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to make the right decision. I think everybody around here today thinks I made the right decision. I think that's all that really counts.

Q. If I could ask the Judge a question. There are many liberal Democrats who have been hoping someone would be named who would serve as a strong counterpoint to Justice Scalia. Do you envisage yourself as someone who can stand up to his more conservative principles and argue the merits of the sort of liberal case effectively and move that Court to a different direction?

Judge Breyer. If I'm confirmed, I envisage myself as a person who will do the best possible job I'm capable of as a Justice of the Supreme Court.

The President. I wish I could answer questions like that. His constitutional privilege is my burden. [*Laughter*]

Q. [*Inaudible*]

Judge Breyer. I believe at some time in the near future, there will be confirmation hearings at which I expect to have lots of questions and difficult ones, too, on matters of substance. And I think that I'll reserve questions and answers of substance for that time.

Q. Mr. President, Judge Breyer said over the weekend that he saw the role of Judge in the Court as making life better for ordinary citizens, something to which he alluded to here as well. What do you mean by that, sir? Do you have a goal or a special agenda that——

Judge Breyer. No, no. Well, what I think of in respect to that is if you think of law in general, there's the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, dozens of guarantees for people, laws and statutes, regulations, rules, common law. There's a whole mass of material that somehow, sometimes, in some way is supposed to fit together. And what is it supposed to do, seen as a whole? What it's supposed to do seen as a whole is allow all people, all people, to live together in a society where they have so many different views, so many different needs, but to live together in a way that is more harmonious, that is better so that they can work productively together. That's a very general statement, but that is a very general purpose, I think, of law.

The President. It's hard to be better than that.

Thank you. We're adjourned.

Q. [*Inaudible*]

The President. I think we should let him speak for himself. I think we let him speak for himself. I don't think—if we do it right, there's not necessarily a dichotomy. We can't be free individually unless we're a responsible society. And I think he'll do very well on that.

Q. Mr. President, how do you feel about the critics over the weekend who said you caved into pressure from Senator Hatch?

The President. That's just not right.

Q. ——said you're not willing to fight for someone you believe in, like Bruce Babbitt.

The President. That's just not right. I believe in this guy.

Q. Were you surprised by the Western Senators?

The President. No, we—[*inaudible*]—we could confirm all three of them. It was not an issue. I'll say again, that was not an issue. I realize these process things can—more than half the stories I read about this were wrong, and that's one of them.

Q. Which ones were wrong?

The President. ——we could have confirmed them all.

Q. What about the stories you saw on TV? [*Laughter*]

The President. They're always right. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:49 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks in a Video Conference Call on Health Care Reform

May 16, 1994

The President. Hello, Roger.

Deputy Secretary Roger Altman. Hello, Mr. President. Good afternoon.

The President. Good afternoon.

[*Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Roger Altman discussed the technological advancements that are being made in video conferencing. He then introduced Norman Gott, chairman and chief executive of PictureTel, a company that provides health care coverage to all its employees.*]

Norman Gott. Thank you, Roger.

Good afternoon, Mr. President.

The President. Good afternoon, Norman.

Mr. Gott. We welcome you up here on, hopefully, technology that will help to carry us into the 21st century.

The President. It's carrying me through the afternoon. I'm amazed by this. [*Laughter*] I'm trying to figure out how to get it.

[*At this point, Norman Gott expressed his support for the President's health care program.*]

The President. Well, I appreciate your support. You know, it is clear to me, having studied this problem for years and talked to literally hundreds of employers, that we're never going to get control of costs and have a fully efficient and effective system that is also compassionate and humane until we have guaranteed health insurance for everybody. We've got to cover everybody. And the simplest and most direct way is to do it through the workplace.

Now, as you know, all the bitter opposition we're getting here in Washington is coming from people who say it will cost jobs and it will hurt small business. But they overlook the fact that many small businesses provide health insurance today at very high rates because they don't have any market power. And under our plan, we'd have discounts for small businesses, and we'd give them market power. We would let them go into buyers co-ops so they would be able to have the same sort of muscle that larger companies do.

And over the long run, unless we do this, we're neither going to be a humane country, from a health care point of view, or as productive as we ought to be, and we're going to lose jobs. All these serious studies of the economy, such as the one done by the bipartisan Congressional Budget Office, say that we'll actually create more jobs and we'll help the small business sector over the long run as we put this universal coverage in.

So I can't tell you how much I appreciate this because the organized groups here in Washington are always complaining about this mandate as if it's the end of the world when, in fact, it's just private insurance for everybody. It keeps the Government out of it except to require people, employers and employees, to be responsible. And I really applaud what you said.

[*Norman Gott asked if there was anything businesses like PictureTel could do to help pass the health care program.*]

The President. Absolutely, there is. I think the most important thing you can do is to contact as many Members of Congress of both parties as possible, describe your business, make it clear that you're a business of the future, and make it clear that the American economy in the future depends upon providing health care for all of our citizens and that the way to do it is through the workplace.

I think that if the Members of Congress could just see over and over and over again all the responsible employers who want to do the right thing and who understand that it's good for business and will create jobs to solve the health care crisis, I think that will do more than anything else to give them the courage to overcome the intense, almost unbelievable pressure from the organized groups who are basically trying to protect the right of business to walk away from their employees and their own responsibility so that the rest of us will pick up the bill when those folks get sick.

I think that if we can just have enough real-life examples like yours that represent the future to the Members of Congress, so they can feel a higher confidence level in doing this, I believe we can get this done. And we can get it done this year. I think it's very, very important that we do this this year. This problem's been studied to death. There's no point in just taking more time. We ought to move, and move now.

Again, I would urge you to reach out to Members of both parties. Tell them, ''Don't play politics with this. Do what's right for America and do it this year.'' And tell them that you know it will be good for America's jobs. That, I think, is really critical, because you'll have a lot of credibility. And you might even set up one of these phone calls with congressional leaders. And you would certainly have a big impression on them.

Mr. Gott. We're going to leave that unit in there so that you can talk to a lot of leaders like this and not waste a lot of time.

The President. You'll save us a lot of travel time.

Mr. Gott. Yes, well, I want you guys to join the 21st century in technology on this information highway. And here's your best example.

The President. You are. This is—the Vice President's always telling me about virtual reality. I virtually feel like I'm there in the room with you today.

Mr. Gott. Well, we appreciate very much your taking the time to talk to us today about this because we think it's important, and I know you do, too. We'll do our part.

The President. Thank you. Thank you for your support for health care. Thank you for helping to take the American economy into the 21st century. I want to again urge all of you, just do what you can to personally contact the Members of Congress and, again, without regard to party. Say this is an American problem. We need an American solution. We need to do it in 1994, not later.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Gott. Terrific.

Deputy Secretary Altman. Mr. President, I'm bringing back 535 video conferencing-equipped PC's for every Member of Congress so Norman can plug into all of them just like this. [*Laughter*]

The President. Good for you. Thank you very much. Thanks. That is amazing.

NOTE: The teleconference began at 2:47 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Remarks on Goals 2000 Legislation

May 16, 1994

Thank you very much. Thank you so much. Mr. Vice President, Mrs. Gore, Secretary Riley, Secretary Reich, Hillary, distinguished Members of Congress and educators, business and labor leaders, church leaders, community leaders, ladies and gentlemen, as I look out at this crowd, I see people in this audience with whom I was working on these problems more than a decade ago. I see people who have lectured me about what we had to do. [*Laughter*] Probably more than half of you have lectured me about what we had to do. I see my good friend Marian Wright Edelman over there. When Hillary was the board chair of the Children's Defense Fund, they said, ''Well, you can't have these national education goals unless all kids start school ready to learn.'' Well, this is part of it. Now, when we make sure they all have health care, we'll know they're ready to learn when they start.

There are people here who work with me in the Education Commission to the States and the Southern Regional Education Board and the Carnegie Council. There are people here who have written books that I have read and learned from, whose lives have been a real inspiration to me. I'm hesitant to mention any of them, but I see Marc Tucker and Ernest Boyer, and I read their books, and now I'm trying to sell them. [*Laughter*] I read Governor Kunin's book, too; it's really good. But if you will forgive me a personal indulgence, I'd like to recognize one man who has been through a particularly painful time in his own life whose work has graced American education everywhere, our friend Jim Comer from Connecticut. Please stand up and be recognized. Thank you, sir.

I see Mike Cohen and Gloria Cabe, who stayed up all night with us in Charlottesville when we were writing the national education goals. All of you here today—I can barely contain myself—here you are clapping for things that matter. Here we are, all of us, the Members of Congress without regard to party, celebrating something that will move America forward. This is why I ran for President, not to pull this country to the right or the left but to move it forward, to get people together, to cross the divide, to face the problems, to deal with the issues.

In the next decade, more than 7 million children will enter our Nation's schools. That's the largest number since my crowd started; I'm the oldest of the baby boomers. That means that we have a special responsibility to make sure that we have done everything we possibly can to guarantee real freedom and opportunity to our people through an education for all that will enable our people, without regard to their race, their income, their standing in life, or where they happen to live, a chance to compete and win,