

The report includes information on the cases heard and decisions rendered by the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the General Counsel

of the Authority, and the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
September 27, 1996.

The President's Radio Address *September 28, 1996*

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about a new executive action I'm taking to crack down on deadbeat parents who won't pay the child support they owe.

During my time as President, I've had a straightforward strategy: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, and coming together in a stronger American community. That's America's basic bargain.

We've worked hard to offer every American opportunity, the chance to make the most of his or her own life. We've got 10½ million new jobs, the lowest unemployment in 7½ years, the deficit has been cut by 60 percent. And just this week, we received more news that our strategy is working and America is on the right track. According to the U.S. census, the income of a typical family went up \$1,600 over inflation over the past 2 years. In just the last year the increase was almost \$900, the biggest increase in a decade. The number of people living in poverty and the rate of income inequality in our country dropped faster than at any time since 1968. Our economy clearly is on the right track to the 21st century.

As we offer opportunity, we must also demand responsibility. The problems of our society will only be solved if there is an upsurge of personal responsibility, if individuals take it upon themselves to meet their obligations, do the right thing, and give something back to those around them.

No area cries out for greater personal responsibility than the quiet crisis of child support. No one should be able to escape responsibility for bringing a child into the world. That is our first and most fundamental duty. But today, too many fathers have tried to walk away from that obligation. When a father leaves the home it can throw a mother and children into poverty.

In fact, one of the main reasons people go on welfare is because the father has failed to meet his obligations of child support. If all the parents in this country paid the child support they owe, we could move 800,000 women and children off the welfare rolls tomorrow.

So our administration has waged an unprecedented and sustained campaign to collect child support and make deadbeat parents pay up. We required States to set up programs at hospitals to find out the identity of fathers at the time a baby is born. Two hundred thousand fathers have been identified through this program. We're requiring mothers who receive welfare to tell us the name of the father of the child. We set up a national data base of delinquent parents and linked up the data bases from 17 States. And I'm pleased to report that in its first few months this system has identified over 60,000 delinquent fathers. Over half owed money to mothers on welfare.

And the landmark welfare reform legislation I signed last month institutes the most dramatic crackdown yet on child support enforcement. It says to deadbeat parents, pay up or we'll track you down, garnish your wages, and make you pay what you owe. Under the new welfare law, States will suspend driver's licenses of deadbeats who don't pay and the National Government will take away passports. This year, at my direction, the IRS will collect \$1 billion in child support by withholding part of tax refunds. The U.S. Postal Service has begun work with the States to post lists of parents who owe support. And we're using the new information technologies to catch delinquent parents, linking the web pages of 20 States to post the identities of deadbeat parents on the Internet.

We now have new evidence of how effective this crackdown has been. In 4 years, child sup-

port collections in our country have risen from \$8 billion to \$11.8 billion, a nearly 50 percent increase in child support collections. And nearly 800,000 paternities were identified. That's an increase of 50 percent over 1992.

We've made a real difference. But we can do more, and we must do more. This past week, the Justice Department proposed legislation making it a felony and increasing penalties for crossing State lines to avoid paying child support or to refuse to pay support for a child in another State.

Last year I issued an Executive order requiring all employees of the Federal Government to pay the child support they owed. Today I'm issuing a new Executive order designed to crack down even harder on those who refuse to pay their child support.

First, I'm ordering Federal agencies to take necessary and legal steps to deny Government loans, such as small business loans, farm loans, home loans, to deadbeat parents.

Second, the Government will do more to collect child support itself. We'll create a streamlined computer system that can find out which people who receive Federal payments still owe child support. We'll deduct child support debts from these fees paid to Government consultants and vendors and the benefits paid to retired Federal employees. The Treasury Department estimates that some \$800 million in payments

go to these deadbeat parents. These funds can then be paid to the mother and the children.

The Executive order says simply if you owe child support, you shouldn't get the support of the National Government. You can't make money off the taxpayers if you're refusing to support your own children. It says we mean business, and we intend to make responsibility a way of life.

We know that when we do take responsibility we can meet the difficult challenges like crime, welfare, and poverty. We're already making real and dramatic progress on child support collections. And I am confident that we can make even more progress. But ultimately, we will only meet this challenge if we recognize that governments don't raise children, parents do. We need everyone to take responsibility to give our children the love and support they need and deserve, to show them by our own actions the meaning of right and wrong. If we do this, then I have great confidence in our country, our children, and our future.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7 p.m. on September 27 at a private residence in Houston, TX, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on September 28. The Executive order of September 28 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks in Providence, Rhode Island *September 28, 1996*

Good morning, Rhode Island! Thank you so much. Thank you. Thank you for being here in such large numbers and with such great good spirits. You deserve these good spirits because our country is on the right track to the 21st century.

Mayor Cianci, thank you for that wonderful welcome and for your exuberant leadership. Under that leadership, as I saw when I drove into town today, Providence has become once again not only a truly historic city but a wonderfully beautiful one. It's an honor for me to be here in this great place.

Thank you, Secretary of State James Longevin, for being here, for being on this plat-

form with me, and for serving well and for embodying the proposition that every person in this country ought to have a chance to live up to his or her God-given capacities. Thank you for serving.

I want to thank the legislative leaders, Governor Sundlun, the other distinguished citizens of Rhode Island who are here. I want to say a special word of thanks to the people who provided our music, the Cranston High School West Marching Band, the Easterly High School—Westerly High School Jazz Band, and the Holy Cross Cathedral Church Gospel Choir. Thank you.