AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

the guy has nothing to do with the human services area—he came up to me, and he had tears in his eyes and said, "I just want you to know that I spent 9 years of my childhood in one foster home after another. And this is going to change entire lives for people."

And then I went to Wichita, Kansas, to the Cessna plant and saw what that company is doing to take hardcore welfare recipients and put them through training programs and guarantee them jobs. And a lot of these women have been severely beaten by their spouses or partners, have no money, are high school dropouts. Cessna provides housing, a 3-month training program, a 3-month pre-job program, and a guaranteed job for anybody who can finish. And I saw people speaking—they had two of these women speaking. If you'd been told that 6 months ago they were on welfare and had less than a high school education, you wouldn't have believed it. You would have thought they were members of the Wichita City Council. [*Laughter*] And I expect they both could be if they put themselves up for election now. [*Laughter*]

We announced—you saw yesterday, we announced that we're going to have the first permanent peace talks between North and South Korea, in the four-party context we proposed, since the end of the Korean war. We're working through a very difficult situation in Iraq, and I think in an appropriate way. And I know those things have dominated the news. But if you think about what happened in America for Americans this week, there were a couple of times when all of us just looked at each other and said, "You know, this is what we got in public life to do. This is what makes all the other stuff worth it."

And what I want you to understand is, the decisions that are made—and the way they're made—are made by real human beings who have real views and real convictions, in conflict with other real human beings who also have honest views.

You know, I had a long talk with Senator Lott yesterday. I like Senator Lott. You know, we lived across the river from each other in our former lives, and it's nice having the Senate Majority Leader without an accent. [*Laughter*] We like each other. We understand each other. I had to give him 5 pounds of barbecue when Mississippi beat Arkansas in football. [*Laughter*] I like him. And he would tell you the same thing. We really look at the world differently. We see things differently. We have honest differences of opinion. And what Roy told you is true: That's what's kept this country going for 220 years.

I believe history will record that at this moment in time our views were right and that we prepared the world—prepared America for a totally new world. But you've got to know that you helped to make it possible. And you should never let that sort of fashionable rhetoric demeaning the whole act of contributing to your democracy so people who believe what you do can hold up their side—that's there's something wrong with that. There's nothing wrong with that.

Tonight when you go home, you think about being at this lunch; you think about those adopted kids; you think about the people who are going to get drugs that will keep them alive; you think about those women that can now be going into the work force because their kids do have food and medicine and child care; you think about the doors of college being opened to everybody for the first time in the history of this country. You think about all that and be proud.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:42 p.m. in the Mansion at the Lawrence C. Phipps Memorial Conference Center-University of Denver.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Reception in Denver

November 22, 1997

Thank you very much. Thank you, Governor, Congressman Skaggs, Representative DeGette, Vice Chair Rodriguez, and Lieutenant Governor Schottler, and to all the office holders and all the candidates and all the would-be office holders. I'm delighted to see my longtime friend Dottie Lamm and all the others here who are going to put themselves up in our Democratic primary for office this next year. Thank you for being here. I'm glad to see Americans here from all walks of life, Native Americans, Hispanic-Americans, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, a few of us Irish boys. [*Laughter*] This

looks like the Democratic Party to me, and I'm proud to be a member of it, and I hope you are.

I would like to begin by thanking Roy Romer—who, as all of you know, has a full-time job that he has done superbly well, I think as well as any Governor in the entire United States—for also being willing to take on the extremely challenging job of being the chairman of the National Democratic Party in the last year. He's done a superb job, and I'm very grateful to him. You should be proud of him.

I want to thank David Skaggs for his superb performance in Congress and tell him I'm really going to miss him, and I wish him well, and I am very grateful that he has done what he's done so well for so long. Thank you, David.

And I want to tell you that Diana DeGette has done very well for a newcomer, in fact, better than a lot of people who have been there a long time. And I hope she has no trouble staying there for a long time. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, as all of you know, I've had a rather interesting week and, on occasion, a rather exhausting one. But it's also given me time to think and reflect about the larger purposes of public life and what our role is in it. And if you don't remember one other thing I say today, when you leave here, remember this: You ought to be proud of the fact that you're a member of this party, and you ought to be proud of the fact that you're not ashamed to show up and support it, including contributing to it, because the good things that have happened to this country in the last 5 years bear a direct connection to your willingness to support people who would fight for those good things and fight through tough elections to advance our ideas, our values, and our causes. And I want you to be proud of yourselves, because I'm very proud of you.

When I ran for President I was worried about the direction of our country. I don't think anyone can possibly say—or dispute the fact that America's in better shape today than it was in 1992. It is, in many ways.

What have we done? We have pursued old values with new means for a new time. We have sought to strengthen families and communities, to advance work and opportunity of all kinds, to increase responsibility among our citizens, to bring the American people together—across all the lines that divide us—into one America, and to continue to be the world's strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity in the whole world. That's what we sought to do.

And we're living in a new and different time. The way we live is different. The way we work is different. The way we relate to each other and the rest of the world is different. We're more different. We are increasingly diverse within our own country. Just across the river from my office in Washington—actually, it's your office; I'm just a temporary tenant—just across the river there's the Fairfax County School District with children from 180 different national and ethnic groups, with native languages that number over 100. We are increasingly different. We cannot expect to be able to go into this new era doing things the way we always did.

So the American people gave us a chance to govern in 1993. And we had different ideas from the Republicans. And I don't subscribe to the kind of vicious personal attacks that characterize too much of our politics today. You know, I was telling the folks at the lunch at the Hill—I had a great meeting with Senator Lott yesterday, the Republican Majority Leader. I like him personally. Besides, he's from Mississippi, just across the river from me, and it's relaxing for me to have a conversation with a congressional leader that doesn't speak with an accent. [*Laughter*] I had to send him 5 pounds of barbecue a couple of weeks ago because Mississippi beat Arkansas in a football game. [*Laughter*] We have a nice relationship. He would be the first to tell you we do not agree on many things about how this country should respond to the challenges of the moment. That doesn't reflect on his character or mine; that's different judgments we make about what we ought to do. But it will make all the difference which views prevail. Or even when we reach principled agreement, it makes all the difference whether the debate is going on in the first place. And that's what I want you to understand.

There is a direct connection between your political activism, the decisions that are made

back in Washington and the reverberations it has in the lives of people in Colorado. And that's why it's so important that you do what you are doing.

Let me just give you an example. One, we clearly have the strongest economy in a generation. The beginning of our big recovery was the passage of the 1993 economic plan. It did not get a single Republican vote. They said it would increase the deficit and bankrupt the economy.

Five years later, really just a little over 4 years later—4 years—we have reduced the deficit by 92 percent. That is before the balanced budget agreement saves one red cent. That's one reason we could have a bipartisan balanced budget agreement; it's easier to reach a deal once you have done 92 percent of the heavy lifting. Your party did that. Your decisions made that. And we did it while lowering taxes on our hardest pressed working families and investing more money in education, more money in technology, more money in our future. It was a party decision; it was a good decision.

We got the lowest crime rate in 24 years. We had a crime bill that put 100,000 police on the street, preventive programs for kids, takes the assault weapons off the street. If people in Denver aren't for that now, I don't know when they'll ever be. It was a party fight. We did get some Republicans to vote for the crime bill, and I'm grateful to them, and I always will be. But the leadership of their party fought us in a sometimes bitter fight. But we prevailed. And what we did was what the police officers, the community leaders, and the prosecutors asked us to do, right across the political spectrum. And the crime rate has come down for 5 years; the murder rate is down 22 percent in the last 3 years. Now, that is the record. Those ideas made a difference. And the people you helped get elected who did that had an impact on the lives of the people all across America.

We passed a welfare reform bill that, yes, does require people to move from welfare to work if they're able-bodied and, yes, gives States more say in how to design work programs. But what it didn't do, because I vetoed two bills before, is to take food or medicine away from kids. And it does guarantee more money for child care when poor people go to work. And it has now $3 billion to help communities, where unemployment is very high, to help create jobs.

What is the result of that? We had the biggest decline in welfare rolls in history—3.8 million—and the smallest percentage of Americans on welfare since 1970. Now, with the smallest percentage of Americans since 1970, lowest crime rate in 24 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 24 years, it makes a difference.

We also proved you can do it and have cleaner air, cleaner water, safer food, fewer toxic waste dumps. Our ideas have been proven to work for the American people. They never would have had the chance to work if it hadn't been for people like you—out here like you—all across America, sticking up for them. So you should be proud of the that and tell people about it and tell them that ideas have consequences; they made a difference; and the ideas that the Democratic party had for the 21st century in America were the right ideas, and that's why we're moving in the right direction.

Here's what I think the central questions are for the future—and that's why we're not going to run out of steam and there's always going to be plenty to do for the foreseeable future. What are the central questions facing our country? They're facing every advanced country in the world.

Number one: So we're living in an information age, dominated by computers and high technology. And that's great. How do we preserve all the benefits of this age, all of the phenomenal individual opportunities, the great opportunity for all these new companies to start, and give all these young people things to do and still preserve the social contract? That is, what about the people that get left behind? How are we going to retrain them? How are we going to put them back in the mainstream of American life? How can we keep people moving forward and not leave anybody behind? How do we meet the challenge in the future of growing the economy and meeting the environmental challenges?

Our next big one is to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions in this country so we don't contribute to global warming. Can we do it? Of course, we can. If you look at

the physics, we can. If you look at all the scientific data, it's out there. Are we going to do it? How are we going to do it? If we ask the American people to sacrifice their standard of living, we will never sustain a majority support for it. So we have to do it intelligently. We have to have the right ideas.

How are we going to preserve access to health care, retirement, family leave, and child care for workers in an environment where we need maximum flexibility in the work force, where there are more and more small companies, where each year we set a new record for the number of new small businesses? How are we going to preserve our public schools and give all our kids access to education but have them flexible enough, creative enough, embracing technology enough, embracing accountability and standards and results enough to produce results that will continue to get support for the public schools from people who don't even have kids in schools anymore? How are we going to meet our intergenerational responsibilities? What are we going to do when the baby boomers retire? I, for one, don't want my kids to go broke trying to support me. Neither do I want to see Social Security or Medicare destroyed. Can we reform entitlements and, at the same time, help all the kids in this country who are living below the poverty line? Of course, we can. But not unless we're thinking about it, and not unless we have the right values and the right ideas, and we're willing to have the right kind of change.

And I think I know that you believe that our party needs to be the party of positive change. How are we going to respect all the differences, even celebrate the differences among us, and still say, okay, you can be an Irish-American or Italian-American, whatever, but there are things that bind us together as one America that are more important than any of that? So it still will matter to be an American in the 21st century.

These are great questions. No society has fully resolved them. But I say the Democratic Party has a fair claim on the allegiance of the American people because we have the best economy in a generation, the lowest crime rate in a generation, the lowest welfare rolls we've had in a very long time and the biggest drop in history, and a better environment with a growing economy, and we're moving the world toward peace and freedom. And that's the message I want you to give. And most important, that's the message I want to sink into your mind and heart.

Everyone knows that last week I was overwhelmingly preoccupied, this last week, with the situation in Iraq. And I don't have much more to add to that, except one of our biggest obligations is to deal with the new security challenges of the 21st century. And while the nuclear threat between two great countries is receding—I talked to President Yeltsin today about his efforts to get the START II treaty ratified there so we can bringing these nuclear weapons down, getting more countries to sign on to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty—we must face an enhanced threat of chemical and biological warfare practiced by terrorists, organized criminals, drug traffickers, and others in the 21st century. And it's our solemn obligation to minimize that threat for you in the next 50 years, the same way we avoided having another nuclear war—a nuclear war in the last 50 years.

But underneath that, a lot of things you might not have noticed happened. And I want to tell you about them, again, so you'll understand there is a consequence between what you do and what we do. We signed a bill reforming the Food and Drug Administration that will move drugs to market and medical devices to market quicker. It will save lives. The bill took 2 years to pass, and the Republican views were heard, the Democratic views were heard, all the stakeholders' views were heard. It passed by a voice vote. It will save lives. It makes a difference.

We passed a bill to reform the adoption laws in America, a subject that Hillary has been working on literally for 25 years. And we had all these advocates there from all over the country and a couple that had adopted 20 children, including three in wheelchairs—adopted, not just given a foster home to, adopted—and people from all over the country. And you could see that it was going to change lives. And afterward, a member of my staff came up to me and said, "I just want you to know that I lived in foster homes for over 8 years when I was a kid growing up,

and this is going to change lives, hundreds of thousands of people's lives.''

I went to Kansas and saw what Cessna is doing with our welfare reform program to take the hardest-to-place welfare people, oftentimes women that had been brutally abused in their homes, and give them training programs and jobs and guarantee jobs to them. I'm talking about high school dropouts—that had been brutally abused—in Cessna making high wages with guaranteed benefits, and they have a 71 percent success rate.

And all these things happen, and just repeatedly, somebody will be with me that works with us and we'd all look at each other and we'd just laugh and say, ''You know, this is what we got into public life to do, to give people the tools to change their lives for the better.''

That is what the Democratic Party stands for. And you need to take a lot of pride in it, and you need to understand what we have done, how it happened, and what we intend to do. And if you do that, then this State, where we have to win the independent vote to win any elections, will see us as the party of positive change. We'll have more Democrats. We'll have more young people who are Democrats. The main thing is, we'll have a better America. When you go out of here today, you tell people that, and be proud you did what you did.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:23 p.m. at the Tennis Pavilion in the Lawrence C. Phipps Memorial Conference Center-University of Denver. In his remarks, he referred to Manny Rodriguez, vice chair, Colorado State Democratic Party; Lt. Gov. Gail Schottler of Colorado; and Dottie Lamm, Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate.

Proclamation 7055—National Family Caregivers Week, 1997

November 22, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

During this season of thanksgiving, when we reflect on the many blessings that have been bestowed on us as individuals and as a Nation, we are especially grateful for the love of our families and friends. One of the most profound ways in which that love is expressed is through the generous support provided by caregivers to those who need help if they are to remain in their homes and communities.

Caregivers reflect family and community life at its best. Thanks to their efforts, Americans with disabilities and a growing number of elderly Americans are able to stay in familiar surroundings and to maintain their dignity and independence. Caregivers not only enhance the quality of life for those they serve, but also greatly reduce the demands on the formal system of caregiving services in our Nation.

The statistics describing caregivers in America today tell an extraordinary story of generosity and compassion. Nearly one in four households is involved in caring for a relative or other loved one in need, providing a range of assistance from personal care to household help to transportation. Thirty percent of caregivers are caring for two or more people, and 64 percent hold down jobs while providing such care. Caregivers share not only their time, but also their resources, spending some $2 billion a month of their own assets for groceries, medicine, and other aid.

There is another side to caregiving in America today. Many older relatives now take care of children whose parents, for whatever reason, are no longer able to provide that care themselves. These generous men and women, who in many cases have already raised families and are looking forward to pursuing their own interests in retirement, embrace the challenges of parenting a new generation of young people. They give millions of our most vulnerable youth the opportunity to grow up in stable, loving homes.

These everyday heroes among us deserve our lasting gratitude and respect. This week, as we honor the many contributions that family caregivers make to the quality of our national life, let us resolve to work through our community, religious, social, business, and other organizations to offer programs and