

thing positive. And I have done what I could, and I'm very proud of our caucus in the Senate for doing what it has done. The Democrats have clearly come out unanimously for some—for campaign finance reform. And we've just got to keep the public spotlight on this and keep going until we get legislation.

### **Welfare Reform**

**Q.** Mr. President, many States, California, Texas, Florida, acknowledge that they're going to fail the first real test of the new welfare law, the requirement that they have 75 percent of two-parent welfare families in jobs and job training by this week. Will HHS impose fines that—[inaudible]—allowed to do, on the States? And what—does it shake your confidence, this failure—shake your confidence in the new welfare law?

**The President.** No, because, first of all—let me answer the second question first. It doesn't shake my confidence in the law, because we have succeeded, I think, beyond anybody's expectations, partly from the growing economy and partly from welfare reform efforts, in reducing the welfare rolls more than they have ever been reduced in a comparable time period, ever.

We've had 20 years of immigration in our country at high levels, many of the immigrants coming here come without many resources, and they want to work their way into the American dream. So we've had a lot of people coming in here, and yet we've been successful in having the smallest percentage of our people on welfare since 1970.

So my answer to you is, I want to keep high standards, and I want them enforced, because we block-granted the money to the States they asked for. After all, they supported the law. They said we could keep the Federal guarantee for health care and food stamps, nutrition, which I insisted on, but they pointed out that they already had the freedom to set different welfare reimbursement levels every month, so they wanted control of that pot of money so they would have more flexibility to move people from welfare to work. And in return, they agreed to these targets.

So I think we just need to keep pushing ahead. In terms of what should be done, ob-

viously I want to consult with our people at HHS and others to do what is best. But I think most States really are working hard and in good faith to try to do this. I think that they know that's what the voters want and most importantly, that's what the people on welfare want. So we don't want to just forget about our high standards, especially when we've proven we can hire a lot more people than we ever thought we could.

### **Campaign Finance Legislation**

**Q.** You mentioned Republicans in the House. This weekend, Speaker Gingrich was unusually caustic, accusing your staff and your lawyers of blocking pursuit of the truth in law. Have you looked back at your records and the phone calls that you have made and come to any new conclusion about your own involvement?

**The President.** First of all, I think—no, I have not come to any new conclusion. But I think the remarks this weekend were an attempt to divert the public attention from the fact that the leadership of the Republican Party in the House opposes campaign finance reform, and has consistently, and continues to do so.

But I am encouraged that along with our Democrats who are supporting it, there are an increasingly vocal band of brave Republicans willing to stick up and be for it. And again, this is our chance to pass this bill, and I think we'd all be making a mistake to be diverted. I don't intend to be.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:03 a.m. in the Briefing Room at the White House.

### **Remarks at the Arts and Humanities Medal Awards Dinner**

*September 29, 1997*

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to begin the dinner by saying a special word of welcome to all of you.

Frequently in this room, it is my privilege on behalf of the people of the United States to offer a toast to a visiting leader of another nation or to showcase our culture to the world. Tonight it is my privilege to honor

the leaders of that culture, our artists and scholars and those who support their work.

Our economy is measured in numbers and statistics, and we got some more good numbers today, and for that I'm very grateful. But nonetheless, in our childhood, at the end of our lives, and in the most important moments in between, we know that our own enduring worth and the enduring worth of our Nation lies in our shared values and our soaring spirit.

Lewis Mumford once wrote, "Love, poetry, disinterested thought, the free use of the imagination—here are the sustaining values of a living culture." Through the work you do and the lives you lead, you are sustaining our living culture and swelling the chorus of American voices.

I have to note, sadly, as many of you must doubtless know now, that we lost one of those great voices today when Roy Lichtenstein passed away. Two years ago I had the great privilege of giving him the award that I was able to bestow on several of you today. He was especially valuable and treasured by us here in the White House because of his support for our arts and embassies program.

The point I think he would like me to make tonight is that everyone of us, each in our own time, has just a little time, whether we live a short or a long life by conventional standards. Therefore, it falls to everyone of us to make sure that there is a next generation of artists and scholars who have the opportunity to learn and to create, so that the next generation of ideas can take root and grow.

So, tonight, as we celebrate the remarkable accomplishments of the men and women we honor here, let us also rededicate ourselves to that future mission.

Now, I ask you all to join me in raising our glasses in a toast to the 1997 National Medal of Arts and National Humanities Medal recipients.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:43 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to artist/painter Roy Lichtenstein, awarded the National Medal of Arts on Oct. 5, 1995.

**Executive Order 13062—  
Continuance of Certain Federal  
Advisory Committees and  
Amendments to Executive Orders  
13038 and 13054**

*September 29, 1997*

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), it is hereby ordered as follows:

**Section 1.** Each advisory committee listed below is continued until September 30, 1999.

(a) Committee for the Preservation of the White House; Executive Order 11145, as amended (Department of the Interior).

(b) Federal Advisory Council on Occupational Safety and Health; Executive Order 12196, as amended (Department of Labor).

(c) National Partnership Council; Executive Order 12871, as amended (Office of Personnel Management).

(d) President's Advisory Commission on Education Excellence for Hispanic Americans; Executive Order 12900 (Department of Education).

(e) President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Executive Order 12876 (Department of Education).

(f) President's Commission on White House Fellowships; Executive Order 11183, as amended (Office of Personnel Management).

(g) President's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology; Executive Order 12882 (Office of Science and Technology Policy).

(h) President's Committee of the Arts and the Humanities; Executive Order 12367, as amended (National Endowment for the Arts).

(i) President's Committee on the International Labor Organization; Executive Order 12216 (Department of Labor).

(j) President's Committee on the National Medal of Science; Executive Order 11287, as amended (National Science Foundation).

(k) President's Committee on Mental Retardation; Executive Order 12994 (Department of Health and Human Services).