

were going to single out one athlete, who would it be?

The President. I believe the athlete in the 20th century that made the most important contribution was Jesse Owens, because he won the multiple Olympic gold medals in the face of Nazi Germany and against Hitler's racial theories. So I think he was both a great athlete who had to show an extraordinary amount of personal courage, and he did something that was of profound significance at the time.

I think the most talented—physically talented athlete that I ever saw play, I think it would be a toss-up for me between Michael Jordan and Willie Mays.

Mr. Patrick. See, it's hard to go wrong. Once you get up to that stratosphere, then if you pick out somebody and—I always thought Jackie Robinson, to me, signified greatness as an athlete and what he overcame.

The President. Yes. Well, let me say, if you asked me who I thought made the greatest contribution to baseball, I'd have to say Jackie Robinson because he broke the color line and because he did it in a way—because he was a great player who was also a great human being. There's almost no way to go wrong here, but if you asked me who I think was the most—had the most stunning athletic attributes in my lifetime, I would have to say Jordan and Mays are the ones that I've physically witnessed. If you ask me—and I think Jackie Robinson, what he did was important. But I guess I would have to say the reason I picked Jesse Owens is because he did it up against Hitler.

Mr. Patrick. Mr. President, thank you for taking time out of your busy day. And you know, you're always welcome to talk sports on here.

The President. I love it. I loved talking to you, and I hope that more of our sports teams will follow the lead of the New Jersey Nets. What they have done is a great thing, and they're giving a lot of kids a chance at a better future.

Jayson Williams

Mr. Patrick. Well, we have the Nets' Jayson Williams. He's on hold. I think you met him today, but Jayson will—

The President. Oh, I know him. He is a terrific young man, and he's going to be well enough to play soon. But it's not going to stop him from spending some of his time trying to give these kids a better future, and I hope more people will follow his lead, too.

Mr. Patrick. Mr. President, thank you, and we'll see you. Even when you're out of office, you want to talk sports, you're always welcome, okay?

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Patrick. I don't want you to feel like, that you're being neglected once you're out. You're still welcome here.

The President. You've got a deal.

Mr. Patrick. All right. Thank you.

The President. Bye.

NOTE: The President spoke by telephone at approximately 2:23 p.m. from Malcolm X Shabazz High School in Newark, NJ. In his remarks, he referred to NBA New Jersey Nets co-owners Lewis Katz and Ray Chambers; former NBA Chicago Bulls player Michael Jordan; Baseball Hall of Famer Willie Mays; and NBA New Jersey Nets player Jayson Williams. Rob Dibble is Mr. Patrick's co-anchor.

Remarks to the North End Community in Hartford, Connecticut November 4, 1999

Thank you very much, first, to you Dick Huber, for being such a faithful member of our new markets team. You started out with us in Atlanta; you made the trip to Appalachia and to the Delta and other places; and you led me home to Hartford today for you. You know, the first time we were talking about this—I should say this about Dick; he talks

about how cynical he is. That's a front. I'm a politician; I recognize a front when I see one. [Laughter]

He said, "You know, I'm not sure I'm happy about you taking all these other businessmen on this new markets tour. It looks to me like there's a great business opportunity here, and I hate for everybody else to find it before I

do.” And I want to come back to that, but I thank you.

I thank my longtime friend the president of Trinity College, Evan Dobelle, and Heidi Miller from the Citigroup. And thank you, Robert Fiondella and all the other business leaders that are here. Thank you, Governor. Thank you, Congressman, and also Congressman Kanjorski, who has been a faithful member of all of our tours. I thank Speaker Lyons and Senator Sullivan and all the other leaders who are here.

I want to say another word. I’m particularly glad to be in Hartford with Congressman Larson, because he’s been after me to come here as well. And Secretary Slater, thank you for making all these trips. And Reverend Jackson, thank you for being such an inspiration for all of these efforts.

I want to thank the Collective founders, Jackie and Dollie McLean. I thought of giving up my speaking time and letting Jackie play. *[Laughter]* And I appreciate the “Hail To The Chief” with the saxophone. And I just heard the jazz band upstairs; they played an old Sonny Stipp tune that I knew back when I was a young man. I don’t believe I’m good enough to play it anymore, but I was astonished at the musical quality of the people here. And it’s a great gift to your community.

Today you’re hearing in words rather than music, another sort of serenade for the people of this city. The corporate leaders together are pledging—listen to this—well over \$200 million to the future of Hartford. That’s one of the most impressive commitments in any city to developing the market potential of people who have not been part of our prosperity anywhere in the United States of America. And you should applaud them, support them, and be very proud of them. *[Applause]*

They’re all saying, “Hartford is our home; Hartford is worth working for, worth fighting for, worth believing in.” And we are committed to working with you to succeed.

Today’s announcements are just the latest sign of the renaissance of this city. Before I came here to the Artists Collective, I had a chance to meet some of the vendors at El Mercado, the Latino marketplace on Park Street. I actually had visited there in 1992, and I remarked, first of all, how excited I was to go back. I had a wonderful time there in ’92. At the time I was battling with my weight, and they made it worse. *[Laughter]* I never wanted to leave

any of the places. And I loved being back there today. And as far as I could see, everything was better than it was in ’92, except for one thing. There was this picture of me when I was there in ’92, and I look worse. But they look better. Everything else is better. *[Laughter]* So I want to thank the people there for all the work that they have done.

Mr. Mayor, I want to compliment you on falling crime rates, dramatically falling crime rates. We have the lowest crime rate in America in 30 years, lowest murder rate in 32 years. No single person can take credit for this, but every person who has supported community policing, responsible law enforcement policies, and working together can take a lot of credit for it. So I thank you.

I also want to compliment everybody here who is responsible for the improvements we see in the schools here. I thank you for your commitment to the MetroHartford Millennium and Adriaen’s Landing projects. I thank Trinity College, working with HUD, for Frog Holler, where they are turning a once devastated brownfield into a remarkable 16-acre learning corridor. I’m pleased to announce that Citigroup has just committed to build on the success of the learning corridor by offering more than \$7.4 million in equity and debt capital to help rehabilitate 70 single-family homes in the neighborhood, and I appreciate that.

Let me just say this. One of the biggest problems we have in America right now is the product of our prosperity. There is not enough affordable housing for all the people who have jobs and have incomes, but because of the economy being so strong, they’re still being priced out of the housing market. Therefore, there is an enormous opportunity, if we can get the capital to the right place, to create more jobs for people who still need them in rehabilitating existing structures in a way that will make them affordable for working people. So this is very good thing, and I hope it will be built on, because you can, Governor, help people not only in Hartford but in Bridgeport, in New Haven, and all the other places that still need help in Connecticut.

And I want to say, if I might, I appreciate your being here, because I don’t believe that this issue should be a partisan issue. I think all Americans want every American to have a chance to work, and I thank you.

I guess my message here is this: Number one, this is great; number two, let's build on it; number three, every other city in America should follow your lead. If we have now the lowest unemployment rate in 29 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 30 years and the lowest poverty rates in 20 years and the lowest minority unemployment rates ever recorded since we have been trying for about 30 years to separate them out, if we have all this in the longest peacetime expansion in history, which come February, will be the longest economic expansion in the history of America, if we can't take this opportunity to bring real hope to the people in places who have not been touched by this recovery, we will never get around to doing it.

So the first thing I want to say is, because we care about one another, it is the right thing to do, and possible. The second thing I want to say is, it's the smart thing to do. That's what Dick said the first time he talked about it. You would be amazed how much time I spend as your President trying to figure out how to keep this economic expansion going, you know, because if you read in the paper, about once every month or so there will be somebody saying the sky is finally going to fall, we can't keep this thing going anymore, inflation's around the corner or it's going to run out of steam.

But the truth is, I always felt if we could get rid of this terrible deficit and start bringing down our debt, if we could still have enough money to invest in our people and new technologies, and if we could keep our borders open so we'd have to be competitive and keep inflation down, we could really grow this economy for a long time. I gave that speech back in '92, and I didn't know if I was right or not, but you all proved that that was right.

Now, we have to say, how can we keep it going? How can we have growth without inflation? The answer is, invest in the people in places who still haven't felt the opportunity. They need the jobs. They need the businesses. They need the capital. They need the work. And they will be new customers. It is an inflation-free strategy to continue the growth of America, to find the people in places still not touched.

So what I want to say to you is, yes, we have a lot of people in the clergy here. You can say, and you'd be right, that it is the morally responsible thing to do for the business leaders of this community and this State and this Nation

to invest in these places. But you also should say, it is the economically smart thing to do, because it's one of the clearest ways we can continue to have this economic expansion with no inflation. It is a magic moment, and we dare not let it pass us by.

Now, what I'm trying to do at the Federal level is to build a bipartisan coalition for giving the kind of tools you need to maximize the number of businesspeople and investors who can participate. The Congress has already, on a bipartisan basis, passed a bill which appropriates some of the money we need to start our national effort. And now, I'm trying to secure agreement to pass a set of tax incentives and loan guarantees, basically tax credits and loan guarantees, which would, for example, give—let's just take Aetna or any other business—the same financial incentives to invest in the inner city in Hartford, in a developing market in Hartford, or any other place in Connecticut, that they can get already to invest in a developing market in Central America, in South America, in Asia, in Africa.

Now, I don't want to stop investing in those countries, but I do think that people in America with money ought to get the same tax breaks to invest in poor communities, in poor people in America, we give them to invest around the world.

So I say to you, I am very grateful to Hartford for setting an example. I'm grateful for this vast and broad-based crowd of people for being here. But this is good business, as well as good social policy. We can be good citizens and actually improve the economy. And if enough of us believe that, then we can pass the laws we need to pass in Congress and get more people to follow the lead of the business investments we've seen here today. This is the right thing to do.

One hundred and thirty years ago, Mark Twain came here for the first time. I like Mark Twain; we ought to all laugh, and besides, he was the first guy who said that reports of his death had been greatly exaggerated, something I came to appreciate more and more as I stayed in this business. [Laughter] Here's what he said about Hartford, "Of all the beautiful towns it has been my fortune to see, this is the chief. You do not know what beauty is if you have not been here."

Thanks to your commitment, your pride, your faith in your city, the beauty is shining through again in new and different ways, with all kinds

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of different people, from all different countries, and all different cultural backgrounds, contributing to a 21st century beauty for Hartford. You can see it in the beautiful children I saw dancing upstairs and all the work done here in the Artists Collective new home. You can see it in the pride of El Mercado and all those beautiful stores I saw up and down the avenue. You can see it in the brownfields transformed and the boarded homes made habitable again. This is what it means to develop America's new markets, and we ought to give the same chance to every hard-working American in every community in this country.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

I want to bring up here a man who was making this speech to me years ago and whose Wall Street project pioneered the partnerships

we want everywhere in America between business and Government, to give people a chance and keep hope alive. Reverend Jesse Jackson. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:40 p.m. in the performance studio at the Artists Collective. In his remarks, he referred to Richard L. Huber, chairman and chief executive officer, Aetna, Inc., who introduced the President; Heidi Miller, chief financial officer, Citigroup, Inc.; Robert W. Fiondella, chairman, president, and chief executive officer, Phoenix Home Life Mutual Insurance Company; Gov. John G. Rowland of Connecticut; State Representative Moira K. Lyons; State Senator Kevin B. Sullivan; and Mayor Michael P. Peters of Hartford.

Statement on Additional Assistance for Victims of Hurricane Floyd *November 4, 1999*

Today I will seek congressional approval for \$429 million in additional assistance for the victims of Hurricane Floyd in North Carolina, New Jersey, and all the States affected by this disaster. These are existing funds that will be reallocated within the Federal Emergency Management Agency. They will assist in the buyout and relocation of homes located in floodplains that remain vulnerable to future floods.

Additionally, I continue to urge Congress to fully fund my request for SBA's disaster loan

program that can help families and small businesses rebuild in the wake of hurricanes and other natural disasters. I have already asked Congress to provide \$500 million that will help farmers in New Jersey and other States who have suffered severe crop losses due to drought and flooding. I urge Congress to meet my requests to help alleviate the suffering of those affected by Hurricane Floyd.

Statement on the Death of Daisy Bates *November 4, 1999*

Hillary and I were very saddened to hear of Daisy Bates' death this morning. She was a dear friend and a heroine. She was known chiefly as a leader during the crisis of Central High School in 1957 and a mentor to the Little Rock Nine. But she was so much more.

President Kennedy so admired her for her civil rights work that he hired her to work in his administration. During her 84 years, she received over 200 awards for her civil rights work,

including the NAACP's esteemed Spingarn Award. In 1957, the Associated Press named her one of the top nine news personalities in the world.

We were blessed to have Daisy as a citizen of Arkansas, where she and her husband, L.C., published the award-winning Arkansas State Press newspaper. For over 30 years, it was the only African-American newspaper in the State. Her death will leave a vacuum in the civil rights