

But if I could have waved a magic wand as Governor, when I was Governor and solved any problem in my State, it would have been that. I had poor little rural schools, I had some schools in poor urban areas that were doing stunningly well. But I never could either set up the systems or set up the incentives or convince people that everybody else ought to run through what they were doing and do it. Because this is not rocket science. This is not the same as walking on Mars within 5 years. In some ways, it's more difficult because it deals with the human psyche and all these human difficulties, but people can understand what works.

And I just think that the work you've done in Minnesota and what you're pushing now, this whole concept of charter districts—I never even thought about it before you said it today, but that's the sort of thing we need to be doing. We will never bring everybody into the big tent of our prosperity until we have not only the best higher education system in the world but the best elementary and secondary education system in the world.

And you've got to give this lady and her colleagues in Minnesota an enormous amount of credit for what they have done now for more than a decade to make us think about this. But if I could say to all of you at the grassroots

level, if you can figure out a way to make economic change faster, to bring opportunity to where it doesn't exist, and to bring more uniformity of excellence in public education, if we could do those things, if that could be a huge part of the DLC's crusade for the next decade, I wouldn't be a bit worried about America's future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Baltimore Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Al From, president, Democratic Leadership Council; Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante of California, who introduced the President; Gov. Parris N. Glendening and Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Gov. Roy Barnes of Georgia; Gov. Mel Carnahan of Missouri; Gov. Thomas R. Carper of Delaware; Gov. Tom Vilsack of Iowa; Mayor Kurt Schmoke of Baltimore; Maryland State Senate President Thomas V. (Mike) Miller, Jr., and House Speaker Casper R. Taylor, Jr.; civil rights leader Jesse Jackson; Mayor Debra Powell of East St. Louis, IL; Mayor Kirk Watson of Austin, TX; Mayor Donald T. Cunningham, Jr., of Bethlehem, PA; Minnesota State Senator Ember Reichgott Junge; Georgia State Labor Commissioner Michael L. Thurmond; and Hiram Eastland, founding member, Mississippi Democratic Leadership Council.

Statement on Proposed Legislation To Provide Assistance to African Nations

July 14, 1999

This week Congress has a chance to pass a bill that can transform our relationship with an entire continent for the better. The African growth and opportunity act promises a new partnership with Africa based on mutual respect and mutual responsibility.

Last week African nations signed two significant documents: a cease-fire in Congo and a peace agreement ending the war in Sierra Leone. With these agreements and with democratic government in Nigeria and a new leadership in South Africa, we have an historic opportunity. The United States must do everything we can right now to support the efforts Africans are making to build democracy and respect for

human rights, advance peace, and lay the foundation for prosperity and growth.

This bill supports education and job creation so that all of Africa's children can grow up educated and productive. It supports better health care and the flow of ideas and technology that will help Africa's doctors save more lives.

This bill has strong bipartisan support in Congress, nearly unanimous support from the nations of Africa, and brings together a broad group of concerned citizens on both continents, from Jack Kemp and Andrew Young to the African Association of Women Entrepreneurs. It represents an effort to build a partnership with

July 14 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1999

African nations that involves listening and working with them. It serves America's national interests in creating new markets for American goods and services; in building strong, reliable, and

democratic partners overseas; and in creating a more prosperous and stable world. I urge Congress to seize this opportunity by passing the African growth and opportunity act.

Statement on the Deutch-Specter Commission Report

July 14, 1999

I welcome the report of the Commission To Assess the Organization of the Federal Government To Combat the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (the Deutch-Specter Commission).

The Chairman, John Deutch, the Vice Chairman, Senator Specter, and other commissioners have provided a comprehensive study of how we should organize the U.S. Government to deal with the threat of proliferation, which poses one

of the most serious challenges to national and international security that we face.

The Commission's report contains a number of interesting recommendations and observations that deserve serious consideration. I have asked my National Security Adviser, Samuel Berger, to coordinate an interagency review and assessment of the Commission's recommendations and report back to me within 60 days with advice on specific steps.

Remarks to the College Democrats of America

July 14, 1999

Thank you. I ought to quit while I'm ahead. [*Laughter*] Harold, you ought to be giving that speech for yourself some day. That was pretty great. I was definitely impressed.

Thank you for your wonderful welcome. I want to thank all the College Democrat officers: your national chair, Reta Lewis, who used to be in the White House with me; Vice President Brendan Tully; Executive Director Jeff Schulman; National Field Director Lisa Kohnke; and all the people who helped to organize this, your largest meeting ever.

Let me say a special word of welcome or greetings on behalf of the Vice President. Eleven years ago he almost single-handedly brought the College Democrats of America back, and I'm glad you came back. We have needed you.

My administration has been, in large measure, about giving the young people of America a better America in the 21st century, an America where there is opportunity for every responsible citizen and where we are coming together as a community across all the lines that divide us.

When I ran for President in 1992, I was infuriated that I had seen election after election

after election and then Washington in between use rhetoric to divide us and to create a majority based on not being "them." I didn't think it was good for America then; I don't think it's good for America today. I have done everything I could do to get all of us to see that what we have in common is much more important than what divides us.

I must say that the young people of America, who increasingly live more and more together with those who are at least superficially different from themselves, are going to have to lead America to that future. The work that you have done, the registration efforts that you have done—in 1996, under the leadership of your former executive director, Susan Blad Seldin, CDA helped to register over a million young people—that is very, very important.

I want to say something serious tonight. This is—we've got a very festive atmosphere, and I know the fire marshal is concerned about how many people we've crammed in this room—[*laughter*]*—*but I want to say something really serious to you. I'm not running for anything anymore. I'm not on the ballot in 2000. I'm