

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:05 p.m. at the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

Remarks at a Saxophone Club Reception in Los Angeles June 23, 1997

The President. I thought he was going to say, "When the son of a migrant farmworker can introduce the redneck grandson of poor dirt farmers"—[laughter]—that's what I thought he was going to say.

Paul Rodriguez. The Secret Service cut that joke out. [Laughter]

The President. They take all our fun away.

Thank you, Kevin. Thank you, Paul. Thank you, Campbell Brothers. Thank you, Bennett Kelley, for all your work on the Saxophone Club. I thank Lieutenant Governor Gray Davis and Congressman Brad Sherman, who were here earlier. And I thank all of you for being here.

I love the Saxophone Club. I love it. I love the idea that we've given so many people who never were in the political process before a chance to be a part of it and to help to forge your own future. I like the fact that most of the people who are in the Saxophone Club are a lot younger than I am. [Laughter] That's not true—I don't like that. [Laughter] But I do like the fact that people who have most of their days in front of them and who have a great stake in what we're doing believe enough in this to be a part of this.

You know, I was just thinking today coming out here to California how wildly different things are here than they were just 5 years ago. And I was thinking how profoundly grateful I feel to all of you for the fact that California voted for me twice, to all of you for the support you've given the policies that we have enacted, to all of you for helping to make it possible for Al Gore and Hillary and me and all of us in our administration to do things that have helped to get the unemployment rate below 5 percent for the first time in 24 years, to get the inflation rate to its lowest point in 30 years, to make America the number one exporter in the world again—and for a Democrat something that's very important—have the biggest decline in inequality among working people in over 30

years. I'm proud of that. And thank you for that.

I'm proud of the fact that we had the biggest drop in crime in 36 years, the biggest drop in the welfare rolls in history. I'm proud of the fact that we've cleaned up more toxic waste dumps in 4 years than they did in the previous 12, and we're going to clean up 500 more next time. I'm proud of that.

I'm proud of the fact that I was able, thanks to you, to get a balanced budget agreement which will have the biggest increase in health care coverage for America's children since Medicaid was enacted in 1965 and the biggest increase in investment for excellence in education in 35 years. And for the first time, if we pass this budget consistent with the agreement, we'll be able to say to every child in this country—

Audience member. What about the NEA?

The President. I'll get to that. [Laughter] We'll be able to say to every child in this country, when they're 10 years old, you will be able to go to college. You will be able to go to college. That's a big deal.

I'm proud of the fact that you've made it possible for us to pursue a policy that says that we can grow the economy and preserve the environment, that we can go forward together, that we don't have to do things like target the NEA or the National Endowment for the Humanities. I never could figure out why we'd want to get rid of spending \$150 million a year, which is a small amount of a \$1.5 trillion budget, to bring the arts and the humanities to people all across the country, in little byroads, who wouldn't have it otherwise, or to give young artists the chance to fulfill their God-given abilities. I think it's a pretty good investment.

But more than anything else, I'm proud of you. Just look around this crowd tonight. Nine days ago I had the opportunity to come to the University of California at San Diego and give a speech that was very important to me. I had been wanting to talk about it for a long time, asking the American people to join me in a

national, honest conversation about race; to have in every community and every neighborhood, on every block, an honest conversation about what it is that still divides us and what unites us that's more important; to identify those laws that we ought to be enforcing that we're not, whatever changes we need to make, what new policies we need, but most important, what attitudes we have to have.

I am convinced that even more than the continuing examples of illegal discrimination, this country is being held back by things that aren't illegal but are equally damaging, that relate to stereotyping one another by race or other category. I am really concerned about it. And in California, you have both the opportunity and the obligation to lead the way in this, which is why I went to San Diego to give this speech. I mean, just look around the crowd tonight.

Today, America has one State, Hawaii, which has no majority race. In 3 to 5 years, California will join Hawaii. In 30 to 40 years, America will join Hawaii and California. And for the first time ever, we will have a chance to see whether all these things we've been saying about America for 100 years are true, that this is not about—this country is not about one race, it's not about one place, it's about a set of ideas and a set of ideals that anybody can share and be a part of and make a future on.

Well, we're about to find out. And it's high time we started thinking about it. What is the unfinished business between black Americans and white Americans? What is the unfinished business that Hispanic-Americans have growing out of their unique heritage—and they will soon be the second largest minority group when we're all minority groups in America—what about that? What does it mean to have Los Angeles County with over 150 different racial and ethnic groups? What does it mean not to be the providence of the coast anymore—Wayne County, Detroit, Michigan, has more than 140 different racial and ethnic groups in it. What does all this mean for us?

Can we become the first truly multiracial great democracy in human history? Can we shed all the historic baggage that's been with us ever since prehistory when our ancient, ancient, ancient ancestors gathered together in bands and traveled across the Earth as hunters and gathers and learned to distrust people who looked different from them because they really had reason

to be afraid of them? Why are we still living like that?

Can we get rid of those deep sort of psychological impulses that are inside? How many times did you ever have a day where you couldn't have gotten through the day if you didn't really dislike somebody? [Laughter] You say, "No matter how bad it is, at least I'm not as bad as that sucker." [Laughter] Right? How many days have you—everybody here has had a day like that, right? Everybody here has had a day like that. "I don't think much of myself today, but I sure am better than so and so." [Laughter] It's almost like we need this sort of thing.

And we're laughing about it. But we have been given a great gift, and those of you—particularly those of you who are younger have been given a great gift. You're going to grow up and live and raise your children and see your grandchildren grow up in an America where people have more chances to live out their dreams than ever before if we can prove that we really can live together as one America, where we not only accept, we actually celebrate what's different about us and we're secure in celebrating it because we know that what we share in common is even more important.

Now, that's really what this is all about. When we started the Saxophone Club in 1992, I had a set of simple little ideas that I wanted to bring to America. I said to myself, what do I want this country to be like when my daughter is my age in the 21st century? I want everybody to have an opportunity who is responsible enough to work for it. I want my country to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom. And I want this country to be coming together instead of being driven apart. I am sick and tired of short-term, destructive, negative political strategies that divide people when we need to be united. That's what I wanted then, and that's what I want now.

Now, so, I say to you, I thank you for being here tonight. I want you to stay active in public affairs. I want you to, every time you hear somebody who is cynical and say it doesn't matter, say, "Compare how we are today with how we were then. This is what I supported; it was right; it made a difference; people's lives have changed." And then say, "But there's a lot more to do, and that's why I'm in it for the long haul."

Thank you, and God bless you.

June 23 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 p.m. at Billboard Live. In his remarks, he referred to actor Kevin Spacey; comedian Paul Rodriguez; Bennett

Kelley, national cochair, Saxophone Club; and Lt. Gov. Gray Davis of California.

Message to the Congress Transmitting a Report on Federal Advisory Committees

June 23, 1997

To the Congress of the United States:

As provided by the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (Public Law 92-463; 5 U.S.C., App. 2, 6(c)), I am submitting my third *Annual Report on Federal Advisory Committees*, covering fiscal year 1995.

Consistent with my commitment to create a more responsive government, the executive branch continues to implement my policy of maintaining the number of advisory committees within the ceiling of 534 required by Executive Order 12838 of February 10, 1993. As a result, my Administration held the number of discretionary advisory committees (established under general congressional authorizations) to 512, or 36 percent fewer than the 801 committees in existence at the time I took office.

During fiscal year 1995, executive departments and agencies expanded their efforts to coordinate the implementation of Federal programs with State, local, and tribal governments. To facilitate these important efforts, my Administration worked with the Congress to pass the "Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995" (Public Law 104-4), which I signed into law on March 22, 1995. The Act provides for an exclusion from the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) for interactions between Federal officials and their intergovernmental partners while acting in their official capacities. This action will directly support our joint efforts to

strengthen accountability for program results at the local level.

Through the advisory committee planning process required by Executive Order 12838, departments and agencies have worked to minimize the number of advisory committees specifically mandated by statute. There were 407 such groups in existence at the end of fiscal year 1995, representing a 7 percent decrease over the 439 at the beginning of my Administration. However, we can do more to assure that the total costs to fund these groups, \$46 million, are dedicated to support high-priority public involvement efforts.

My Administration will continue to work with the Congress to assure that all advisory committees that are required by statute are regularly reviewed through the congressional reauthorization process and that remaining groups are instrumental in achieving national interests. The results that can be realized by working together to achieve our mutual objective of a better, more accessible government will increase the public's confidence in the effectiveness of our democratic system.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
June 23, 1997.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 24.