I think we have to empower people to make the most of their own lives, because that way we'll all be better off. That's what I believe. Therefore, I don't think that you can sacrifice our responsibility to educate people and our responsibility for basic health and safety, security issues, on the altar of deficit reduction.

You know, sometimes I think my big problem is that I was for some of these things before they were popular, like deficit reduction.

Everybody's for it now. That doesn't mean we didn't do a lot of it in the last 2 years.

So we have to decide that. Now, don't kid yourself—from the point of view of the Congress, welfare reform has stopped being welfare reform primarily. Primarily welfare reform is a way to cut spending on the poor, so that we don't have to worry about it and we can balance the budget in 7 years and give a big tax cut, largely benefiting upper income people who have done pretty well in the 1980's. That's what this is about.

It is true that a lot of people genuinely believe the States ought to have more say over this. So do I. It is true that a lot of people believe the prior system didn't do much good for people who were permanently dependent on welfare. So do I, and I have for 15 years. But we should not confuse—if we really say it's more important to cut spending so that we can balance the budget in 7 years and still give a tax increase to upper income people, even if we're going to hurt poor children, people ought to just say that flat out because that's what's really underneath this.

So I ask you to think about it. What's it going to be like the next time the coasts are growing and the Middle West is in a depression, when the farmland goes to pieces? What's it going to be like the next time there's a high-tech collapse and the coasts are in trouble and only the heartland is doing well? What's it going to be like the next time we have a serious national recession if there is not even a maintenance-of-effort requirement, if there is no real effort to have work? You know what it's going to be like. You'll have less people moving from welfare to work, more people getting less money, and the most important thing is our children, our future, will be in more difficult circumstances.

You could not design a program that would be too tough on work for me. You could not design a program that would give the States any more flexibility than I want to give them as long as we recognize that we, our American village, have a responsibility to our children and that in the end, our political and economic policies must reinforce the culture we're trying to create. They ought to be pro-family and pro-work. But if we get in the fix in this country where people cannot succeed as parents without being derelict at work or they cannot succeed at work without being derelict to their children, which is exactly what exists for too many people

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in America today or that is their deep worry, then we are going to suffer. We are going to suffer economically, and we are going to suffer culturally.

Now, I think this is a huge opportunity. We can save some money and reduce the deficit in this welfare area. I have proposed that. I think we can. I don't believe every penny we're spending is sacrosanct, but I just would say to you we must not walk away, and you should not walk away, and you shouldn't want us to put you in a position to walk away from our fundamental responsibilities. Just imagine all the debates that are going to occur here. Children are not very well organized. Poor children are very poorly organized. They will not do well on balance in all the State legislatures of the country the next time things are really bad and, especially, after all the other budget cuts come down to all the other people who will also be on your doorstep.

We can have welfare reform. We can balance the budget. We can shrink the Government and still be faithful to our fundamental responsibilities to our children and our future. Let's don't make it either/or. Let's do it all, do it right, and take this country to the next century in good shape.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:38 p.m. at the Stouffer Renaissance Harbor Place. In his remarks, he referred to Governors Howard Dean of Vermont, Mike Leavitt of Utah, Parris N. Glendening of Maryland, Mel Carnahan of Missouri, Tommy G. Thompson of Wisconsin, George V. Voinovich of Ohio, and John A. Kitzhaber of Oregon; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore; State legislators Daniel T. Blue of North Carolina and Jane L. Campbell of Ohio; and Randall Franke, president, National Association of Counties.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Conflict Resolution in Africa

June 6, 1995

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Pursuant to Public Law 103-381, Sections 8 and 9, I hereby transmit the Inter-Agency Plan and Progress Report on Conflict Resolution in Africa.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Mark Hatfield, chairman, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, House Committee on International Relations; and Bob Livingston, chairman, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 7. An original was not available for verification of the content of this letter.

Remarks at the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Recognition Program

June 7, 1995

Jaime, I think I can speak for every adult in this audience today and say that there's not a person here who wouldn't be proud to be your parent when you graduate from high school tomorrow. Thank you, and God bless you for everything you've done and said. Thank you,

Marilyn, for being here. Thank you, Director Brown, and thank you, Secretary Riley.

Ladies and gentlemen, the statement you just heard from this fine young woman, about to begin her life after high school, is as clear an example as I could ever think of of what I think we ought to be doing as a country. You