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Now, there are other provisions in this bill that I think are unfair to children—and let me just mention, for your information, I think they're really tough on disabled children and children in foster homes—and I think they ought to be modified. And finally, it is important to point out that under the guise of State flexibility, this plan reduces future payments to States in ways that make States and children very vulnerable in times of recession or if their population is growing more than other States. So basically, if we adopt this plan the way it is, it will say to you in your State, if times get tough, you're on your own.

I don't think we should let budget-cutting be wrapped in a cloak of welfare reform. We have a national interest in the welfare of our children. Let's reform welfare. Let's cut the deficit. But let's don't mix up the two and pretend that one is the other. Let's put our children first.

Let me say that I have come here today in the spirit of good faith to try to outline these specifics. You may not agree with me; you may agree with them. But I want you to know what the points of debate are. Again, I am glad we're discussing this. This is a big problem for America. And I believe in the end we can work it out together as long as we remember what it's really about—again, the way you think about problems, you have a name, a face, and a life history. That's what we sometimes lose up here in Washington.

I just want to close with this story. When I was Governor, I was trying to get all the other Governors interested in welfare reform. I once had a panel at a welfare meeting in Washington. And I didn't even know how many Governors would show up. Forty-one Governors showed up to listen to women on welfare, or women who had been on welfare, talk about their lives.

There was a woman there from my State, and I was asking her questions, and I didn't know what her answers were going to be, letting her talk to the Governors. And I said, "Do you think it ought to be mandatory for people on welfare to be in these education and job placement programs?" She said, "Yes, I do." I said, "Why?" She said, "Because a lot of people like me, we lose all our self-confidence. We don't think we amount to much, and if you don't make us do it, we'll just lay up and watch the soaps." But then I said, I asked her to describe her job, and she did. And I said, "What's the best thing about having a job?" She said, "When my boy goes to school, and they ask him, what does your momma do for a living, he can give an answer."

So I want you to help us, because whether you're Republicans or Democrats or black, brown, or white, or liberals or conservatives, you have to deal with people with names, faces, and life histories. We're up here dealing in sound bites trying to pierce through on the evening news. It's a big difference. It's a big difference.

This debate is about more than welfare. It's about who we are as a people and what kind of country we'll want to pass along to our children. It's about the dignity of work, the bond of family, the virtue of responsibility, the strength of our communities, the strength of our democratic values.

This is a great American issue. And I still believe that all of us working together can advance those values and secure the future of our children and make sure that no child in this country ever has to grow up without those values and the great hope that has made us, all of us, what we are.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:15 a.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Randall Franke, president, Douglas Bovin, first vice president, Michael Hightower, second vice president, Randy Johnson, third vice president, John Stroger, immediate past president, and Larry Naake, executive director, National Association of Counties; Doris Ward, San Francisco County Assessor; Marian Wright Edelman, president, Children's Defense Fund; and ACORN, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now.

Statement on the Terrorist Attack in Pakistan

March 8, 1995

The attack on American diplomatic personnel in Pakistan today outrages all Americans. I have instructed relevant U.S. Government agencies to work with the Government of Pakistan to apprehend the perpetrators of

this cowardly act. I want to thank the Government of Pakistan for the excellent cooperation it has already provided.

Our hearts go out to the families of Gary Durell, a communicator, and Jacqueline van Landingham, a consulate secretary, who were killed. We pray for the speedy recovery of Mark McCloy, a consulate spouse, who was wounded.

Attacks such as these should make the international community rededicate itself to efforts to stamp out terrorism everywhere.

Message on the Observance of Saint Patrick's Day, 1995

March 8, 1995

Warmest greetings to everyone celebrating Saint Patrick's Day.

More than 1500 years ago, Saint Patrick escaped the bonds of slavery and brought his message of faith and opportunity to the Emerald Isle. His extraordinary courage and conviction inspired the Irish people and heralded a new era of enlightenment and peace for his adopted homeland. Today, Saint Patrick's legacy continues to endure, in Ireland and beyond, as we strive for the hope embodied by his teachings and his life's work.

On this feast of the patron saint of Ireland, we rejoice in our Irish heritage and honor the Irish Americans who have made immeasurable contributions to our nation and our culture. Since the earliest days of our republic, the sons and daughters of Ireland have symbolized the American dream. Overcoming political, economic, and social struggles, Irish Americans have achieved tremendous success in all realms of American life—from politics to education, business to the arts.

This Saint Patrick's Day has a special importance to all friends of Ireland for it is the first in a generation to occur in a peaceful Northern Ireland. Let us today join together to build on the progress of the past year and advance the cause of peace and reconciliation.

Across our country today, in parades, in classrooms, and in churches, millions of Irish Americans will celebrate the spirit of Saint Patrick that lives on in all of us. Best wishes to all for a wonderful holiday.

Bill Clinton

Executive Order 12954—Ensuring the Economical and Efficient Administration and Completion of Federal Government Contracts

March 8, 1995

Efficient economic performance and productivity are directly related to the existence of cooperative working relationships between employers and employees. When Federal contractors become involved in prolonged labor disputes with their employees, the Federal Government's economy, efficiency, and cost of operations are adversely affected. In order to operate as effectively as possible, by receiving timely goods and quality services, the Federal Government must assist the entities with which it has contractual relations to develop stable relationships with their employees.

An important aspect of a stable collective bargaining relationship is the balance between allowing businesses to operate during a strike and preserving worker rights. This balance is disrupted when permanent replacement employees are hired. It has been found that strikes involving permanent replacement workers are longer in duration than other strikes. In addition, the use of permanent replacements can change a limited dispute into a broader, more contentious struggle, thereby exacerbating the problems that initially led to the strike. By permanently replacing its workers, an employer loses the accumulated knowledge, experience, skill, and expertise of its incumbent employees. These circumstances then adversely affect the businesses and entities, such as the Federal Government, which rely on that employer to provide high quality and reliable goods or services.

Now, Therefore, to ensure the economical and efficient administration and completion of Federal Government contracts, and by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including 40 U.S.C.