

This is an historic moment. For 30 years, under both Democratic and Republican leadership, we've been saddled with a broken welfare system. Now we've got a real chance to reach common ground and higher ground. The Senators owe it to the people who sent them to Washington not to let this opportunity slip away by doing the wrong thing or by failing to act at all. The American people have waited long enough.

Next week, let's end the old system that fosters dependence, and let's give the American people a new one based on independence, work, responsibility, and family.

Thanks for listening.

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

## Statement on the Death of Jamie Whitten *September 9, 1995*

It is with deep regret that I learned today of the death of former Congressman and Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee Jamie Whitten. Congressman Whitten served Mississippi and our country in Congress for 53 years, longer than any other person in the history of this Republic. He was literally an institution himself within one of the most important of our democratic institutions.

Throughout his long service and especially as chairman of the House Appropriations Committee from the 96th Congress through the

100th Congress, Congressman Whitten dedicated himself to the concerns of the hard-working people of this country. He worked tirelessly on behalf of America's farmers, especially our family farmers, and he never gave up working to build more opportunity for all Americans willing to make the most of their own lives.

The people of the United States and of Mississippi will miss Jamie Whitten. Hillary and I send our sympathies to his family and loved ones.

## Roundtable Discussion With Students on Student Loans at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois *September 11, 1995*

*The President.* Is everybody in? For the members of the press corps that came in with me, as you know, I have been doing these roundtable discussions with students and faculty members and others in colleges around the country. And this is the kickoff of a back-to-school week we're doing this year to emphasize the choices that have to be made in Washington in the next 60 days that will affect education. And so I came here to Southern Illinois University.

One of the big issues is what's going to happen to the student loan program and, particularly, the direct loan program which our administration started. So I thought that we should start by having Pam Britton, who is in charge of financial aid here at SIU, talk a little bit

about how it works—the direct loan program—and what you're doing here.

So, Pam, why don't you lead it off.

[At this point, Ms. Britton welcomed the President and asked the participating students to introduce themselves. Following the introductions, Ms. Britton explained the importance of the student loan program at Southern Illinois University.]

*The President.* Thank you. Let me explain—how many of you come from schools that have the direct loan program? You know the old guaranteed student loan program basically gave banks a 90 percent guarantee if they made a student loan to a student and the student didn't