

The President's Radio Address *April 1, 2000*

Good morning. Today I want to speak with you about an opportunity to shape the future of our country, and a responsibility we all have to make our voices count. I want to talk about this year's census and the importance of filling out and sending in your census form right away.

The Constitution mandates that our Nation conduct a census every 10 years. The first was taken back in 1790 and was directed by Thomas Jefferson when he served as Secretary of State. Every decade since then, the census has helped tell the story of America—who we are and what we're becoming.

Census 2000 is our chance to write the latest chapter in the unfolding epoch of America. Even though the census is taken only once in a decade, it has an impact on our lives every day. A report I'm releasing today by the Council of Economic Advisers shows just how much we need the census.

We need the census to help decide how almost \$200 billion in Federal funds will be invested in States and communities. We need the census to draw legislative district lines and allocate seats for each State in the U.S. House of Representatives. We need the census to help our hometowns determine where to build everything from roads to schools to hospitals to child care centers. And we need the census to help businesses make decisions about where to invest and help individuals make informed decisions about where to buy a home or take a job.

For all of these reasons, it's important to make sure the first census of the 21st century is fair, accurate, and complete. After all, if we want to make good decisions about where we need to go as a nation, we first have to know where we are.

In the last census, we didn't know where more than 8 million people were. They were left uncoun- ted. Many of them were children, minorities, and low income families. When people are uncoun- ted, their voices are unheard in the Halls of Congress and in their own communities.

Those who suggest that filling out your census form isn't essential are plainly wrong. An inaccurate census distorts our understanding of a community's needs, denies people their fair

share of resources, and diminishes the quality of life not only for them but for all of us. If we believe everybody in our American community counts, we simply must make sure everyone is counted.

That's an enormous undertaking. This year's census represents the largest peacetime mobilization in American history, involving hundreds of thousands of local census takers and community volunteers. But the most important person in the process is you.

I want to thank the millions of Americans who have sent in their forms. As of today, we're halfway there. But we must do better. We need the most accurate picture of America in the dawn of the 21st century.

So today I'm issuing a proclamation declaring this Census Day and urging all Americans to take a little time this weekend to fill out and send in your form. I've also issued a memorandum to all Federal employees urging them to do the same. Having completed our census form, I can tell you it only takes a few moments.

You can also fill out your census form online, as the Vice President did just recently. The on-line form can be found at www.2000.census.gov. It won't take long. The short form is the shortest since 1820. The long form is the shortest in history. And every question on both forms was reviewed by Congress 2 years ago.

But more important, information from the long form is critical for everything from helping communities design mass transit systems to providing 911 emergency services. It also helps us calculate cost-of-living increases for Social Security, military retirement, and veterans' pensions.

I know Americans are concerned about their privacy, and that's why I also want to stress that the information you provide is strictly, absolutely confidential. Individual information will not be available to anyone outside the Census Bureau for any reason.

So whether you have a long or a short form, please fill it out completely and send it in promptly. America is counting on you. This is your future. Don't leave it blank.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 12:38 p.m. on March 31 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the

Press Secretary on March 31 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The proclamation is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Luncheon for Hillary Clinton

April 1, 2000

[*The President's remarks are joined in progress.*]

The President. —we couldn't have done what has been done without you, and I'll never forget you. I would also like to thank Denis and the New York AFL-CIO. They supported—[*inaudible*—and me and supported—[*inaudible*—and Hillary. I thought she made a really good talk today.

I just want to make three points very briefly. First of all, when I showed up here in January of '93, thanks to the efforts of many of you and millions and millions of people like you all across America, and the economy was in a shambles, the deficit was huge, and the debt had been quadrupled in 12 years, and the social problems were getting worse, and Washington was like a political blood fight, I had basically some very simple ideas about the economy and how it related to the rest of our lives. And I just want to reiterate that because that's where the differences are between us and our friends in the Republican Party. That's where the differences between Al Gore and George Bush are, and the differences between Hillary and her opponent.

Number one, I believe you could be pro-business and pro-labor. And as a matter of fact, I didn't think you could successfully have an economic policy unless you help both labor and business.

Number two, I believe you could be pro-work and pro-family, so that I thought we ought to have things like annual leave and health insurance, and if people were going to be required to move from welfare to work, we ought to give them child care and food and medicine for their kids and transportation to get to work and training to know what they were doing, instead of just talking about welfare cheats and all of that. I thought you could be pro-work and pro-family.

Number three, I thought you could be for economic growth and for environmental protection. I thought working families could be able to take their children to parks and that we could generally still grow the economy.

I believed all those things. And essentially, our friends in the other party believe that they can only help business by sticking it to labor, that every family protection is bad for the economy and the work ethic, and that the environment's a nice thing as long as you don't have to take too much trouble to protect it. Now, that's what they believe. And so we've had this donnybrook for 7½ years.

But I think the evidence is in, and you need to think about that in terms of Hillary's race, the Vice President's race, every other race this year. It's not as if there is a debate here based on the evidence. We have the longest economic expansion in history. We have these 21 million jobs. We have the lowest unemployment and welfare rates in 30 years. We have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest poverty rate in 20 years, the lowest income tax burden on average families in 4 years, the lowest female unemployment rate in 4 years.

This is not some sort of fluke, friends. You're on the right side of history. So when you fight for the Presidential campaign and you fight in the senatorial race, tell people that this is not a debate, and they are making a deliberate decision, if they vote for the other candidates, to go back to a failed economic theory, a failed social theory, a failed environmental policy.

And you've got to be serious and blunt here. And I'm not running for anything, and you know, most days, I'm okay about it. [*Laughter*] What is at stake here is bigger than me or the Vice President or Hillary or all of you. It is the direction of our country. And you need to go out and say you're not anti-business;