

- (10) Secretary of Education
- (11) Administrator of the Small Business Administration
- (12) Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service

The Chairs of the Task Force may add such other officials and independent agencies as they deem appropriate to further the purposes of this effort or to participate in specific aspects of it. The Chairs, after consultation with Task Force members, will appoint staff members to coordinate the Task Force's efforts. The Chairs may call upon the participating agencies for logistical support to the Task Force, as necessary. Members of the Task Force may delegate their responsibilities under this memorandum to subordinates. During its work, the Task Force will consult regularly with the nonprofit sector.

Objectives of the Task Force

The Task Force will:

1. Develop a public inventory of "best practices" in existing collaborations between Federal agency programs and nonprofit organizations. In cooperation with the nonprofit sector, the Task Force will work to apply these leading models to other government efforts. For example, cross-agency initiatives that reflect the community-wide focus on many nonprofits could be highlighted and replicated. The Task Force will also examine ways that Federal agencies can better draw upon the experience and innovations of nonprofits in the development of public policy.
2. Evaluate data and research trends on nonprofits and philanthropy. Understanding the significance of the relationship between the nonprofit and Government sectors requires an understanding of the impact that the nonprofit sector has on the economy and on public policy. For example, the Council of Economic Advisers should undertake an analysis of existing data from the private and nonprofit sectors concerning the role of philanthropy in our economy, including an examination of the factors that affect giving and an investigation of trends that are likely to affect future giving. The Task Force will also coordinate agency efforts to identify the contributions made by the nonprofit sector and information regarding philanthropic activity.
3. Develop further policy responses. The Task Force will meet to discuss new findings and to consider new or modified Administration policy responses. For example, the Task Force will work with the nonprofit sector and others to explore ways to encourage philanthropy and service, efforts to help nonprofits develop and grow (including "venture philanthropy"), opportunities for closer collaboration on research and in meeting local needs, and ways to reduce governmental barriers to innovative nonprofit enterprises.

From time to time, the Task Force will report to me on the results of its efforts.

General Provisions

This memorandum is intended only for internal management of the executive branch. This memorandum is not intended, and should not be construed, to create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or its employees. This memorandum shall not be construed to create any right to judicial review involving the compliance or noncompliance with this memorandum by the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any other person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Remarks at a Kennedy/King Dinner in Alexandria, Virginia October 22, 1999

Thank you very much. I guess I ought to begin by saying that all the things that Congressman Moran said so generously about me, we

might all well say about him. He has represented you so well. I am delighted to see all of you here, from the leader of your Senate

to the chairman of the State Democratic Party to all the local officials to all the candidates. It actually might not have been a bad idea to let all 52 of you talk tonight. [Laughter]

I've been thinking about what I could say tonight that would give you something to carry out of here into these legislative races and into the great election season next year. We come here in honor of the two men whose pictures are behind me. Thirty-one years ago, I was a senior at Georgetown University when Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were killed. One of my roommates was working in Senator Kennedy's office.

This week I had a wonderful experience. Hillary and I hosted a large number of Americans as we celebrated the fifth anniversary of our national service program, AmeriCorps, in which, in only 5 years, 150,000 Americans have already served, working in their communities, earning credit for college, making America a better place. And we asked Coretta Scott King to be one of the people who presented awards to the most outstanding of our young AmeriCorps volunteers.

Last night I went to the home of Senator Edward Kennedy for an event to raise funds for his campaign for reelection next year. And the wife of Robert Kennedy, Ethel Kennedy, was there; his daughter, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, probably the finest Lieutenant Governor anywhere in America, the only person to successfully get a State to include in its school curriculum, as a required course for graduation, community service—in the spirit of her father.

As all of you know, Edward Kennedy's son, Robert Kennedy's nephew, Patrick, is now the chairman of Congressman Moran's Democratic Senate Campaign Committee, for all the House Members. One of his sons, Joe Kennedy, represented Massachusetts in Congress. Another of his sons, Chris, is being urged to run for Congress in northern Illinois this year. The Kennedys and the Kings continue to serve, continue to inspire.

And Senator Edward Kennedy has been faithful to his brother's legacy, based on the sheer body of his accomplishments, I think by any measure one of the 10 outstanding people ever to serve in the entire history of the United States Senate, in over 200 years, now.

But I said last night, when I was a sophomore in high school, Ted Kennedy was in the Senate. [Laughter] And when I leave after two terms

as President, he'll still be in the Senate. [Laughter]

I also want to say a word on behalf of a Senator who wanted to be here tonight, my friend of 20 years Chuck Robb. You should know—I hope you won't be offended when I tell you, as the father of a college student, that I am very glad he is not here tonight, because he's at parents' weekend at Jennifer's college. And just as he stood up for all of you for so many years, he's standing up for her this weekend. He gets to escort her onto the field for her last field hockey game. Now that's a big deal to a daddy, and I am glad he's not here.

But he's still standing up for you. He stood up for you in the Senate when he introduced legislation to help the States and school districts build or modernize 6,000 schools. No State in the country needs that more than Virginia. He embraced and introduced a bill with Congressman Moran to fight gridlock in northern Virginia. And I've been lobbied about it again tonight. He stood up for you and the environment when he offered an amendment last month to protect our beautiful national forests and supported me in setting aside 40 million acres for roadless areas in our national parks.

And in 1993, at enormous political peril to himself—when, if anybody in the entire Congress could have been justified in taking a dive on a tough vote because of all he had been through and because of the difficulties of any Democrat getting elected statewide in Virginia—Chuck Robb never blinked. He stood up, and he gave courage to other Senators when he said, "We have to support the President's economic plan." It passed by one vote, and that's why we've got the longest peacetime economic expansion in the history of the country. He is a brave and good man.

All the polls say he's behind now because he governed and made decisions as a Senator in tough and difficult times, and because we Democrats have a hard time in Virginia. But I'll make you a prediction. If you stand up for him the way he stood up for you all these years, he will be elected in November of 2000 for another 6-year term.

Now, how are we going to do that? What are we going to say? Let's begin with the people we honor tonight, and be honest about what our problems have been. When Robert Kennedy eulogized Martin Luther King, he said, "Martin Luther King dedicated his life to love and to

justice for his fellow human beings." King could have said that about Robert Kennedy.

The truth is that a lot of people who could vote either way in an election know that we're for love and justice. But they used to characterize us, our Republican friends did, in ways that were, to say the least, unhelpful at election time. [Laughter] They created these sort of cookie-cutter stereotypes of us, you know? We never met a tax we didn't like. Couldn't be trusted with the budget and the economy. Soft on welfare; soft on crime. Could never be put at the helm of the country's affairs. You've heard it all.

So Jim Moran, Chuck Robb, and a lot of other Democrats set out with me in 1993 to change all that, to transform our country, to transform our party, but to be absolutely faithful to the guiding principles which have kept us Democrats and made this the oldest political party in history. And we had some new ideas.

Basically, Jim sort of hit the essence of it when he said I never tried to divide people. You have to understand, for a dozen years before I came here, I was Governor, as President Bush used to say, of a small southern State. [Laughter] I did not—I was proud of it and loved every day of it. [Laughter] But I was not part of this Washington political scene, you know? I didn't wake up every day and read these columns in the Washington Post that turn you inside out. I didn't watch the talk shows on Sunday. I just sort of went about my life. When I came to Washington, I had people's business to do. I wasn't maneuvering on some greasy pole up or down.

But it seemed to me that the country was totally paralyzed by what was going on in Washington. There was this—everybody had to have a liberal position or a conservative position. And the most important thing is that people should be fighting, fighting always, and never be caught getter together.

And what I was looking for was a set of unifying policies to turn this country around. For example, it was hard to get the Democrats to support reducing the budget deficit because the Republicans always wanted to do it by cutting education. So I said I believe we can balance the budget and increase our investment in education. I believe we can follow policies which protect the legitimate interests of laboring people—both those in unions and those who aren't in unions—and still be pro-business. I believe

we can grow this economy and make the environment cleaner. I believe we can maintain our military strength but realize that it is the moral force of our ideas that is the true source of our influence in the world; and that we can go into this post-communist world and be a great force for peace and freedom. I believe we can celebrate our diversity and still find common cause in our shared humanity. Unifying ideas.

And we tried to turn those into specific policy initiatives. Some of them were quite controversial because it is always hard to change, and people took a chance on me in this country—on me and Al Gore and our whole crowd—because we were just making an argument. No one could know whether it was true or not. And as we were rocking along in '96, we did a little better in the reelection—Virginia we nearly carried, even. We did pretty well here. [Laughter]

But here's what you need to start with saying to people who say they're independents: "Look, this is not an argument anymore. The evidence is in, and the policies that the Democrats have followed have given us the longest peacetime expansion in history; 19½ million new jobs; the highest homeownership in history; the lowest unemployment in 29 years; the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years; the lowest poverty rates in 20 years; the lowest crime rate in 30 years; the first back-to-back balanced surpluses, budget surpluses in 42 years; all accomplished while reducing the size of the Federal Government to its lowest point in 37 years."

Now, it doesn't take long to say that. But what I want to say—just try to remember that. Because then our Republican friends have a little hill to climb. [Laughter] Now, they're pretty good at climbing it; they're never in doubt, I've got to give them that. [Laughter] I like that the evidence never deters them. I admire that. [Laughter] But we don't have to win many—two seats in the Senate, a few more seats in the House—to pad your margin.

There is no answer to that, because we had no support for our economic plan from the other party, and most of them opposed our crime policy. I had to veto two welfare bills before I got one that required able-bodied people to work but didn't hurt the kids and put more money into child care.

These are our policies, and they work. Not because of me. I am just grateful I had the

chance to serve at this time, to be the instrument of trying to move our country forward and pull our country together. The ideas are important. It doesn't matter how persuasive a person is. In fact, it can be dangerous if a person is persuasive and the ideas are wrong.

What we have stood for works for America. And you need to memorize—every Democrat needs to memorize that litany. If this expansion goes on until February, it'll be the longest economic expansion in history, including all the ones with wars. And you just remember that. Lowest unemployment rate in 29 years; lowest welfare rolls in 30 years; lowest poverty rates in 20 years; lowest minority unemployment rates ever recorded, since we've been keeping statistics; highest homeownership in history; first back-to-back balanced budgets in 42 years; and the lowest crime rate in 30 years. Just remember those things, because the things they—all those little things they used to say about us are demolished by that set of statistics.

Then we get to the main event, which is, okay, now we're in this shape, now what are we going to do? What are we going to do?

You know, what I wanted to do in 1992 was to turn the country around and pull the country together. And I should say that we also did a lot of other things. We passed the Brady bill, and it worked, and it didn't do any of the things they said it would do. We passed the family and medical leave bill. Fifteen million people took advantage of it. We raised the minimum wage, and every year there was a new record set for new small businesses started. It worked. It didn't do the bad things that they said it would do. And compared to 7 years ago, the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer; and we set aside more land, protected more land, than any administration in the history of America except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. So you can grow the economy and improve the environment.

So we start with that. Now, what are we going to do?

You know, the election of 2000 ought to be about change. They do all these polls and they say 75 percent of the people want change, and they act like I should be upset. And I said, "If they'd polled me, I'd be in the 75 percent, too." [Laughter] If somebody ran for President, for example, and said, "Vote for me. I'll do everything Bill Clinton did," I'd vote against that person. Why? Because this is a country in a

constant state of renewal, and because, objectively, the world we're living in is changing so fast we have to keep moving and moving.

But what I want to say to you is this—and it's relevant to the State elections and to the national elections—8 years ago in 1991 and 1992, we had to worry about getting this country together again and moving this country forward again. Now, we're headed in the right direction. Sometimes the most dangerous time in life is when things are really rocking along well. [Laughter] Right? I used to have a rule in politics: You're always most vulnerable when you think you're invulnerable. And it's a good rule in life.

How many times in our own lives have we squandered some great moment by relaxing, by getting diverted, by not thinking about the opportunity being presented to us? Every one of you secretly is nodding your head, at least inside your head. [Laughter] It is human nature.

So when the Republicans come along with this siren song, "Let us take all the non-Social Security surplus and give it back to you in this huge tax cut," it sounded pretty good. One of the most hopeful things for the future is the way the American people stood with me and our allies in Congress when I vetoed that tax cut bill. They knew better than to do that. It was very hopeful. It was very hopeful.

What I hope the next few days of budget negotiations, the next year of work with Congress, and the debate in 2000, will be about is the following thing: Okay, we've got this chance; it is the chance of a lifetime. Not in my lifetime have we had a chance like this. The economy was maybe close to this good by the terms of that time back in the sixties, but we had to deal with Vietnam and civil rights. We now have a chance to write the future of America and our children in a new millennium, and we better not blow it. And that's what this election ought to be about. And what are the big issues?

Very briefly, this is what I think the big issues are. Number one, the aging of America. Not only the baby boomers retiring but all of us living longer. If we get the results I expect from the human genome project, there are young people in this audience whose children will be born with a life expectancy of nearly 100 years.

Now, what do we know right now? Right now we know that in 30 years there will be twice as many people over 65, and we know that the

baby boom generation is bigger than our children. Therefore, since we have the money and the opportunity, we should now, move now to save Social Security, reform Medicare, and add a prescription drug benefit now, not later.

The second thing, what do we know about the children of America? We know that education will be more important to them than ever before. We know that they live in a world in which information technology will determine all kinds of options in life. We know that they are the first generation of children bigger than the baby boom and that they are far more diverse racially, ethnically, linguistically, and religiously.

So what do we know about that? Well, we know, at an absolute minimum we have to do more to give them a world-class education. And for me that means finishing the work of putting 100,000 teachers out there for smaller classes, giving those thousands of modern and new schools, having high standards, and giving schools help to turn around problems, giving kids more after-school programs and the other mentoring programs that they need, but putting the education of these children first and recognizing it will be different.

Third issue—that I think is a huge issue—what have we learned about the 21st century economy, with all this long run? Can we keep it going? And to me, very important to be faithful to them, can we be honest enough to say that in the most prosperous period of American history there are still millions of our country men and women who have been left behind? Because there are people and places that are untouched by this recovery. So is there more that we can do there?

I would argue for two things. Number one, in terms of poverty, we need to continue to do the work that the Vice President has done so well with these empowerment zones and these enterprise communities. I wish you could talk to the people who have been a part of them. He has mobilized thousands of people across America to take their destiny into their hands, to attract investment, to move forward. It is amazing. But we'll never have every poor community in an empowerment zone. We don't have enough money. That's why it's important for the Congress to adopt this new markets proposal I have made. All it does is this: It provides some money to help people start things going economically, but it gives investors the same incentives to invest on an Indian reservation,

in the Mississippi Delta, in Appalachia, in a poor inner-city community; the same incentive to invest in developing markets in America we give them to invest in developing markets in Latin America, in Asia, in Africa, and other parts of the world.

And if we can't bring free enterprise to the poorest parts of America now, when will we ever? It's very interesting. We passed this financial modernization bill last night, or at least we reached an agreement. And I was so moved that all the banks were saying, "We agree with the President. We don't want to get rid of the Community Reinvestment Act. We think it's an opportunity to invest in poor communities in America, because most of those people are working. They want to work harder. They're capable of having new businesses. They're capable of doing more."

The Democrats ought to be on the forefront. Now is the time to say we can bring opportunity to poor people, and the Government doesn't have to do it all. The private sector can do it, and we will make it good business. That ought to be our cause in this election. We've got to go out there and prove that everybody that wants to work, that wants to have a chance to start a business, ought to have the same chance that those of us who've been blessed to be able to come to this dinner tonight have had. I think it is very important.

Finally—this is something I know Chuck Robb believes, too—I hope that we will stay on the path that we're on and say we're not going to spend that Social Security surplus, and we're going to hang on to enough money so that over the next 15 years we can pay off \$3½ trillion of national debt. And in 15 years this country will be out of debt for the first time since 1835, when Andrew Jackson was President of the United States.

Now, why should the Democrats be the party? We're supposed to be the more liberal party. You've heard it dripped from their lips, our adversaries—[laughter]—as if it were a dirty word. Why should the more progressive party be for paying off the debt?

Because it's the progressive thing to do. Because it will keep interest rates down. Because it means more businesses and more jobs and higher incomes. Because it means, though the economy will doubtless go up or down in the future, it'll always be better than it otherwise

would have been. Because it means that ordinary people will have lower home mortgages, lower car payment rates, lower credit card rates; and they can send their kids to college with lower college loan rates than would otherwise be the case. Because it means when our friends overseas get in trouble, like the Asian countries did in the last 2 years, and our economies hurt because they can't buy our things anymore, they will be able to get out of trouble at lower cost. Every wealthy country in this world ought to get itself out of debt in a global economy, set a good example, and give people everywhere a chance to live up to their dreams. And I want the Democrats to lead America away from the wilderness of the 12 years before I came here into a debt-free future.

There are other things that I could say, I don't want to spend a lot of time on. We've got to stay with this environmental issue. We've got to prove you can grow the economy and improve the environment. There is nothing so dangerous for a country to be in the grip of a big idea that is wrong. And most countries still believe—most dominant influence centers in most countries still believe that you can't get rich in the 21st century unless you get rich the same way America got rich in the first half of this century, which means that you have to use more energy than oil and coal and things that burn, more greenhouse gases and heat the climate of the world and cause all these problems. We've got malaria going to higher and higher places and showing up in odd places around the world. That's just one little example. The thinning of the ice caps. All kinds of other problems.

I am telling you, I have studied this for 22 years. I don't think anybody believes that I'm not pro-growth, pro-business, pro-economic strength. It is no longer true that you have to grow the economy by burning up the atmosphere. It is now possible, technologically, to reduce our emission of greenhouse gases and create more high wage jobs and a brighter, high-tech future by doing the environmentally responsible thing. It is affordable; it is sensible; and we just don't know it yet. So we need to be out there.

And let me just say one thing before I get to the main point I want to make. *[Laughter]* I want you to remember this: the aging, the children, the economy, the environment, America, and the world. For all the politics around

this Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty vote, you should know that there are a lot of people in the other party that really think it's a bad idea. And why do they think it's a bad idea? They say, "People can cheat; we don't trust the rest of the world, so why should we sign a test ban treaty?"

Well, my answer is, number one, we're not testing now. We're spending \$3½ billion of your money to keep our nuclear weapons safe and usable without testing. Even they don't think we ought to start testing. So it's easier to cheat now than it would be if the test ban treaty were passed. Why is that? Because if somebody tests an underground bomb a good ways away and it's not too big, you may think it's an earthquake. And if it's small but still usable, you may not detect it at all. But if this treaty passes, we'll have over 300 sensors out there, all over the world in all the right places, dramatically increasing the chances that people can't cheat.

So the truth is, it's a visceral, ideological thing. They really believe that what we need is more bombs, more missile defense, a higher wall, a bigger bomb; that we should go into that 21st century by ourselves because you can't trust anybody, never mind the fact that the cold war is over; never mind the fact that our allies in the cold war have all signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; that Britain and France, two nuclear powers without anything like the capacity we have to maintain their nuclear weapons, aren't worried at all.

But you need to understand there is a different view here. A lot of them feel sort of bad about not paying their U.N. dues, but they're not sick about it—I'm sick about it; it's wrong; a lot of them, it doesn't bother at all—or passing a foreign affairs budget that has no money to fulfill the obligations we solemnly made to the Middle East peace process when we've got a chance to actually get it done; that has no money to continue to get rid of the Russian nuclear weapons; that has no money for America to do its part to help the poorest countries in the world get rid of their debt, something the Pope has asked us to do and every sensible world leader knows would be good for the economy of America as well as for those poor countries.

So you've got to decide, what do you think our role is? Most Americans, I think, including most Republicans who live outside the beltway, believe that this is an interdependent world in

which we ought to work with our friend and neighbors and allies, in which we're safer and more secure and more prosperous when we have a sense of partnership.

I'll give you two practical examples. All those people in Kosovo were being slaughtered because they were Albanian Muslims. And we went in and stopped them because we had the military power to do it, with our Allies. But we're very much in the minority in Kosovo now because other people are carrying the load. That's what partners do.

We raised a lot of Cain about what was happening to those poor people in East Timor. But it's a long way from our backyard. And because we have partners—we're a tiny, tiny portion of the global effort to bring humanity and freedom and independence to the people of East Timor, because we work with other people. It's a good deal, folks. And if the Democrats need to stand up for responsible internationalism and not isolationism, that ought to be a part of it.

But if I were on my last day in office, if you asked me what the number one thing I would give to America, if I could give us one last gift of citizenship, it wouldn't be solving the aging crisis or the long-term economy or the environment or even the problems of the children or our role in the world, even though I care about them. I would find a way for us to really be one America.

If you look at all the problems that I've had to deal with, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to the Balkans to the tribal wars in Africa—this whole world, on the verge of this modern age of explosion in scientific and technological advances, is beset by the most primitive failure of human society. We're still afraid of people that aren't like us, whether it's because of their race or their ethnicity or their sexual orientation. We're afraid.

So even America, which has had so much success, has a young man like Matthew Shepard stretched across a fence, or James Byrd dragged to pieces, or a Filipino postalworker murdered in Los Angeles, or a young Korean Christian shot as he came out of his church by a guy who said he belonged to a church that didn't believe in God but believed in white supremacy. And we're doing better than most places, and we have this.

In one of Hillary's Millennium Evenings—which we've been having at the White House, dealing with the big subjects of the future—

we had a man named Vint Cerf who was one of the founders of the architecture of the Internet—sent the first E-mail, 18 years ago, to his wife, because she was so profoundly deaf even hearing aids couldn't help her. So he wanted to find a way to talk to her when he was at work. That's how the E-mail came about.

And he was there with a professor named Lander, who is a professor of genomics, the study of the whole gene structure. And what they were talking about was the intersection of computers and learning about the genes, and how we couldn't really break down the human gene if it weren't for computers. And they said a lot of fascinating things, including the fact that it may be that we'll be able to come up with digital, computer-operated program devices, tiny ones, that we'll be able to insert in all defective parts of the human body. For example, if someone has a spine severed in an accident—we've been working on replacing nerves. They now believe they may be able to put digital equipment in the spine that will replicate the nervous system and allow people to stand up and walk again.

And Mr. Cerf's wife, who was profoundly deaf for 50 years, they found—a small digital device was developed, they stuck it way down in her ears, and she heard after 50 years and stood up and talked about the experience of hearing and what it was like to hear the birds for the first time after 50 years and what it was like to go to a James Taylor concert now. Those of you who are young, that won't be such a big thing—[laughter]—but for me it's a big thing.

But here's the thing I wanted to tell you. Lander said, "Look, there's 100,000 genes and billions of variations. But the truth is that all human beings genetically are 99.9 percent identical." And even more important—especially here in northern Virginia, where you have all this diversity—this is the most astonishing thing. He said if you took any genetic group—let me just look around the room. Let's say you took 100 Pakistanis and 100 Chinese and 100 Mediterranean Europeans and 100 people from west Africa. He said if you took those groups, there would be more genetic differences within the groups, among individuals, than there would be between one group and another. Amazing, huh? You remember that. It gives scientific support for what our values say.

We're a smart country. We nearly always get it right in the end. *[Laughter]* Otherwise we wouldn't be around.

But I'm telling you that it is—the thing that concerns me most is we're on the verge of all these scientific breakthroughs; we're going to find out what's in the black holes in the universe; we'll discover billions of other galaxies; we'll revise our notion of time itself unless we are dragged down by the oldest human failing: being afraid of people because they're different from us, which leads to misunderstanding, which leads to hatred, which leads to dehumanization, which leads to violence.

Now, the Democrats are now in a position to say, "Let's go back to love and justice and concern, expressed in Martin Luther King's and Robert Kennedy's life. And let us do it because you can trust us. You know we can run the economy. You know we can get the crime rate down. You know we can manage the welfare issue. You know we can manage the budget. You can trust us; let's deal with our core problems."

So when the Virginia legislature says, "We're for a Patients' Bill of Rights, or we need smaller classes, and we need to do things to educate our children," it is an expression of our common humanity and our mutual responsibilities.

I just want you to walk out of here armed with the information to say, "Look, this is not an experiment. Our way works. The most important thing is for us to go forward together. Give us a chance, from the bottom to the top."

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 p.m. in the main ballroom at the Alexandria Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Lt. Gov. Kathleen Kennedy Townsend of Maryland; Coretta Scott King, founder, Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change; State Senate Minority Leader Richard L. Saslaw; Kenneth R. Plum, chairman, State Democratic Party; Vinton G. Cerf, senior vice president of Internet architecture and technology, MCI WorldCom, and his wife, Sigrid; and Eric Lander, director, Whitehead Institute/MIT Center for Genome Research.

The President's Radio Address

October 23, 1999

Good morning. Today I want to talk about what we must do to meet one of the critical challenges of the next century: the aging of America.

This week I sat down with congressional leaders of both parties at the White House to ask them to work with me to construct an overall framework for completing our work on the spending bills that reflect the priorities and the values of our people. The cornerstone of that framework must be paying down our debt, investing in education and other critical priorities, strengthening and modernizing Medicare, and saving Social Security for the retirement of the baby boom generation.

If we value the financial well-being of our parents and grandparents, if we believe that all Americans deserve to retire with dignity, if we want to make sure we don't place an unfair burden on the backs of the next generation of young parents, then we must seize this moment

of unprecedented prosperity and budget surpluses to extend the life of Social Security.

Unfortunately, so far, instead of making the tough choices to save Social Security and extend its life to 2050, the Republican majority in Congress, especially some of the House Republican leaders, have been accusing the Democrats of spending the Social Security surplus. They've also been claiming that their budget doesn't spend the Social Security surplus.

As it happens, neither claim is true. Oh, they've used a lot of budget gimmicks—like claiming the census and ordinary Pentagon expenditures are actually emergencies—in an effort to claim they're not spending billions from the Social Security surplus. But unfortunately for their argument, their own Congressional Budget Office has said they've already spent more than \$18 billion of the Social Security surplus. But the main problem is, while spending this money, their plan doesn't extend the solvency of Social Security by a single day. I