

ham Lincoln-Theodore Roosevelt dinner. This is about American values, American interests, America's future. And I want you to promise yourself that when you walk out of this room tonight, for the next year you are going to engage your fellow Americans in talking about these fundamental values and the fundamental vision we have for our future. The 21st century

is ours if we will simply be true to our values and follow our vision and think about these children and what kind of America we want for them.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:15 p.m. in the Veterans Memorial Auditorium.

The President's Radio Address *October 21, 1995*

Good morning. I want to talk to you today about American renewal. Not economic renewal, though our economy is certainly on the move. Not the renewal of peace, though the United States is leading hopeful efforts toward peace from the Middle East to Northern Ireland to Bosnia. Not even the renewal of the American spirit, though there is a tide of optimism rising over our country as we harness technology and other changes to increase opportunities for all our people and strengthen our families and communities. No, the American renewal I want to talk to you about today is the renewal of our national pastime, the renewal of baseball.

A year ago, for the first time in 90 years, we found ourselves without a World Series, and boy, did we miss it. We missed those nail-biting extra-inning nights. We missed a game that for so many of us is so much more than a game. Well, tonight, with the start of the World Series, baseball is back. And we couldn't be happier.

Baseball is a part of our common heritage. Its simple virtues—teamwork, playing by the rules, dedication, and optimism—demonstrate basic American values. We can look out at the green grass of the outfield or feel the worn leather of an old glove or watch a Latino short-stop scoop the ball to a black second baseman, who then throws it to a white first baseman in a perfect double play, and say, yes, this sure is America. This is who we are.

At its best, baseball is more than just a field of dreams. Every season brings our children and many adults face to face with heroes to look up to and goals to work toward. This year was no different. Greg Maddux's 1.63 ERA; Albert Belle's 50 home runs and 50 doubles; and of course, most important, Cal Ripken's 2,131st

consecutive game: All these inspire countless young people to play the game and those of us who are older to make the most of the talents God has given us, no matter what kind of work we do.

While baseball provides role models, it also helps us recognize these American values in everyday life. Just before Cal Ripken broke Lou Gehrig's record, I saw a story about other dedicated workers, featuring a bus driver who hadn't missed a day's work in 18 years. This man said he didn't see anything unusual about himself; after all, his father had told him we're all supposed to work hard and show up every day. But had it not been for Cal Ripken, we would never have had the opportunity to meet this wonderful man or to appreciate the hard work that he and millions and millions of other Americans do every day just by showing up for work like Cal Ripken did.

Baseball does something more. It helps to hold us together; it helps us to come together. I've been fortunate enough to see a lot of our great country. Just about everywhere I've ever been I've come across a baseball diamond. No matter where you go in America, sooner or later there will be a patch of green, a path of dirt, and a homeplate.

When I was growing up in Arkansas, baseball connected me to the rest of America. My team was the St. Louis Cardinals, the closest team to my home State. They were the ones we got on the radio. And I spent a lot of hot summer nights listening to the heroics of Stan Musial come over my transistor, like thousands of other young kids all over America.

Baseball also teaches us tolerance. It teaches us to play as hard as we can and still be friends

when the game's over, to respect our differences, and to be able to lose with dignity as well as win with joy—but real tolerance for differences. I mean, after all, my wife was raised in Chicago as a Cubs fan, and she married me even though I'd grown up rooting for the Cardinals. And everybody in the Midwest knows that when Cubs fans and Cardinal fans can sit down together, that's real tolerance.

If you watch one of the 178,000 Little League teams in this country, you also will see real community in America. Two and a half million of our children get together to play this sport, boys and girls. And that's not counting everyone who supports the teams and shows up for the games and practices and bake sales. Communities large and small grow up around baseball: kids playing a pick-up game until it's too dark to see, folks getting together for softball after work, families walking together to see a home game at their local ball park.

This has been a wonderful baseball season. When it's over and the owners and players sit down to resolve their labor dispute, I hope they'll remember the spirit of the season, the spirit we all feel right now, and use it to come together to build a lasting agreement. America doesn't need to lose baseball in a squabble. America needs to keep baseball.

During World War II, there was a debate about whether baseball should continue while

so many of our young Americans were fighting for freedom around the world. President Roosevelt knew we should play ball. He wrote, "It would be best for the country to keep baseball going. Everybody will work longer hours and harder than ever before, and that means they ought to have a chance for taking their minds off their work even more than before."

Well, we still need baseball. We know we have many important challenges facing us as a nation as we prepare for the 21st century. We know that we're having important debates in Washington and real differences. But tonight, I just hope Americans will be able to take their minds off all that and their own work for a moment. I hope they'll be able to wonder instead at the arc of a home run, a catch at the wall, the snap of the ball in the back of a mitt. Soon these sights and sounds will become a new part of our shared national memory of baseball.

Tonight fans of the Cleveland Indians and the Atlanta Braves will watch with special interest. But all of us Americans have reason to smile, for baseball is back.

Thanks for listening, and play ball.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:20 a.m. on October 20 in the Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Des Moines, IA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 21.

Remarks at the Dedication of the National Czech and Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

October 21, 1995

Thank you very much. President Havel, President Kovac, Governor Branstad, Senator Harkin, Congressman Leach, Mayor Serbousek, Mr. Schaeffer, Mr. Hruska, Ambassador Albright. Ladies and gentlemen, if we have not demonstrated anything else about the Czech and the Slovak heritage of Iowa, we have certainly shown to these two Presidents that you are a hearty people. I thank the Czech Plus Band for playing today. I thought they did a marvelous job, and we thank them.

I am proud to stand here with these two Presidents, each a pioneer and a patriot, each leading his nation through an epic trans-

formation, each representing the promise of Europe's future, and their presence today reflects our growing partnership as well as the deep roots of their people in the soil of Iowa.

I will never forget visiting Prague in January of 1994, the first time I had been there in 24 years, and walking across the magnificent Charles Bridge with President Havel. I remembered then all the young people I had met there a quarter century before and how desperately then they had longed for the freedom they now enjoy. In his devotion to democracy and through his courage and sacrifice, Vaclav Havel helped