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you, the Star-Spangled Banner will be preserved for the ages. In ways large and small, as we look to the millennium we are keeping alive what George Washington called ''the sacred fire of liberty.''

Six years ago, I came to office in a time of doubt for America, with our economy troubled, our deficit high, our people divided. Some even wondered whether our best days were behind us. But across this country, in a thousand neighborhoods, I have seen, even amidst the pain and uncertainty of recession, the real heart and character of America. I knew then that we Americans could renew this country.

Tonight, as I deliver the last State of the Union Address of the 20th century, no one anywhere in the world can doubt the enduring resolve and boundless capacity of the American people to work toward that ''more perfect Union'' of our Founders' dream.

We're now at the end of a century when generation after generation of Americans answered the call to greatness, overcoming depression, lifting up the disposed, bringing down barriers to racial prejudice, building the largest middle class in history, winning two World Wars and the long twilight struggle of the cold war. We must all be profoundly grateful for the magnificent achievement of our forebears in this century. Yet, perhaps, in the daily press of events, in the clash of controversy, we don't see our own time for what it truly is, a new dawn for America.

A hundred years from tonight, another American President will stand in this place and report on the state of the Union. He—or she—he or she will look back on a 21st century shaped in so many ways by the decisions we make here and now. So let it be said of us then that we were thinking not only of our time but of their time, that we reached as high as our ideals, that we put aside our divisions and found a new hour of healing and hopefulness, that we joined together to serve and strengthen the land we love.

My fellow Americans, this is our moment. Let us lift our eyes as one Nation, and from the mountaintop of this American Century, look ahead to the next one, asking God's blessing on our endeavors and on our beloved country.

Thank you, and good evening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:10 p.m. in the House Chamber of the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Jean Hastert, wife of Speaker J. Dennis Hastert; Evelyn M. (Lyn) Gibson, widow of Detective John M. Gibson, and Wenling Chestnut, widow of Officer Jacob J. Chestnut, whose husbands died as a result of gunshot wounds suffered during an attack at the Capitol on July 24, 1998; terrorist Usama bin Ladin, who allegedly sponsored bombing attacks on the U.S. Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania on August 7, 1998; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Capt. Jeffrey B. Taliaferro, USAF, Chief, Wing Weapons, 28th Operations Support Squadron, 28th Bomb Wing; and Sammy Sosa, National League Most Valuable Player in 1998.

Remarks to an Overflow Crowd in Buffalo, New York

January 20, 1999

Thank you. Wow! Good morning. Good afternoon. [*Laughter*] I want to say, first of all, how very grateful that Hillary and Al and Tipper and I are that you all came out to see us today to make us feel so welcome. I want to thank your mayor, your county executive, Mrs. Eve, and especially Congressman John LaFalce for being here with us. He is a great man.

You know, we don't want to put you through the speeches and everything because you have the monitors here, and you're going to see them. But let me say that Buffalo has been wonderful to me and to Hillary, to Al and Tipper. We are so grateful. We remember when we came here together in 1992. And I'm always glad to come back, even in the snow. Yes, that's right. This guy says, ''This ain't nothing.'' [*Laughter*] And we had some buffalo wings in the holding room.

And we just want you to know how much we appreciate you, how much we appreciate the support that you've given us in two elections, how grateful we are for the chance to serve, and how committed we are to the agenda that I outlined last night. Let me also—we want you to be committed to it, too.

We want to get out here and shake a few hands, and we don't want to keep those other 20,000 people waiting. And you'll see the movie. And thank you very much. We're glad to be here.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12 noon in the Harbor Room. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Anthony M. Masiello; Erie County Executive Dennis T. Gorski; and Constance B. Eve, chairperson and founder, Women for Human Rights and Dignity, Inc. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Remarks to the Western New York Community in Buffalo

January 20, 1999

Thank you very much. I think you got so excited that you melted the snow for a mile around this arena. Let me ask you, have you ever seen the Vice President so fired up in your life? [*Laughter*] I want you to know that just before we came in here, we went off into a little room, and he had a quick hit of buffalo wings and Flutie Flakes; that's what he did.

I want to thank the Mayor and Dennis Gorski and Connie Eve and the whole Eve family. Eric worked for us for a long time, then decided to go out and get rich. We forgive him. I want to thank all the community heroes who are here. I want to thank Reverend Smith for that magnificent invocation, which I will remember all my life. I want to thank our wonderful friend, Congressman John LaFalce, one of the most outstanding Members in the House of Representatives, a truly wonderful human being. And I am delighted that Pat and his son, Martin, are here with us today.

I think you could see that Tipper and Al and Hillary and I, we're sort of like a big family. We like going places together. And I love it, because now I don't have to talk about 90 percent of the issues anymore because they already covered them, which was really good. We work together. And we have tried to model what we want America to do.

You know, no one has ever spoken as passionately and consistently for the cause of mental health as well as Tipper Gore has done. I think it's fair to say that at least no one since Eleanor Roosevelt has done as much with the Office of First Lady as Hillary has done. And I am grateful for that. And I am quite confident that in the entire history of the United States no Vice President has had remotely the responsibility and had the positive impact on the people of the United States that Al Gore has had. And I am very grateful to him.

Now, we are here today in this magnificent arena—and I've just got to say one thing about that Vice President. He compared me to the goalie for the Sabres. I was flattered, but I thought—you know, he kept talking about how I was swatting away those flying hockey pucks in Washington. I was flattered, but I thought, I just wish one day they would give me a mask and a few pads when I dodge that stuff.

Anyway, we're delighted to be here. We're here because we are grateful to New York, to western New York, to Erie County, to Buffalo, grateful for the support we received in 1992, grateful for the support we received in 1996, and even more grateful for the fact that this community every day is trying to live and work in the way we want America to live and work in the 21st century.

I know that many of you heard my speech last night. I know that you have listened to the previous speakers. I only want to speak to you about one of the issues, and that is how we're going to meet the challenge of the aging of America, because that affects all of us, not just the old but the very young as well. And I want everyone to understand exactly what I was trying to say last night and why.

But let me make the bigger point. It was, as has already been said, 6 years ago today at noon that I took the oath of office as President. And it seems impossible to me that those 6 years have flown by. They have been, to put it mildly, quite eventful. But I am very, very grateful that we had the chance to serve, grateful for your support, grateful the state of the Union is strong.

But I want you to focus on this: You know as well as I do the world is changing rapidly. You know this community and its economic base and the nature of its society bears not