

choice there. We don't want to crater the economy, but our most important job is to raise our children well.

So we're full of all these challenges, and it's exciting. But we have to—when I took office, we had this huge deficit and basically a yesterday's Government. And I made a commitment, as I've said many times, to the policies that favor the future over the past, change over the status quo, unity over division, and things that benefit everybody instead of just a few people. And that required changes, so we downsized the Government; we shared more responsibility with State and local government and the private sector. And State governments, anyway, have primary responsibility for things like auto insurance rates and, constitutionally, education.

So I can go out here and talk until I'm blue in the face about the importance of embracing national education standards. The United States is the only great country in the world that has no national standards of academic achievement that guarantee international capacity—in terms of operating in the economy—that everybody has to follow. We're not talking about Federal Government standards. We're not talking about imposing anything on anybody. It's totally voluntary. But that means that every Governor will decide whether to participate in the standards movement.

So the decisions made by the Governor of New Jersey in the next 20 years almost certainly will range over a wider scope and have a deeper impact on the lives of the people of New Jersey than in the previous 20 years. And if my vision

is going to be fulfilled, we have to have a partnership that really works to grow the economy, to fight crime, to preserve the environment, to deal with social problems, and most importantly, to make sure that every child in this country has a chance to live out his or her dreams with a decent education.

That's why I showed up here today, because this young man actually has an idea of what he will do if he gets elected. He's not running for Governor because he wants to live in that magnificent old house—New Jersey I think has the oldest and perhaps the most beautiful old Governor's mansion in the country—he actually has an idea of what he wants to do, and I think it's the right idea. And I hope you'll help him achieve it.

Thank you. Bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 4 p.m. in the chief executive's office at the Kushner Companies. In his remarks, he referred to State Senator Jim McGreevey, Democratic gubernatorial candidate; Charles Kushner, chief executive officer, Kushner Companies; Mr. Kushner's wife, Seryl, and children Joshua and Nicole, and his mother, Rae; Annette Felsen, Seryl Kushner's grandmother; Dara Freirich, student council representative, Joseph Kushner Hebrew Academy; Miryam Lichtman, student council president, Kushner Yeshiva High School; President Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu of Israel; and Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestinian Authority.

Statement on House Ways and Means Committee Action on Fast-Track Trading Authority Legislation

October 8, 1997

I am pleased that the House Ways and Means Committee has reported out legislation with bipartisan support that restores the traditional trading authority every President has had since 1974.

To keep our economy strong, we must continue to break down unfair foreign trade barriers to American products and services. This legislation, now passed by the committees of jurisdiction in both the Senate and the House, will

allow us to tear down those barriers and help American businesses and workers compete and win in the global marketplace. I look forward to working with Members on both sides of the aisle to secure passage of this important legislation this year.