

on the people they are working for, how much money they're spending, and what they're trying to get done. It's a good law, and I'm proud we did it. And I compliment the Republicans and the Democrats for doing it. But we need to finish the job.

Two distinguished United States Senators—a Republican from Arizona, John McCain, and a Democrat from Wisconsin, Russ Feingold—who disagree on a lot of things but understand that the health of our democracy must be put ahead of partisan politics, have sponsored a campaign finance reform bill. And we ought to pass it, and pass it now, because of Frank and because of you.

This bill includes the things I talked to you about in 1992. It limits spending. It curbs the influence of PAC's and lobbyists. It ends the soft money system. Most important of all, it would recreate the kind of town meetings that New Hampshire made famous, because it would give the candidates free air time. No more negative ads dominating politics but open air time and honest discussions of the issues. We need campaign finance reform, and we need it now.

But let me tell you something else we need; we need you. We need you. I want you to go out Tuesday night. You say, well—or Tuesday in the daytime—and vote. You say, "You don't have an opponent, Mr. President." Oh, yes I do. Oh, yes I do, and so do you. Our opponent is cynicism. It is negativism. It is apathy. It is division. It is short-term gain instead of the long-term interest of the country. Those are our opponents.

Remember, when we're united we never lose; when we're divided we defeat ourselves. Cynicism is a cheap cover and a poor excuse for inaction by the American citizens. Don't tell me your vote doesn't make a difference. It does. It does. If you voted for Bill Clinton and Al Gore 4 years ago, you got the family and medical leave law, you got national service, you got a better college loan program, you got more

kids in Head Start, you got a halving of the deficit, you got policies that contributed to the growth of jobs in America. You did make a difference, and it will make a difference.

You dare not permit the American people, your friends and neighbors, who would never think of coming out here on a cold day and standing here like you are, fall victim to this kind of skepticism and cynicism. It has no place in America.

Let me tell you, I know people say the Government would mess up a one-car parade and nothing good ever happens, but I just gave you a list of things good that happened. And let me tell you something else. In his new book, my friend James Carville points out something that every American should know. In the last 30 years, we have spent one-half of your tax money on just three things: defense, Social Security, and Medicare.

Now, what did you get for it? We won the cold war. There are no missiles pointed at America's children. The elderly poverty rate has been cut in half, and if you live to be 65, senior citizens in America have the highest life expectancy of any group of seniors in the world. I think we got our money's worth. We can make a difference when we work together and when we determine to do things. If we meet the challenges of the future the way we met those three challenges, this country's best days are ahead of us.

You can do it. Go Tuesday. Stand up for your country. Fight for your future, and determine that we are going to do this together.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:55 p.m. in the Keene central square. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Pat Russell; Clesson Blaisedell, State senator; and Jennifer Durling, student body president, Keene High School; and Yitzhak Rabin, former Prime Minister of Israel.

Remarks to the Community in Manchester, New Hampshire February 17, 1996

The President. Thank you so much. Didn't Jason Sabatino do a great job? And thank you,

Donna Soucy. And to New Hampshire College Board Chair Bob Morine, and all the people

here from New Hampshire College, I'm glad to be here with the Penmen. I congratulate you on the success of your basketball and your soccer teams. And I now know that enthusiasm is one key to that success. It's wonderful to be here with you.

Let me also ask you to join with me in giving a warm round of applause to the Salem High School band. We thank them for playing. This is the second time they played for me in 2 weeks; I feel like we're on a road tour together. [Laughter]

I want to tell you how wonderful it is to be here. I have been in Rochester and Keene today. I have been in Concord and Nashua and Bedford and Salem on the last trip I was here. And this is my second trip to Manchester just in the last couple of weeks. It has been a wonderful experience for me. I can also tell you that when the First Lady was here a couple of weeks ago, she had a wonderful time. And I thank all of you who have been so supportive of her. And I thank all those who have come out to see the Vice President and who supported his efforts and our administration to protect the environment and promote technology.

This is a remarkable experience, the New Hampshire primary season. You might ask, well, what are you doing here? [Laughter] I'm here for two reasons. One is, when I was elected President, I told the people of New Hampshire that I would not forget, that I would not stop coming back, that I would be here again and again, and I have been. And I wanted to be here to say, secondly, I do have an opponent Tuesday in the election. It's cynicism and apathy. It's the division of our people that comes up too often at election time. And those are the real opponents that you have. So I came here to ask you for the last time to go to the polls Tuesday and vote for Bill Clinton for President of the United States in the primary.

Now, let me say—you were cheering so loud, let me finish—I want to say—I said, for the last time in a primary. [Laughter]

I want to talk to you tonight—this is a rally. We're all going to have a good time. I want you to cheer and enjoy yourselves, but I want to be just a little serious tonight as well, because the people of New Hampshire have a unique opportunity every year that a lot of our—every 4 years—that some of our citizens never have. The country is vast and heavily populated. And when people are running for President in most

places they have to go from tarmac to tarmac. They don't have the opportunity to visit the towns, to have the meetings, to see people face to face in the way that all people seeking public office ought to.

I also want to thank the people of New Hampshire, not only for the incredible boost they gave me at a difficult time 4 years ago but for the educational opportunity I received, being able to go to those communities, being able to run a grassroots campaign, having town meeting after town meeting after town meeting, just listening to people tell me their life stories, tell me their hopes, tell me their dreams, tell me their concerns. I have learned a lot.

Audience member. [Inaudible]—for '92. We're still waiting for—[inaudible].

The President. I might say to you—I believe in free speech. That's right. Wouldn't you like—

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Let me point out something, if I may. Let me point out something. Let me point out something.

Audience member. [Inaudible]

The President. Thank you.

Abridging my right of free speech is not the best way to get a positive response from me or anyone else. What is the truth? What is the truth? What is the truth? What is the truth?

Audience member. [Inaudible]—doctors—AIDS—

The President. Let me ask you this. Would you consider at a time of declining public spending a 30 percent increase in research action? Would you consider, at a time when hundreds of programs are going by the boards and I'm fighting my heart out to save student aid programs and other opportunity programs that affect all Americans, would you consider a huge increase in treatment funds for people with AIDS, action, not words? Would you consider the most serious effort in 40 years to give health care coverage to all Americans, including people with AIDS, action, not words?

Let's look at the facts. Would you consider a yearlong effort to save the Medicaid program, which allows people who are HIV-positive to work, to be constructive citizens, against what the Congress has tried to do, action, not words? Would you consider the appointment of the first AIDS director ever and having the first AIDS conference ever, action, not words? I think you would.

So you might ask, why is this demonstration going on at our rally instead of their rally? Now, this is New Hampshire. You heard them; you heard me. Now, let's go back to the agenda of the evening.

You know, when I came here 4 years ago, and I looked into the faces of all the people who were here, the unemployment rate was over seven points—

Audience member. Poll that now—[inaudible].

The President. I've got an idea. Why don't you pretend he's not here and listen to me, and then you'll defeat him.

I told you then that our country had to have an agenda for the future, if all of you were going to be able to participate in the American dream, if we were going to come together and not be divided, if we were going to maintain the leadership of this country. I said if you voted for me I would not promise you miracles, but I would promise you progress, that we would move.

In the last 4 years, the unemployment rate in this State has been cut by more than half. This country has almost 8 million new jobs. The deficit is half what it was. Trade is at an all-time high. We are selling more of our products overseas than people are selling to us again. Americans are competing in this world.

We are coming together. The crime rate is down. The poverty rate is down. The welfare rolls are down. The teen pregnancy rate is down. We are coming together as a country, and we are the strongest force for peace and freedom in the world, from the Middle East to Bosnia to Haiti.

But this is also a perplexing time. No time is free of difficulty. Do you ever ask yourself, those of you who are in college particularly, how could it be that New Hampshire has an unemployment rate under 4 percent, the country has almost 8 million new jobs, and yet, millions of people still feel uncertain in their lives. They're worried about being laid off in one of these big corporate downsizings, or they're worried about continuing to work harder and harder and never getting a raise. They're worried whether they can afford a college education for their children or if they'll lose their health insurance if someone in their family gets sick.

How can this happen? It is very important that you understand why. It is happening because your country is undergoing the biggest period of change in 100 years. Not since we

moved from the rural areas to living primarily in cities and towns, not since we stopped making our living largely on the farm and mostly in the factory have the American people seen such change in the way they work and live. Now we are moving into an economy dominated by technology and information, and the longer we go into the future, the less it will matter where you live because you'll be able to access everybody else through the information superhighway.

We are living in a world dominated by world markets for goods, for services, and for money. And what that means is that there are incredible new opportunities in this world for Americans, more than at any time in the history of the country, for those who are prepared to take advantage of them. But if those who aren't prepared to take advantage of them, or those who have the misfortune of being downsized, it is not a rosy picture.

What we have to do today is not to reverse the policies of the last 3 years; we are moving in the right direction. What we have to do is to bear down until every American has the opportunity to succeed. And we have to do it together.

If you ask me what one lesson I have learned as President in the last 3 years, it is this: Whenever we are together as a people, we never lose. And when we permit ourselves to be divided, we defeat ourselves. We must solve these problems and meet these challenges together.

Now, it is in that context that I want you to see your responsibilities as citizens. In the State of the Union Address, I said, again, I want to balance the budget, but we have to do it together in a way that is consistent with our values and consistent with our interests. That means that I want to balance the budget. After all, the debt was quadrupled in the 12 years before I moved to Washington. We have cut it in half in 3 years.

But I want us to do it together. That means that, yes, we can balance the budget, but we don't want to do it in a way that violates our obligations to our parents or to our children or to the future. What does that mean? Don't wreck the Medicare program. Don't weaken the Medicaid program. The people that are here to demonstrate tonight, the people they represent, they need Medicaid. They deserve it. They deserve the right to work and to be here as long as possible.

And balance the budget, yes. But what is the purpose of balancing the budget? To give our young people a stronger future. Therefore, don't balance the budget by cutting back on the student aid program or by cutting Head Start or by abolishing the national service program. That is not the way to balance the budget.

What is the purpose of balancing the budget? To make us more secure in the future. Therefore, do not balance the budget by cutting environmental protection by 30 percent and undermining the future of this country.

We can do this. We have identified more than enough savings to balance the budget and to provide a modest tax cut. We must not sacrifice our values or our future to do it. We must not.

But I want to say this to you. When you think of your decision in this election, of course, I want your support. But I don't want you to support me just because of my affection for New Hampshire, even though it's enormous. I don't want you to support me just because of the record we have established, although clearly we are moving this country in the right direction. I want you to be with me because I will be with you as we go together into the future to meet our challenges.

You know, we have seven great challenges. We have to strengthen our families. We have to educate all Americans. We have to provide economic security to every family in this country willing to work for it. We have got to preserve the environment and grow the economy. We have got to abolish forever from our thinking this destructive idea that we can only expand economically if we undermine our environment. The truth is, we can only grow over the long run economically if we find ways to preserve our environment and put people to work doing it.

We have got to continue the fight against crime and violence. Even though the crime rate is down, it is too high. Everybody knows it. If you saw what we did in Manchester when I was here a few days ago, with the local police, in a neighborhood that is now a freer neighborhood where people can walk the streets at night and children can play safely in the schoolyard—that's what we have to do everywhere. We should not turn our backs on it until we have finished the job.

And I ask for your continued support in meeting the challenge of leading the world toward

peace and freedom. I know Americans wonder sometimes whether it is really necessary for the United States to do some of the things that we have done when I have been in office. And I know some of them have not been popular. But the people of Haiti just had the first peaceful transfer of power in almost 200 years of history. The people of the Middle East have undergone the awful agony of having the Prime Minister of Israel assassinated. But they are moving determinedly toward peace and freedom and partnership with us.

We see it all across the world. And tonight, while we are here in this wonderful, warm gym, our men and women in uniform in Bosnia are in the cold Bosnian winter standing up for humanity around the world.

Finally, we have to meet the challenge of making our democracy work. You have to have a Government that works better and costs less. You have to have a Government that earns your trust, and you have to be worthy of your legacy as citizens. We need the line item veto. We need campaign finance reform, and we need it now.

But of all these challenges, I want to say here at this college, with its rich heritage, we must, we must, open the doors of learning to every American for a lifetime. And let me just say, I come to you with a record and an agenda. We have had a clear strategy, high standards, high expectations, high technology, and high levels of opportunity and grassroots reform. That has been the strategy of this administration. We have expanded Head Start. We have given schools money and flexibility they never had before to try to meet high national standards. We have dramatically expanded college loans and scholarships, and we must do more. But it is not enough.

And if you continue this administration, here is what I want to do. I want, first, to make sure that every school, every classroom, every library in this entire country is hooked up to the Internet, to the international—information superhighway by the year 2000.

Second, I want to open the doors of college education to every single person in this country who wants to go. I want to maintain the loan programs. I want to expand the Pell grants. I want to keep national service. And I want to expand work study to a million students in this country working their way through college. And if we are going to have a tax cut, let's have

the best tax cut of all, a tax deduction for the cost of college tuition.

Finally, let me say, at New Hampshire College, called the Penmen, something you know. You understand the economy. You know that more and more jobs are being created by small businesses. But you know more and more people my age are being laid off by big ones, being asked to start over again when they're trying to send their own children to college. You know more and more people are struggling in jobs where they never get a raise and they would have to have new training to get that raise.

So I say to you that college cannot just be for the young and training cannot just be for the young. One of the things that I have proposed to do is to take all these Government training programs and collapse them into a big pool of money and give every unemployed and underemployed person in this country a simple voucher they can take to the nearest college to get whatever training and education they want.

We built the opportunities we enjoy today through the GI bill after World War II for the returning soldiers. Today we need a "GI bill" for all those American workers who are working harder and harder just to hang on. They need to be lifted up. They need to be able to go forward. We need to support them as well.

Let me say the most important thing I have to say to you tonight is: Whatever we do, we have to do it together. The era of big Government is over. I told you that 4 years ago, that I was not a Democrat who believed in preserving the status quo and every bureaucratic program that ever existed. And I can report to you tonight that under our administration we now have the smallest Federal Government in 30 years. To find more money for the programs that need our investment—the health care programs, the medical research programs, the education programs, the technology programs—we have eliminated hundreds of other programs. We have closed thousands of offices. There is no big Government.

But just because we don't have a big Government anymore doesn't mean we need a weak Government and that we can go back to the time when people were told to fend for themselves. That is wrong. It will not work.

When business people in New Hampshire 4 years ago asked me to make more credit available to them so they could borrow money again

to keep their businesses going and create jobs, and we did it, we didn't do it with a weak Government. When I went just a few days ago out to Washington and Oregon and Idaho to deal with the terrible floods that are gripping those people, they don't want a weak emergency management agency. You don't want a weak Government. You don't want a weak student loan program. You don't want a weak Pell grant program. You don't want a weak national service program.

We don't have to have bureaucratic inefficiency to have strength and partnership. That is what we have to have. But let me say to you, a partnership is a two-way street. Yes, your Government has let you down, and I've tried to change that. I've made it smaller and more efficient. I've done everything I could to do that. We have addressed the problems that were before us with everything from the family leave law to the Brady law to the college loan law, all the initiatives we have taken.

But we also know that we have to make you trust the Government more. So we passed a tough lobby reform law, a law to apply to Congress the laws they impose on the private sector, a law that stops lobbyists from having tax deductions for the cost of lobbying, for a change. We are moving in the right direction.

Yes, we need to do more. Yes, we need the line item veto. I hope Congress will give it to me soon. We need it. They promised it, and I want it. And yes, we need campaign finance reform, and we need it now to put you back in the driver's seat.

But if you think about all those other challenges—if we're going to strengthen our families and give childhood back to all children; if we're really going to have a world-class system of education that offers opportunity to everybody; if we're really going to provide economic security for every family willing to work for it; if we're really going to make our streets safer and our environment cleaner; and if we're going to continue to lead the world toward peace and freedom—in the end this is a democracy—you are the most important players. You have to do your part. That's why I'm asking you to vote on Tuesday, and even more of why I'm asking you to fight the cynicism and the negativism and the division and the turnoff that so many citizens express.

I'm going to tell you something. We had an interesting little exchange here, but I honor

these people that came here to demonstrate. At least they care about something. At least they show up. At least they make their opinion known. At least they're fighting for something. They're standing up just like you are. Just like you are.

And I want to tell you, make no mistake about it, there's one thing I can do that none of you can do. I can go abroad to represent all of us. And when I do, it is a feeling I can't even put into words for you, because I'm no longer Bill Clinton, and I'm not even really the President. You just become the United States. And you realize what a very great country this is, what we stand for and what we can do.

No one has been more willing to be critical of Government that doesn't work than I have. But for people to go around and say, "It doesn't matter what I do; it doesn't matter how I vote; it won't make any difference"—it does make a difference. It does make a difference. You got the family and medical leave law, the Brady bill, a doubling of tax breaks on low-income working people. You have a whole new economic strategy. You've got the deficit cut in half. You've got a telecommunications law now that provides for honest opportunity for everybody to compete in this brave new world in a way that advances the public interest, all because of the votes in the last election. It does make a difference.

But more importantly, it bothers me when I hear people say that our Government is intrinsically bad and every penny is wasted. My friend James Carville has written a book which I commend to you in which he says that in the last 30 years we have spent half of your tax money on just three things: national defense, Social Security, and Medicare. Now you decide if you got your money's worth. What happened? We won the cold war, and there are no missiles pointed at the United States or any of its people tonight. In spite of the fact that most people over 65 live on very modest incomes, we have

cut the rate of poverty among our seniors in half because of Social Security. And most important for the present budget debate, if you live to be 65 in this country, our seniors have the highest life expectancy of any group of seniors in the entire world. So I think we got our money's worth. And it shows you what we can do when we go together and when we work together and when we stand together.

Now, don't let anybody fool you, folks. It's just like I said 4 years ago. This election is fundamentally about you and your families, your children, your future, your dreams, and your challenges. It belongs to you. And you have to seize it. The first thing you got to do is show up, be heard, and be counted. The second thing you have to do is to go to your friends and neighbors and get them to do the same thing.

And then what you have to remember is—I will say it again—no country like this has ever existed. Look around this room. Just look at each other. Look at all the differences that leap out at you, the differences in age, the differences in physical condition, the differences in racial and ethnic background. Look at it all. And it all works when we realize that we must go forward together.

I believe more strongly than anything else—you've got to decide—I am telling you there is no challenge out there we cannot meet. But we all got to show up. We have to put all our players on the field. And I want you to start Tuesday. Say to yourselves, your friends, your neighbors, we are going to go out there and take a stand for our future, and we are going to do it together.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:11 p.m. in the gymnasium at New Hampshire College. In his remarks, he referred to Jason Sabatino, student body president, and Donna Soucy, Manchester alderman.

Message on the Observance of Presidents' Day, 1996 *February 17, 1996*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Presidents' Day, 1996. I am pleased and proud that

so many of our citizens gather at this time each