

Jean Kennedy Smith; Anthony Lake, former Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs; Nancy E. Soderberg, former Deputy Assistant

to the President for National Security Affairs; and Rev. Ian Paisley, leader of Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party.

## The President's Radio Address

*September 12, 1998*

Good morning. It's been an exhausting and difficult week in the Capital, not only for me but for many others. But as I told my Cabinet on Thursday, we cannot lose sight of our primary mission, which is to work for the American people and especially for the future of our children. The most important thing to do now is to stay focused on the issues the American people sent us here to deal with, from health care to the economy to terrorism.

Today that's exactly what we're doing. I want to tell you about the latest steps we're taking to combat a truly alarming trend, the growing use of drugs among our young people. The good news is that overall drug use has dropped by half since 1979. But among our children, the problem is getting worse. In fact, if present trends continue, half of all high school seniors will have smoked marijuana by the time they graduate. That's a frightening development. When we know that drugs lead to crime, to failure in school, to the fraying of families and neighborhoods, we know we must do better.

We can reverse this terrible trend if we attack it in the way we did the crime problem, by working together at the community level, neighborhood by neighborhood, block by block, person by person.

Crime overall has dropped to a 25-year low now, because whole communities are taking responsibility for their own streets and neighborhoods, and because here in Washington we're giving them the tools they need, such as support for community policing programs. When we assumed responsibility for bringing down crime, something remarkable happens: crime does go down.

We can have a similarly dramatic effect in curbing the use of drugs among our young people. But all of us have a responsibility to send our young people the same simple message: Drugs are wrong; drugs are illegal; and drugs can kill you.

This summer my administration launched an unprecedented media campaign to ensure that the message comes across when young people watch television, listen to radio, or read the newspaper. But media is not enough. We also must enlist the efforts of parents, teachers, ministers and clergy, coaches, principals from the community of adults around them. That's why, with the support of both Democrats and Republicans in Congress, and under the direction of General Barry McCaffrey, we're extending new help to community-based groups all over our Nation. Representatives of some of those groups are here with me in the Oval Office today. Already they are working to curb drug use by reclaiming drug houses, reaching out to at-risk foster kids, teaching parents to deliver the anti-drug message.

Today I'm delighted to announce the first round of high-impact, low-redtape grants to 93 communities. Their dollar amounts are not large, but if these grants empower communities to do more of what works to keep young people away from the scourge of drugs, their effect will be enormous.

Now, we also need the support of Congress on other serious issues facing our country. We are committed, in a bipartisan way, to fight against drug use among our young people. We must similarly be committed in a bipartisan way to continue our economic growth by staying with our economic strategy that has made our country the envy of the world, by maintaining our fiscal discipline, setting aside the surplus—every penny of it—until we save Social Security first.

We have to restore strength and growth to the world economy by investing our proportionate share in the International Monetary Fund. All of you know that the world economy has been going up and down and changing quite a bit lately. Treasury Secretary Rubin and I will go to New York on Monday, where I will discuss the current challenges of the global economy

and the risks to our prosperity unless we act on the IMF request and take some other steps designed to make sure that America does not become a sea of prosperity in an ocean of distress.

We also have to continue to invest in the education of our people. We have to have smaller classes, more teachers, modernized schools, all the classrooms hooked up to the Internet, and higher standards.

We need a real Patients' Bill of Rights. We need to protect the environment. We need to protect our democracy by passing bipartisan

campaign finance reform. All these items, also, are before Congress now.

It is truly encouraging to me how we have put aside partisan differences to save our children and their future from drugs. We have to do that on other issues critical to our future now—and even in the weeks before the election in November. We must stay focused on your business.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

## Remarks to the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City *September 14, 1998*

Thank you very much, Pete. Hillary and I are delighted to be here with you and Joan, and I'm glad to be joined by Secretary Rubin and Jim Harmon, Gene Sperling, other members of our team. I'm glad to see Dick Holbrooke over here; I hope, if we can overcome the inertia of Congress, he will soon be a member of the team again. And I thank David Rockefeller and Les Gelb and others who welcomed us here today.

The subject that I want to discuss—let me just say one thing in advance—I'm going to give you my best thoughts. We have been working on this for 3 years at some level of intensity or another, going back to the Naples G-7 meeting in the aftermath of the Mexican financial crisis. I have done everything I could do personally to reach out across the country, and indeed across the world, for any new ideas from any source. I'm going to give you my best thinking today about what we can do, but I want you to know that I'm here, and if I had my druthers, this would be about a 3-hour session where I'd give this talk and then I would listen for the rest of the time.

So I want to encourage you, if you think we're right, to support us. But if you have any ideas, for goodness sake, share them, because I agree with what Pete said. This is the biggest financial challenge facing the world in a half century. And the United States has an absolutely inescapable obligation to lead, and to lead in a way that's consistent with our values and our

obligation to see that what we're doing helps lift the lives of ordinary people here at home and all around the world.

The Council on Foreign Relations has always stood for political and economic freedom, since right after World War I. And I think one of the things that has impacted all of us, and it was implicit in what Pete said, is that for the last decade the growth of freedom around the world—with more than half the people in the world living under governments of their own choosing; more than half the villages, the one million villages, in China now even electing their own governments; and this sweeping replacement of command and control economies by market economies—I think it seems to have happened so easily, so effortlessly, so inexorably that I think we think the trend is inevitable and irreversible. But if you consider today's economic difficulties, disruptions, and the plain old deep, personal disappointments of now tens of millions of people around the world, it is clear to me that there is now a stark challenge not only to economic freedom, but, if unaddressed, a challenge that could stem the rising tide of political liberty as well.

Obviously, we have profound interests here. It is a great irony that we are at a moment of unsurpassed economic strength at a time of such turmoil in the world economy. We, I think, all of us in this room, know that our future prosperity depends upon whether we can work with others to restore confidence, manage