

stop giving Medicare to anybody under 67 years old, to raise 3 times as much as it takes to bail out the Trust Fund has nothing to do with saving Medicare; it has everything to do with funding their budget priorities.

My priorities say, we owe it to the elderly not to do that to them. Most of them have very limited incomes. The average senior lady in the country—a woman over 65 living alone is living on less than \$9,000 a year average. In many States, 75 percent of those folks are living on less than \$7,500 a year. They cannot afford to have their premiums and deductibles doubled. It is wrong. It is not necessary. And we should not do it.

And finally, let me say just a word about the Medicaid program. It's not popular to stand up for poor children anymore, but the Medicaid program, two-thirds of that money in Medicaid goes to the elderly and the disabled Americans of this country. It pays for their nursing home care, for in-home care to avoid the costs of going to nursing homes, and for hospital care. About a third of the money goes to the poor children of America to pay for their medical bills. And a lot of that money goes to hospitals in big cities and isolated rural areas.

And if you take a third of that money away over the next 7 years, 3 times as much as I have recommended in my balanced budget plan, there is no way you will not do grievous harm to the elderly, the disabled, and the poorest, most vulnerable children in America. And to all those who say, "Well, I'd rather have mine now; I don't care about them," just remember, those children will be—will be—the adults of the future. And we—those in my age group—will be depending on those kids to take care of us when we are retired. We are a family. We better act like a family. We cannot afford to do these things that violate our family values.

Lastly, let me say how very proud I am that the Hispanic Caucus mirrors these values every day in their work. And let me encourage all of you who may be discouraged by what I have just said, and I left a lot of things out. They also have proposed, for example, that if an elderly couple has one of—the husband or the wife needs to go into the nursing home, they've proposed letting States require the one that's not in a nursing

home to have to sell their house, their car, and clean out their bank accounts before the one who's in the nursing home can get any kind of help. I don't think that's right, either.

My idea of the America of the 21st century is a high-opportunity country where everybody has a chance to live up to the fullest of their ability. I do not want my child to get ahead by driving elderly people into poverty. That is not my idea of family values. That is not the right thing to do.

Now, I want to ask all of you, without regard to your political party or where you live or what your income is, in these next few weeks to urge the Congress to live by the values of Hispanic America, to decide by the values of Hispanic America, to lift up work and family, to work for more freedom and responsibility, to remember our obligations to our children and to our parents, and to remember, the future belongs to the United States if we can just remember that we're a community, not a crowd.

Look at America and imagine what the world's going to be like in 20 or 25 years, the global economy, people moving around, technology, ideas, information moving around. There is no country in this world as well-suited to seize the 21st century as the United States, if we will just remember how we got to where we are: by being a community, not a crowd.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to NBC News correspondent Giselle Fernandez.

**Executive Order 12973—
Amendment to Executive Order No.
12901**

September 27, 1995

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 141 and 301–310 of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2171, 2411–2420), and to ensure that the trade policies of the United States advance, to the greatest extent possible, the export of the products and services of the United States and that trade policy

resources are used efficiently, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order No. 12901 of March 3, 1994, is amended in section 1 by inserting in the first sentence "1996" in place of "1994" and "1997" in place of "1995."

William J. Clinton

The White House,
September 27, 1995.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:26 a.m., September 29, 1995]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 28, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on October 2.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chairman Yasser Arafat of the Palestine Liberation Organization

September 28, 1995

Middle East Peace Process

Q. Mr. Chairman, do you think this will lead to a Palestinian state, this signing today?

Chairman Arafat. The most important thing, it will lead to a permanent and just solution and peace in the Middle East.

Q. But will it lead to a Palestinian state? You want a Palestinian state, you want a capital in Jerusalem. Is this a step in that direction?

Chairman Arafat. And we have expressed our—from the first day, we were talking with the Israelis, even during the Sadat period, when he was making his invitation with Mr. Begin.

Q. Mr. Chairman, are you worried about another outbreak of terrorism in the wake of this agreement, as there have been in the past? Are you worried about another outbreak of terrorism?

Chairman Arafat. Look, there are many enemies against this, the peace process. And for this, we call it "the peace of the braves." And we are in need of all our efforts and this extensive help to overcome all of these obstacles, including the terror and the oppositions on the two sides.

Q. Have you solved all the problems with the Israelis, particularly the date for a military pullout from—

Chairman Arafat. Yes, the last one has been informed to us from Mr. Dennis on the phone. And there is—there was a contact with Abu Alaa when we were in the meeting with His Excellency, Prime Minister Major, which were the most important points which had been changed—

Q. But all the issues have been solved?

Chairman Arafat. Yes.

Q. —including the—[inaudible]—

Chairman Arafat. There is now—there is now a committee to finalize the whole situation.

Q. Mr. President, what is the U.S. policy on a Palestinian state? What is the U.S. policy, currently? What is the U.S. policy?

Q. President Clinton, could you maybe tell us how you defined the U.S. role in today's events and what transpired here?

The President. Well, we've continued to work to try to help the parties make peace and to help them reach their own agreements. And that is what they have done in good faith and with very difficult negotiations. And now that they have taken this other important step, as they take successive steps, we will try to make sure each step succeeds, that we build on it and we keep working until we have a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

And I am very proud of the work that the Secretary of State has done, that Dennis Ross has done, and that the others involved in our team have done. But the credit here, the ultimate credit, belongs to the parties, to the Palestinians and the Israelis, who have been working through this in a very difficult way. We have said that our job was to support the peace process and to help make sure it succeeds once an agreement is reached. This is another important agreement. We'll do our best to make sure it succeeds.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Q. Mr. President, do you think after this signing ceremony that you will be going to the Middle East and visit these peripheries, the Palestinian periphery, the Israeli periphery, the Egyptian periphery, and the Jordanian periphery, as well as Syria and Lebanon?