

it's passing hate crimes legislation, employment nondiscrimination legislation, raising the minimum wage, or doing the other kinds of things that show that we really believe that we're all in this together, and we all do better when we help each other.

The overwhelming fact of modern life is not the growth of the Internet, the growth of the global economy, the explosion of biotechnology, but what they all mean in a larger sense, which is that every single day, in breathtaking ways, many of which we cannot see, we are growing more interdependent. We need each other more. So we have to find a way not just to tolerate one another but to celebrate our diversity and take comfort from the fact that what we have in common is even more fundamental and more important. Yes, compassion is important, but enlightened self-interest is even better. We need to know we actually need each other, and we need to do the right thing by each other.

So for me it's a great comfort to know that the Vice President and Joe Lieberman are running, that Hillary is running, and that we're moving in the right direction. I just want to ask you this. Spend every day you can between now and November reminding people that it matters and that there are differences. And if you do that, we'll all win, and America will be fine.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:20 p.m. at the Sony Picture Studios. In his remarks, he referred to Tim Wuliger, president, American Israel Public Affairs Committee; Joel D. Tauber, chairman, executive committee, United Jewish Communities; Todd Morgan, chairman, Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles; William B. Dockser, national chairman, National Jewish Democratic Council; Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel, and his wife, Nava; Leah Rabin, widow of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel; and Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman and his wife, Hadassah.

Remarks at a National Democratic Institute Luncheon in Los Angeles

August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, you have just heard a stirring

example of Clinton's first law of politics: Whenever possible, be introduced by someone you have appointed to high office. [Laughter]

Secretary Albright, thank you for your great work as Secretary of State and, before that, as our Ambassador to the United Nations and for your constant friendship and support to Hillary and me.

Gary, thank you for hosting this today and for what you said and for all the good work you do. Mr. Mayor, thank you for putting on a great convention and sitting through all these speeches by Democrats. [Laughter] There's been a lot of talk in this convention about religion because Joe Lieberman is our first Jewish candidate on the national ticket. But I want you to know I am still a confirmed Baptist. We believe in deathbed conversions, and I'd like to have you switch at any time—[laughter]—we love you very much. You too—[inaudible]. [Laughter]

I want to thank Paul Kirk, my friend of many years, and Ken Wollack and all the members of the NDI. Thank you, Senator Feinstein. And I'd like to thank all the members of the diplomatic community who are here, parliamentarians from around the world, and the people who have been or are now part of our diplomatic efforts: Vice President Mondale, who did such a brilliant job in Japan; and Reverend Jackson, our Special Envoy to Africa; Ambassador Blinken; Ambassador Shearer; there are a lot of others here. But I thank them all for what they have done.

I'd also like to say how much I appreciate the work of the NDI, how much I've tried to support it, how grateful I am that we have a nominee for President and Vice President in our party who will strongly support you for a long time in the future.

Way back in the distant past of the last millennium, when I was first elected President, people were asking whether the end of the cold war would lead to a new birth of freedom or whether incipient democracies would be overcome by forces of hardship and hate. There were then perhaps as many reasons for fear as for hope.

In Russia, people faced breadlines and hyperinflation. Many were resigned to an inevitable backlash that would lead back to

communism or ultranationalism. Southeast Europe was full of backward economies and battered people willing to be manipulated to wage war on their neighbors. In parts of Asia, leaders claimed democracy was an alien, Western imposition, that there was really no such thing as a universal conception of human rights or free people governing themselves. Never mind, of course, that people from Burma to the Philippines to Thailand were already struggling and sacrificing for freedom. Some still believed democracy only works for people of a certain culture or a certain stage of development.

Well, since then we've learned a lot about human nature and humanity's desire for freedom and self-government. Looking back, I think we'll all say that the 1990's were democracy's decade. With our support and with your support, democracies flourished in central Europe. Despite all the difficulties, it has endured in Russia, persevered in Latin America, and truly triumphed in Mexico. In 1999, thanks to the democratic transformations in Nigeria and Indonesia, more people won the right to choose their leaders than in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall fell.

In the Balkans, the cause of pluralism faced perhaps its greatest obstacles. Prime Minister Dodik and the head of Bosnia's leading multiethnic party, Zlatko Lagumdžija, are both here with us today. We welcome them, and we urge them to keep up their good work for freedom. Their success has proven that Bosnians of every ethnic background are turning to leaders delivering prosperity and hope, instead of exploiting human differences.

Last week I met with the new President and the new Prime Minister of Croatia. They're taking their country on a breathtaking journey to democracy. Their success says to all the people of the Balkans, where popular will overcomes authoritarianism and hate, the road to Europe is open.

With Kosovo holding the first free elections in its history later this year, the only vestige of the Balkans' undemocratic past is Serbia. We are encouraging the democratic opposition there to mount as unified a challenge to Mr. Milosevic as possible, so that even if he steals the coming Presidential election—he undoubtedly will try to do that—

he will lose what legitimacy he has left with the Serbian people. But whatever may happen, he has utterly failed to build a greater Serbia based on ethnic cleansing and exclusion. All around him, instead, we are seeing the emergence of a greater Europe based on tolerance and democracy.

We also learned some lessons in democracy's decade of the nineties. It used to be said that unelected leaders were easier for America to deal with because they were free to make hard and unpopular choices. Well, it turns out to be one of those big ideas that just isn't true.

Consider the case of Prime Minister Barak. In pursuit of peace he has been able to make some of the hardest and most courageous decisions I, personally, have ever seen because he knows he draws his mandate from the people. Consider Kim Dae-jung of South Korea. He overcame his country's economic crisis because he had the legitimacy to push through wrenching change, and he made a brave, brave step in reaching out to North Korea.

Ironically, unelected leaders tend to be more fearful of political opposition than elected leaders. That's a lesson I've had to learn the hard way. The first 3 or 4 years, when I heard that, I thought they were just making excuses for something they didn't want to do. And finally I realized that they really were afraid to take unpopular decisions, even if they might be able to sell a vast majority of their people on it because it was the right thing to do. Maybe it's because when dictators lose power, they lose everything; Democrats live to fight another day—or build Presidential libraries. [*Laughter*]

Another lesson that we learned is that democracy's success is in our interest. Our support can be critical to that success. Next week I'll be going to Nigeria, to a new, democratic Nigeria. [*Applause*] Thank you. A Nigeria that's a leader for peace and economic development in the struggle against AIDS. If democracy takes root in Nigeria, it will lift up an entire region. So we'll do our part to help with trade and investment, support for Nigeria's peacekeepers in its efforts to ensure that the vast wealth it has accumulated and

squandered in the past finally benefits its people.

Now, a day after I come back from Nigeria, I'll be going to Colombia. There, people are struggling to keep one of the oldest democracies in our hemisphere alive in the face of terrible violence, fueled by a drug trade that threatens their children and ours. We have a national interest in supporting them, and now with strong bipartisan support from Congress—for which I am profoundly grateful—we have made a commitment to do just that.

We care about democracy in countries like Nigeria and Colombia because the success of freedom is contagious, and so is freedom's failure. One reason we can tip the balance is because of the work NDI does. Just about every time I travel to an emerging democracy, whether it's Nigeria or Ghana or Bosnia or Russia or Nicaragua or Bangladesh, I find that NDI is there before I land and, most important, after I leave. Thanks to you, America not only has a Peace Corps; it has a democracy corps. If the 1990's were democracy's decade, you had a lot to do with it. And with your help, we can now start building democracy's century, a century that we can't stop working on until the most powerful, liberating, revolutionary idea in all human history touches every human community.

Let me just say in closing something that's not in my notes, and I'll probably get in trouble with all my staff for saying—[laughter]—but we have people here who devote your life to thinking about these things. I am gratified that in this very turbulent period, that we have been able to build in the United States a bipartisan commitment to democracy that has been manifested, for example, in Plan Colombia, manifested in the passage of PNTR with China, manifested in the passage of the African/Caribbean Basin bill, manifested in the common commitment both candidates for President have consistently made this year, to an expansive, embracive, farsighted trade policy.

But there are still challenges out there that, if we want to maximize our impact on, we have to internalize debate and resolve as a people. Because we have seen over and over and over again, it is very difficult for

America to do anything big, good, profoundly long-lasting unless we are agreed. And let me just give a few examples.

I hope the commitment we have made to Africa will endure and be embraced in a bipartisan way. I hope those people who believe in the Congress and in the country that I honestly made a mistake—and they honestly believe this—those who believe that I made a mistake in committing our military resources and our diplomatic muscle, first in Bosnia, and then in Kosovo, will rethink, because I think if the cause of freedom had been lost in those countries and the principle of ethnic cleansing had been upheld, we would be paying for it along with free people across the world for a very, very long time.

I hope the next administration will continue the commitment that we have begun to a new stage in our relationship with India and that we will continue to be involved in trying to resolve the tensions on the Indian subcontinent. If you think about the 200 or so ethnic groups that we have in the State of California and in the United States of America, Indians and Pakistanis both rank in the top five in per capita education and per capita income. There is no telling what could happen for the good on the Indian subcontinent in the 21st century that will open new vistas of possibilities, not only for people who are still desperately poor in those nations and in Bangladesh but, indeed, throughout the world, if they can just find a way to resolve their deep differences. So I hope that will happen, and I hope all of you will stay with us.

The other day when we said—our administration—that we felt that the worldwide spread of AIDS had become a national security threat to the United States, some people ridiculed that. But I hope we will have a broader notion of our national security and a broader sense of what tools we need to bring to bear against them.

I have done what I could in every year to support a strong defense budget, to support improvements in the quality of life for our men and women and families in the United States military, to modernize our weapon systems. But I think the work that we're trying to do this year in the Congress to fight AIDS, malaria, and TB is important.

I think we should be doing much more than we are to help countries deal with the breathtaking breakdown in public health systems in a lot of the former Communist world and in a lot of the developing countries, things which really could just eat the heart out of democracy over the next 10 or 15 years unless people can at least find a way to keep babies alive and to stop children from dying prematurely.

I hope we will be very creative in the ways we fight terrorism and chemical and biological warfare, cyberterrorism, and what I think will be the most likely threat to our security over the next 20 years, which is that the miniaturization process that we see, inevitably, part of technology that now allows you to have a little computer in your palm with a screen and a keyboard that people with big hands like me can't use anymore—will also—you will see this with weapons. And it is far more likely that we will deal with those kinds of weapons in the hands of terrorists, with enormous destructive potential, even than we will have to fend off hostile missiles coming in. And I hope we'll have a bipartisan consensus about how to imagine the new most likely security threats of the 21st century.

I hope there will be even stronger support for relieving the debt of the poorest countries in the world. I hope there will be even stronger support for the initiative that Senator McGovern and Senator Dole brought to Secretary Glickman, who is here. We have—we really believe that for a relatively modest amount of money, a few billion dollars, we could guarantee one nutritious meal to every poor child in the entire world every day at school. If we did it, it would dramatically increase school enrollment, especially among young girls, and do a lot to reverse the tide of trafficking in young women and of the abuse of the rights of young women. And it would change the whole fabric of society all across the world in a way that would be very good for democracy. We need a real consensus on those kinds of things that there has not been nearly enough talk about. And we need to look at all these things in terms of our commitment to democracy, our commitment to national security.

We have to have—and as I said, I don't think I have to take a back seat to anybody

in my commitment to a strong national defense, but our national security and our advancement of democracy depends on far more than our military power. And as wealthy as we are now, as successful as we are, for a relatively modest increase in terms of the surpluses we're projecting, in the investments we make around the world in people problems and in building institutions and in giving people the capacity to fight off the demons of the 21st century, we will get a huge return in the advance of freedom.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:20 p.m. at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. In his remarks, he referred to Gary Winnick, founder and chairman, Global Crossing, Ltd.; Mayor Richard Riordan of Los Angeles; Paul G. Kirk, Jr., chairman of the board, and Ken Wollack, president, National Democratic Institute; former Vice President and former U.S. Ambassador to Japan Walter F. Mondale; Rev. Jesse Jackson, Special Envoy to Africa; Alan J. Blinks, former U.S. Ambassador to Belgium; Derek Shearer, former U.S. Ambassador to Finland; Prime Minister Milorad Dodik of the Serb Republic (Republika Srpska) of Bosnia-Herzegovina; Zlatko Lagumdžija, president, Social Democratic Party in Bosnia; President Stjepan Mesic and Prime Minister Ivica Racan of Croatia; President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro); Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel; President Kim Dae-jung of South Korea; Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush; and former Senators George McGovern and Bob Dole.

Remarks at an American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association Luncheon in Beverly Hills, California

August 14, 2000

Thank you very much. Well, first I want to thank Sandy and Bob and all of you with the AFT and the NEA for all these years of support and friendship and for what you have done in our schools over the last 8 years. It seems like only yesterday that I started this odyssey to become President in late 1991, in no small measure because I wanted