

that many more people being productive, that many more people being a positive role model for their own children. This is a huge thing. So I hope that you will, all of you, do what you can to try to mobilize the women business people of America to try to take an active and aggressive role in this effort.

I have asked the Congress to pass what I think is a good flextime bill to give people more options to take their overtime in time or money. But I think the important thing is that the employee ought to have the choice. It shouldn't be a way around the 40 hour work week. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I have asked the Congress—I think—I've asked the Congress to expand family and medical leave in a very narrow way just to give some time off to go to children's conferences at school and to take their children or their parents to regular doctor's appointments in a very limited fashion. I hope that will pass and find favor. And as I said, we've also proposed some other things in the retirement security area.

The last thing I would say is, I think that there are a lot of women who are outside their regular school years who deserve a second chance, who could make a major contribution to the economic life of this country. And the education proposals that are on the table in this Congress would be really helpful. If we pass the \$1,500-a-year tax credit for the first 2 years of college, it would in effect make community college education as universal as high school is today.

I also proposed a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for the cost of any high school—any tuition after high school, easier access to an IRA that you could withdraw from tax-free to pay for education, and the biggest increase in Pell grants in 20 years.

But I think these things are important. We need to remind ourselves that the average age

of people in our educational institutions is going higher and higher and higher. Even in the 4 year colleges now, it's up to 25—26 in some of our 4 year colleges in America. Most of our community colleges, it's higher than that. And so having universal access so people can get a second chance, I think, is profoundly important. And I hope that you will support that. It's a big deal for our economy and a big deal for women's economic opportunity.

So these are the things that we're going to be pushing. If you have other ideas, I hope you will do that and give them to us.

And the last thing I want to say is I hope you will continue to participate as partners with us. I went to a memorial service yesterday over at the Commerce Department for Ron Brown and the other people who were killed a year ago in Croatia, and I think one of the more important things that Secretary Brown did was to make sure that he emphasized women business leaders in these trade missions and reaching out to the rest of the world and trying to build ties. So I hope you will look for other opportunities to participate in that way and to continue to be a part of the partnership that we're trying to establish with America to create the kind of country we want for the 21st century.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:41 p.m. in the Indian Treaty Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Betsy Myers, Deputy Assistant to the President for Women's Initiatives and Outreach, and Maria Echaveste, Assistant to the President and Director of Public Liaison, White House; and Linda Tarr-Whelan, president and chief executive officer, Center for Policy Alternatives.

## **The President's Radio Address**

*April 5, 1997*

Good morning. I want to talk with you today about how we can make this glorious spring a season of service all across America. As I have said many times, the era of big Government

may be over, but the era of big challenges for our Nation is surely not. Citizen service is the main way we recognize that we are responsible for one another. It is the very American idea

that we meet our challenges not through heavy-handed Government or as isolated individuals but as members of a true community, with all of us working together.

On April 27th through 29th, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, we will be convening an historic Presidents' Summit on Service. I will be joined by President Bush, General Colin Powell, by every living former President or his representative, by other prominent Americans, including former HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros and Lynda Robb. Every person, business, or organization represented at the summit will have already committed to take specific steps to help to serve our children and to rebuild our communities. Our mission is nothing less than to spark a renewed national sense of obligation, a new sense of duty, a new season of service.

I hope that many activities in the weeks leading up to this wonderful event will make all Americans think about the duty all of us owe to one another. Citizen service can take many shapes. It can mean volunteering nights or on weekends in a religious group or neighborhood association or devoting full years of your life to service like those the Peace Corps or the Jesuit Volunteer Corps members do.

Over the past 4 years, we have worked to harness this citizen energy in so many ways. I am especially proud of AmeriCorps, the national service program I proposed when I ran for President, that we launched the very next year. Since its creation, 50,000 young people have earned college tuition by serving their communities, with the basic bargain of getting the opportunity to go to college in return for giving something back to their friends and neighbors.

The success of AmeriCorps shows that service can help to meet our most pressing social needs, from renewing our cities to protecting our environment, to immunizing poor children, to giving them mentors and someone to look up to. And that service often leads to more service; a typical AmeriCorps member trains or recruits a dozen or more community volunteers.

To focus the American people on the importance of this summit and the urgency of service, I'll issue a proclamation designating the week of April 13th through 19th as National Service Week in America. During that week, over a million young people will participate in 3,000 events across our Nation, cleaning up neighborhoods and working with children.

I've asked the thousands of AmeriCorps alumni and returned Peace Corps volunteers to participate as well, reaching out to youth in their communities, speaking in schools, recruiting volunteers, and teaching a new generation about the power of service. I'm very pleased that some of them have joined our Peace Corps Director, Mark Gearan, here with me today.

I hope that they will teach that citizen service cannot be a pursuit for just a week or a month, that the ethic of service must extend throughout a lifetime. No one is too young to serve. As a recent study by Brandeis University shows, when you begin to serve at a young age, school-work improves, and there is a good chance you will continue to serve in the years to come. It's a good habit that's hard to break. And no one is too old to serve, either. But we must find even more ways to encourage our young people to begin to serve.

I'm joined here today by some young men and women from Maryland, along with that State's Lieutenant Governor, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who has been a leader in making Maryland the first State in our Nation to require that every student perform some service as a condition of high school graduation. One of the students meeting with me gathered food and clothing for the needy; another, dyslexic herself, taught disabled students; another tutors young children at a Head Start center.

Today I challenge schools and communities in every State to make service a part of the curriculum in high school and even in middle school. There are many creative ways to do this, including giving students credit, making service part of the curriculum, putting service on a student's transcript or even requiring it, as Maryland does. This week, the National Association of Secondary School Principals agreed to introduce service learning to more than 2 million students, and I hope they'll work to find even more creative ways to involve service. States and schools, of course, should be free to decide this for themselves. But every young American should be taught the joy and duty of serving and should learn it at the moment when it will have the most enduring impact on the rest of their lives.

Two weeks ago, applications went out to high school principals all around our Nation, inviting them to select a student in that school who has performed outstanding service, thereby making them eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship.

Under this new initiative, which we launched last year, our National Government will put up \$500 for each student if it is matched by local communities. Already, a host of civic organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Moose International, the Lions Clubs, the U.S. Jaycees, have accepted our challenge to work with their local chapters to provide matching funds for these scholarships. And public servants from agencies like the Agriculture Department will continue to work as partners with these schools, sending volunteers to work with teachers and acting as mentors to the students.

I hope all of you will join in the spirit of the Presidents' Summit on Service and take part in the National Week of Service beginning April 13th. Service is in our deepest national tradition.

Millions of young Americans in my generation were inspired by the call to service issued so often from this very office by President Kennedy. Now it is up to all of us to take up President Kennedy's challenges, remembering, as he said, that every person can make a difference, and every person must try.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Colin L. Powell, USA (ret.), former Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Lynda Robb, wife of Senator Charles S. Robb. The National Service and Volunteer Week proclamation of April 11 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel

April 7, 1997

### *Middle East Peace Process*

Q. Mr. President, how dangerous is the standoff between Israel and the Palestinians?

*President Clinton.* Well, I think it's very important to get this peace process back on track. The Prime Minister is coming here at a very good time. As you know, he saw King Hussein the other day; I did, too. And I want to have this chance to spend an hour with him to discuss what we can do to get it going again.

Q. Mr. President, will you be amenable to hosting a peace conference at Camp David, as the Prime Minister has suggested?

*President Clinton.* Well, I think it's important not to jump the gun on that. The first thing we have to do is get the process going again. There is a preexisting process. There are a whole lot of agreements. And the Prime Minister has got some ideas about what we can do to get the substance working.

Obviously, I've been heavily involved in this from the day I became President. I continue to be heavily involved, and I wouldn't rule out any reasonable opportunity for me to make a positive contribution. But we have to have the conditions and the understandings necessary to go forward. That's the most important thing, is to get the thing going again.

Q. Mr. President, are the Palestinians entitled to a concession in order to make a statement against terrorism, the kind of zero-tolerance statement you want? Does Israel have to trade something for that, or is that just an obligation under the Oslo agreement?

*President Clinton.* I think under the Oslo agreement and under any sense of human rights and human decency, we ought to have zero tolerance for terrorism.

Q. Mr. Prime Minister, how was your visit with King Hussein?

*Prime Minister Netanyahu.* It was very good. I wanted very much to see him. He had paid a visit to Israel under very difficult times and, I think, expressed his humanity and his concern for peace, and I wanted to come there. And I wanted very much to come here as well. It's always, for me, a pleasure to meet President Clinton. He is the world leader, who is also taking tremendous efforts and tremendous pains to assist us in the quest for peace with security. I think both of us see eye to eye on the need to fight terrorism, and we'll explore these and other subjects, I'm sure.

Q. Mr. President, you've said that your role is to support Israel as it takes risks for peace. Has the time come to exert more influence or