

keep working forward and moving forward. And that's what I'm trying to build for the future and what I want you to be a part of.

Let me just say this in closing. Every day I try to imagine what I hope the country will be like 30 years from now. And if that guides a President and you work back from there, you'll be amazed how much easier that makes the decisionmaking process. And when I think of the young people that are here tonight, all these fine young people that are working for the Democratic Party and did all the work to make this possible tonight—what will determine what kind of America they live in?

Number one, will we succeed in being a truly multiracial, multiethnic democracy, where we not only respect but celebrate our diversity and still say the most important thing is we're one America? Number two, will we stop making excuses for ourselves and finally embrace the idea that all children can learn, and we're going to see that they learn at internationally accepted levels of excellence? Number three, will we reach into the areas that have not been touched by our prosperity and figure out a way to hook them into the future? Number four, will we figure out a way to grow the economy while enhancing the environment? And finally, will we continue to do what it takes to lead the world when it comes to peace and freedom and prosperity?

If we do those things, the best days of this country are still ahead. And when we are all much older we can look back on this moment and say, because we were here then and because we did what we did, we did prepare our country for the 21st century. We saved progressive Government for its higher purposes, and we revitalized America's progressive party to make it go on.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. in the Colonial Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, and Alan D. Solomont, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; C. Thomas Hendrickson, chair, Democratic Business Council; and Eli J. Segal, president and chief executive officer, Welfare to Work Partnership.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

August 7, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Governor. Thank you, Alan. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for being here. Mostly what I want to do is have a conversation tonight, but I would like to just briefly comment on the events of the last couple of days, in the context of what's happened for the last 4½ years.

When I came to Washington after our campaign in '92, I had a very clear idea of what I was trying to do. It seemed to me that the country had to make a number of changes if we were going to go into the next century with the American dream alive for everyone, leading the world in all the ways that are so important, and giving our children the future they deserve. And I felt, among other things, that our party, which has historically been the progressive party, had to advocate changes that would move beyond the old divisions between growing the economy, preserving the environment, helping business, helping labor, being tough on crime, being compassionate and smart—all those—what I have always thought were kind of false choices. And that we ought to have a simple strategy that asks, will this create opportunity for people who are responsible enough to work for it? Will this bring us together, rather than drive us apart? Will this preserve our leadership for peace and freedom and prosperity? That's what we've tried to do.

Before I signed the new budget law, we had reduced the deficit by 80 percent, we had a historic drop in welfare rolls, we have the smallest percentage of people on welfare we've had since 1970 now. We had dramatic drops in crime—last year, the biggest drop in crime in 35 years and a number of other very positive things happening.

Now, this budget I believe will be very good for the economy because it will continue the downward trend of the deficit. It will bring us into balance. It will produce a surplus. And it will also sustain itself over the years ahead. There are tax cuts in the budget. We've been criticized in many quar-

ters for them, but I would like to make a couple of points.

Number one, the capital gains and the estate tax relief, which the Republicans wanted, have gotten a lot of publicity. But it's important to note that 80 percent of the tax relief went to the children's tax credit for middle income people, to the education tax credits to open the doors of college education to all who are willing to work for it, and to the initiatives primarily directed at urban America, to the areas which have not participated in our recovery—80 percent.

Number two, perhaps even more importantly in the larger economic sense, in the aggregate, these tax cuts are about one-eighth the size of the tax cuts in 1981 that led to the permanent structural deficits. And it's very important that the American people understand that. We did not just—this Congress did not just sort of take the lid off the Treasury in a kind of a political orgy. This was a very disciplined, limited thing.

Of course, the budget also has the biggest increase in investment for education in over 30 years, the biggest increase in investment for children's health since Medicaid was established in 1965. It is an historic, positive, progressive budget that will be pro-economic growth and good for the people of this country. So I feel good about that.

I feel good about a lot of the things that have happened in foreign policy, our expansion of NATO, our working with Russia in that regard. I feel good about the Presidents' Summit of Service we had in Philadelphia. I'm very committed to this initiative on examining and improving race relations, which I think is absolutely critical to our future. All these things have been started this year.

Perhaps most important over the long run, I'm committed to seeing this effort to establish national educational standards of excellence in our schools for the first time in history. We cannot back up on that, and I hope you will help me get all the people in your respective States on that bandwagon.

We're coming into the fall. There are a lot of other exciting issues that we'll have to deal with, and I'll just mention them very quickly and then sit down and we'll have a conversation. But in the remaining months of this year, I am hoping that we can secure

fast track authority from Congress so I can continue to expand trade for America. Our economic analyses are that one full fourth, 25 percent of the economic growth this country has had in the last 4½ years, which is now 13 million new jobs, a fourth came directly from the efforts to open markets to American products and services. So I think that's important.

I think it's important that we pass the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill. It's finally coming to a vote in the Senate. For some of you, it will save you a lot of money if it passes. It will be a good thing. But it would be a good thing for both parties because we'll have to go out and find more contributors and more people to participate and distribute the responsibility, and that will be a very good thing.

But, finally, let me say this whole campaign finance reform effort will never succeed unless we reduce the cost of campaigns, which will only happen if we get free air time or drastically reduced air time for the candidates. That is an absolutely critical thing. Unless we change the cost environment, no matter how you work with, manipulate, or change the contribution rules, there will still be the costs out there and they will flow somehow, because people will have to communicate with the voters and will have to be able to reach the voters with a message.

The third thing I want to mention is coming up, that I hope all of you will take an interest in, is the climate change debate. In December, in Japan, the advanced nations of the world—and we hope all the others—will be called upon to make commitments to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions of our economy so that we can reduce the rate at which the planet is warming up. This is a big deal. If we have just a few degrees of warming of the planet over the next hundred years, it could lead to rises in the sea levels which could, for example, flood the entire Florida Everglades. It could change the whole economic structure of American agriculture. So we have to find a way to grow the economy and improve the environment.

We are going to begin dealing this fall and over the next year and a few months with the whole question of entitlement reform, which, simply put, is what is the best way

to preserve the integrity of Social Security and Medicare in the 21st century when the baby boomers retire. That's really the issue. Social Security right now is secure through 2029. We just added 10 more years to the Medicare Trust Fund. The issue is, how can we preserve the integrity of these programs and the benefits they bring in a century when people are going to be living longer and when the baby boomers will retire and there will be just barely more than two people working for every person retired. We've never dealt with an issue like this without a crisis before, but the bottom line is, if we make modest changes now, we can avoid imposing drastic changes that our children will have to make later. I think the responsible thing to do is to deal with the modest changes now. So I hope we will do that.

And finally, in October, the First Lady and I are going to have a big conference on child care. I am still—I think “obsessed” is not too strong a word—with the challenges so many Americans face succeeding in raising their children and succeeding at work. And there is still not a systematic network of child care out there.

We have gotten a lot of help from the Congress in establishing child care networks for people who will be moving from welfare to work, and that's good. But there are a lot of people who have never been on welfare who work for modest wages, whose children simply do not have access to quality, affordable child care. And I think that's one of the next big frontiers in our efforts to bring America together.

So I hope you will help us with that, and I hope you will follow it. And I hope you will be proud of the fact that you have supported us and you have made possible the best economy we've had in a generation and progress on all these social issues and progress abroad as well as at home. That's what the political process is supposed to do. And if we can keep going and do this flat out for 3 more years, I think we can watch our country move into a new century and a new millennium, confident that the best days of America are still ahead. And that is our obligation as citizens and as human beings.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:09 p.m. in the East Room at the Mayflower Hotel.

Remarks at Georgetown University Medical Center

August 8, 1997

Thank you very much. I would like to thank Dr. Wiesel and all the people here at the Georgetown Medical Center for hosting us. I want to thank Mary Delaney and Chief Joyce Dugan and Sandra Puczynski for their speeches and for their example. As you might imagine, over the course of my tenure I have had occasion to come to quite a number of ceremonies like this. I don't believe I have ever heard three people back to back speak so powerfully, so clearly, so eloquently about a matter of great national concern. And I think we should give them all another hand. *[Applause]*

I'd like to thank all of the people who are here today, diabetes patients, families, activists, and advocates. Especially, I'd like to acknowledge the people on the platform: Stephen Satalino, the chair of the American Diabetes Association. Joan Beaubaire, the former head of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, is also here. Her son works for me at the White House, so I get a little extra prodding on this from time to time. *[Laughter]*

I'd like to say a special word of thanks to Mary Tyler Moore, who has awakened the conscience of our Nation and indeed the entire world about this issue, for her long and tireless and selfless efforts. Thank you, Mary.

I want to thank Dr. Phillip Gorden, the head of diabetes research at NIH. He's here with us today. And the NIH will play a major role in the work that we are discussing here.

None of us could write the history of the century that is about to end without a big chapter on the miracles modern medicine and science have wrought in our lives. Polio, mumps, diphtheria, the diseases that robbed so many families of beloved infants and toddlers for centuries have been virtually eradicated. Premature babies who just a decade ago would not have had a chance at life beyond the intensive care unit are growing into happy and healthy children. Powerful treatments are prolonging the lives and improving