

The President. I'm glad you didn't stay home today, Sam [Sam Donaldson, ABC News]. [Laughter]

Q. What do you think of the idea of tax cuts for a stay-at-home mom?

The President. Well, we need to get into a negotiation. We need to get started talking seriously about what we're going to do.

Q. Would you be open to it?

The President. I'll be happy to talk to them, but we've got to—are we going to make a serious effort here? We need to have a discussion about it.

Q. So you are willing to negotiate, then?

The President. I'm willing to negotiate with anybody who wants to help people raise their children better so that people can succeed at home and at work. It's not an either-or deal. That's why we had the \$500 tax credit last time,

children's tax credit, because we wanted to help all parents. We're not against helping all parents. But the question is, most parents are in the work force and we have to do something serious about it. We have to decide, are we going to do it, or not?

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Treasury Department Working Group on Child Care member Randall L. Tobias, president, chairman, and chief executive officer, Eli Lilly and Co. He also referred to the Treasury working group report entitled "Investing in Child Care," and the Department of Labor report "Meeting the Needs of Today's Workforce: Child Care Best Practices." The exchange portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Senate Action on Education Legislation

April 23, 1998

I am disappointed that Republicans in the United States Senate have passed up a major opportunity to improve public education in this country.

Instead of investing in modern schools for the 21st century, the Senate chose to provide tax incentives skewed to high-income taxpayers. Instead of helping make classes smaller and improving student learning, the Senate chose to eliminate accountability by prohibiting voluntary national tests. Instead of giving kids new learn-

ing opportunities after school to keep them out of trouble, the Senate chose to undermine the critical safe and drug-free schools initiative. Instead of working to strengthen public education, the Coverdell bill returns us to the days when Republicans waged a campaign to eliminate the Department of Education.

As I have said before, if this bill reaches my desk, I will veto it, because it weakens our commitment to making America's schools the best they can be in the 21st century.

Statement on Protecting the Northern Right Whale

April 23, 1998

Today I instructed the United States representatives to the International Maritime Organization to seek strong measures to protect the northern right whale, one of the world's most endangered marine mammals.

Like many other species of whale, the northern right whale was once hunted nearly to extinction. The 300 or so that survive spend much of the year in waters off of Cape Cod and off

the Georgia and Florida coasts. Biologists believe the greatest human threat they face today is collisions with large ships. We must address this threat so these magnificent creatures can flourish once again.

Under our proposal, which the IMO will address when it meets in July, commercial ships entering the whales' calving and feeding grounds will be required to report by radio to the U.S.