

Draft 6/13/97 noon draft 1c

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO**

**June 14, 1997**

[Acknowledgments]

Thank you for inviting me here, and thank you for offering our nation a shining example of diversity and strength. Here, you have overcome old boundaries of race and national origin. You have blazed new paths in science and technology, and explored the new horizons of the Pacific Rim and Latin America. All that and more mark UCSD as one of the cutting edge universities of the nation -- a university for the 21st Century.

Today, we celebrate your achievements at a golden moment for our nation. The Cold War is over, with freedom ascendant around the globe. Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and the strongest in the world. Our culture, our science, our technology are on the cutting edge. Social problems -- from crime to poverty -- which for so long seemed destined to deepen, are now bending to our efforts.

Not so long ago, some were predicting our decline. Instead, we have entered a new era of American leadership, bringing us to the eve of a second American century.

Admittedly, we face serious threats to our forward march. At home, we must find ways to build our economic strength; we must prepare for the moment when your parents generation

retires; we must harness the powerful forces of science and technology so they serve the public good. Abroad, we must build new institutions and new alliances for peace, and do endless battle against terrorism and drugs to the spread of new and deadly weapons of mass destruction.

But the greatest challenge we face is also our greatest opportunity: Can we become the world's first truly multiracial, multiethnic democracy? Will we be one America in the 21st Century?

Within the next three years, right here in California, no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of the state's population. Already 5 of our largest school districts draw students from over 100 different racial and ethnic groups. At this campus, 12 Nobel Prize winners have taught or studied -- from 9 different countries. And half a century from now, when your own grandchildren are in college, it is entirely conceivable that a majority of the population will be Latino, African American, Asian American, Native American and other people of color.

We know what we will look like -- but what will we be like? Can we be one America, respecting, even celebrating our differences, but embracing even more strongly what we have in common?

Our hearts long to answer yes, but our history reminds us that it will be hard. The ideals that bind us together are as old as our nation, but the forces that would pull us apart are not new

-- and the striving to surmount them is the story of America.

We were born with a Declaration of Independence which asserted that it is self evident that we are all created equal -- and a Constitution that enshrined slavery.

We fought a bloody civil war to abolish that slavery and preserve the union -- but we remained a house unequal and divided for another century.

We advanced across this continent in the name of freedom -- yet in so doing we pushed the Native Americans off their land and into reservations, often crushing their culture and destroying their livelihoods.

Our Statue of Liberty welcomes poor, tired, huddled masses of immigrants to our shores -- but each new wave of them has felt the sting of discrimination.

In World War II, Japanese Americans fought valiantly for freedom in Europe, taking great casualties -- while their kinfolks back in America were herded into internment camps.

In our own time, no one doubts we are closer to our ideal of one America than in the past, but no close observer denies that there is still discrimination, stereotyping and misunderstanding in America that keeps our house divided.

The complexity of these issues has multiplied with our growing diversity. To be sure, there is old, unfinished business between black and white Americans. We see it in acts of discrimination, in the assault on affirmative action without any effective alternative, in grossly disparate views held blacks and whites about the fairness of the criminal justice system.

But the classic American dilemma in many ways has become a new dilemma. We see tension between blacks and Hispanic customers and their Korean or Arab grocers. We see a resurgent anti-Semitism, even against college students. We see stereotyping of immigrants, even those who through hard work and family spirit, have succeeded in their new land.

In spite of all these difficulties, our society is more integrated than ever. More of us share neighborhoods, work, school, social and community activities, religious life, even love and marriage across racial lines, than ever before. More of us enjoy each other's distinctive cultures -- and learn from each others varied experiences -- than ever before.

And that is more important than ever before, for our nation of many nations now competes in a global economy. America has just one 20th of the world's population, but one fifth of its wealth. The only way for our economy to continue to grow is to export -- to sell the fruits of our enterprise and creativity to the 95% of the world's consumers who live beyond our borders. Americans, drawn from every country and every culture on earth, are uniquely

positioned to link our land with the rest of the globe through currents of commerce and communications.

This new era can be a time when America's brilliant diversity illuminates the entire globe. We can prove to the people of the world, torn by modern rivalries and ancient ethnic hatreds, that freedom and democracy are the best organizing principles for a multiracial society.

So even though our past was poisoned by racial division -- and our present remains infected with it -- and the rest of the world, from Bosnia to Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Africa, shows how deep the destructive impulse of racial division is -- there is still more cause for hope than fear. If we face the facts; if we speak with and listen to each other respectfully and honestly, and if we work together in concrete ways to build our One America, we can go beyond the darker side of our own history. We can lead the world away from its racial hatred. We can build one America.

### **The problems we face**

We have to start by facing the facts and facing up to our problems.

Three decades ago, when I was the age of those graduating today, all America saw the brutality of police dogs set on civil rights marchers in Birmingham, and they saw the dignity of

Cesar Chavez fighting for workers rights in the farm fields, and they saw the streets of cities in flames during urban unrest. Most Americans agreed then on what the problems were. But, while we know we still have problems, we're not sure what they are or why we still have them.

*[We will insert more from Don't Believe the Hype, as we look through it.]*

It is a myth that people in the inner cities don't want to work. When work has come, the response has been overwhelming. When a new hotel opened in Chicago 4 years ago, 3 thousand people lined up in bitter cold, some of them waiting overnight to be the first to apply for work. In Harlem, New York, a study found that there were 14 applicants for every fast-food job.

It is a myth that most Hispanics are immigrants. They are not. Two-thirds of Hispanics in our nation are U.S.-born, and many have been here for generations.

It is a myth that new immigrants don't want to learn English. They do. In fact, the demand for English as a second language classes is so great, that keeping up is a challenge. In Los Angeles, classes are offered round the clock; in New York, there is a X month waiting list; in xxxx. And most Latino immigrants see bilingual education as a way not to reinforce Spanish, but to learn English.

We need to get past the myths if we are going to understand each other, and we need to

understand each other to work together. For all the progress we have made, whites and blacks, Anglos and Latinos, Asians and others -- we still live in different worlds, and we see the same realities in very different ways.

[Today, one third of blacks surveyed, and more than half of whites surveyed, believe that blacks make up as much as half of our population, instead of the 12% that is reality.] [*we don't think this proves much*]

Today, most whites believe that blacks have achieved equality with whites on the issues that set off the civil rights movement. But the numbers tell a different story:

Every American should know -- but few do -- that whites earn 60 percent more than African-Americans.

Every American should know -- but few do -- that whites are xx times more likely to have access to health care for their families.

Every American should know -- but few do -- that whites are twice as likely to graduate from college than African-Americans.

Every American should know -- but few do -- that the problems of black and white are

not the problems of three decades ago. The black middle class has grown fourfold since Dr. King's murder. But the rate of poverty among black children is the same -- cut off from the work and values that shape our society, falling prey to the many pathologies of poverty.

How we solve the glaring disparities in our society, how we bring every person to the table of opportunity, and how we learn to better live together will ultimately determine how we do as a nation in the generations to come and whether we can truly come together as One America.

#### **What we must do**

Our first imperative must be to expand opportunity. Our basic bargain is unchanged, and has been the source of our strength for two centuries. By offering responsibility to all Americans and demanding responsibility from all Americans, we can forge the ties of a strong community of common values.

For four and a half years, we have worked to create an economy that offers all our people the chance to live out their dreams. A strong and growing economy is the best antidote to envy and despair and racism. Today, our prosperity is unrivaled in the world, and it is America that stands ready to lead the new global economy of the 21st Century. Now we must redouble our efforts to bring that prosperity to those places, in our cities and in our rural areas, that prosperity

has not yet touched. We must press forward with our efforts to bring private capital, jobs and hope to the inner cities. [*more on urban policy?*]

And the most important thing we can do to expand opportunity – the passport to the future for all our people – and our most critical task as a nation is to give all our people the best education in the world. We are demanding that all our children meet high standards -- and we must give all our children the tools to meet those standards, through trained teachers and modern classrooms.

For you, the college education you have earned reflects the fulfilment of your parents dreams and your hard work. For America, an educated citizenry is the key to our strength. So we must open the doors of college wider than ever -- and we can never allow them to be slammed shut. A college education means stability, better jobs, a chance to join the middle class, another stakeholder in America.

America does not believe in guaranteeing equal outcomes, but we do believe in guaranteeing equal opportunity for all who will work for it -- and that means education. We cannot abandon any efforts to expand access to higher education. We cannot abandon affirmative action.

I know that many people in this state voted to abandon affirmative action last year, and

did so with no intention to hurt their fellow citizens. But it is a stunning and sobering fact that African-American and Latino enrollments at this university and all across California and Texas are plummeting, for the first time in decades. Call it what you will -- I call it resegregation. We cannot afford to turn back the clock. To this day, the South is still recovering from the self-inflicted wound of segregation. America cannot make that mistake again.

This past week we learned that our fourth grade students, the most diverse student body in the world, are among the leaders in the world in math. Diversity and excellence go hand in hand.

To all of America, I say, we must make sure that only qualified students are accepted. But if only qualified students are accepted, I also say: our universities will provide a stronger education -- a better preparation for the new world -- and a more enjoyable experience -- if its student body looks like the student body reflects our diversity as yours does here at UCSD. The purpose of affirmative action is not to help any one group or individual. It is to help America -- for we don't have a person to waste.

And to those who say that race and ethnicity should not be factors, that scores on standardized tests should be the sole measure of qualification, I say: We take into account whether someone is an athlete, a musician, or a child of an alumnus. And we know when given a chance, students who enter with the help of affirmative action do just as well as any other

student.

I want to be clear: We will continue to fight the rollback of affirmative action in higher education because it is wrong, it is hurtful to our progress and it divides our people.

Our second imperative must be to break down the walls of discrimination wherever they exist. Racism is wrong; discrimination is wrong; and moreover, it is illegal. Our civil rights agencies are among the most critical law enforcement agencies in the government -- and we must give them the resources they need to end the crushing backlog of cases and get the job done. It's time for Congress to put our money where our ideals are. [*housing discrimination?*]

And our third imperative is in many ways the most difficult of all: we must begin a great national conversation on the issues of race and our diversity.

We must recognize that we cannot come to solutions or even truly identify our problems unless we are willing to be honest with each other. It's time to let down our guards, and to be honest with people different from ourselves. We have talked at each other and about each other. It is high time we begin talking with each other.

Over the coming year, I want to lead the American people in a great and unprecedented conversation about race. I have asked one of America's greatest scholars, Dr. John Hope

Franklin to chair an advisory panel of seven distinguished Americans. He will be joined by former Governors Tom Kean and William Winter, Linda Chavez-Thompson, Suzan Johnson, Angela Oh, and Robert Thomas -- distinguished citizens, leaders in their community, who will work with me in a searching examination of the truth about the changing face of America.

We will examine the stereotypes and the facts -- the myths and the reality -- that hold us apart. We do this because we cannot move forward together, and act together, if we do not agree together on what action is needed.

We will ask Americans to talk to one another everyday, at home, in their communities, in school, at work -- and help us develop plans of action. I will join this conversation with Americans across our nation at town meetings over the next year.

The town meetings I will hold are just the start. I call on Americans of all colors to begin a "table fellowship" within their communities, to break bread together and begin to know each other. And I want every American to see this as an opportunity to learn about each other by doing with each other. Tutors are needed in many communities to teach reading and other skills; that kind of interaction pays dividends in many ways. Churches, mosques, synagogues could consider exchanging congregations for a day. And the best chance for dialogue is among the young. I call on the nation's churches to link up the young people in the suburbs with those in the cities.

And in one year's time, I will report directly to the American people about what I have found and the what actions we must take to move our nation forward.

I know that honest dialogue and exchange will not be easy at first. We need to get past defensiveness, fear, political correctness and other barriers to honesty. That may open wounds, but that is how we begin the healing so that we may move past them.

What do we want from all this? If we achieve nothing more than talk, that will be too little. If we propose nothing but policy ideas that are merely small gestures along the way, that will be too little. But if 10 years from now, people can look back and see that America's commitment to our ideals was renewed and reinvigorated and that the post-Martin Luther King generation finally shouldered its fair burden in this historic struggle, then this effort will have been a success.

#### **Conclusion: why this matters**

This is a steep challenge. And many of you, coming of age in a time when the acid of doubt and cynicism seems to corrode our faith, might look at this mission and feel it is impossible. But what we are called upon to do is nothing less -- and nothing more -- than what America has done at every moment of challenge and change in its history.

For two centuries, wave upon wave of immigrants have come to our shores, to work, to raise their families, to build a new life, speaking many tongues, wearing the garb of many cultures, but all drawn here by those same ideals. We have never lived up to our founding vision, but we have never stopped trying -- and our people, even those who have suffered the most, have never lost faith in the American creed that unites us.

Today, we are all, in Martin Luther King's words, woven into "one garment of destiny." We rightly celebrate the multiplicity of America -- our marvelous blend of cultures, beliefs and races. Yet despite this diversity, or above it, we possess a common identity -- as Americans and as human beings.

We must recognize that the same ethnic and racial ties that can offer us a sanctuary of meaning and personal strength also contain the possibility of a frightening fragmentation. We must honor our diversity; we must cherish the uniqueness of each culture that feeds into the American experience; we must find new ways of talking to one another with respect instead of disdain. But we must reach with even greater fervor across those lines that divide us, to honor and strengthen those bonds of community and shared values that have always united us.

It was almost exactly one hundred [forty nine] years ago, Abraham Lincoln, quoting Scripture, warned, us that "a house divided against itself cannot stand."

For two centuries, on every continent, people struggling for freedom looked to see if our house would stand. Over the past century, we have taken our greatest strides when we knew the whole world was watching. Today, the people of Belfast and Bosnia, of Rwanda and the Middle East, are watching. With American ideas and ideals ascendent, with ancient racial and ethnic hatreds once again flaring around the globe, we must be a beacon, we must be that last great hope for mankind.

To those who say we will not ever transform the problem of prejudice into the promise of diversity, we can, for I have seen it happen. I grew up in the segregated South. I saw a different future when I worked by my grandfather's side in his small grocery store back home in Hope. My grandfather taught me that, yes I was different than the black children who came into his store, but I was no better. But I could see that on the black side of town, the streets were left unpaved. And segregation was legally sanctioned. There were "whites only" signs at public restrooms. Blacks and whites could not swim together, we could not drink at the same water fountain, we could not even sit in the same section at the movies. I was 11 years old when President Eisenhower ordered troops into Little Rock so that nine black children could integrate Central High. And when I was your age and in school in Washington, D.C., Martin Luther King was killed and the streets exploded in flames. My memory is forever tinged by the pain and anger I saw.

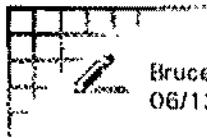
Since those days, we have made great progress. We have torn down the barriers in our

laws. Now we must tear down the barriers in our hearts. More than 30 years ago, at the high tide of the civil rights movement, the Kerner Commission said that we were becoming two Americas, one black, one white, separate and unequal. Today, we face a choice: will we become, not two, but many Americas, separate, unequal and isolated. Or will we draw strength from our great diversity to become the world's first truly multiethnic, multiracial, and multi religious democracy? That is the unfinished work of our times.

Much of the burden, and all of the benefits of this work lie with you, the young people here today and throughout our land. As Dr. King reminded us, there is real power in our dreams. So, dream large. Aim high. Teach your children well, and don't be afraid to challenge your elders on this issue.

We may not achieve as much as we want, but let us set our aim as high as we can. Let us resolve that in our day and our generation, we shall overcome. In the 21st century, we cannot be many Americas. We must be One America. We are One America.

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Bruce N. Reed  
06/13/97 01:53:07 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Michael Waldman/WHO/EOP  
cc:  
Subject: Comments on latest draft

For your sake, I wish this were over and done with. The next 24 hours will be as bad as the last 48.

I'm with you -- I liked the previous draft better. This draft is heavy on description and commentary, and a little light on both substance and emotion.

I don't have an easy answer, but a few thoughts:

1) the opportunity section has too little about opportunity and too much on affirmative action. I'm all for a vigorous (and concise) defense of mend it don't end it, but our whole opportunity agenda -- education, urban policy, jobs for welfare recips, etc. -- is a lot more compelling, future-oriented, and more likely to make a real difference.

2) the draft is really weak on responsibility. Memphis and Austin both made powerful appeals to whites and blacks alike to take responsibility for their own lives and actions, and not to use divisions as an excuse. That's been the heart of our approach to racial issues, and what set the President apart. It's also a way for him to soar and to challenge, as opposed to just saying, let's have a conversation. (Along these lines, there is almost nothing about crime in this draft, which is a mistake.) We have to say over and over, we have common responsibilities -- to use a favorite phrase, that is our duty to one another.

3) It's a big mistake to say "If we propose nothing but policy ideas that are merely small gestures along the way, that will be too little." That sentence manages to raise expectations and trash everything we've done for the last 2 years. Drop it.

4) It might help to play up the preparing America for the 21st century theme a bit more. You want to paint a vision of an America that leaves all these things behind, where every child has the chance to learn, where every American can live wherever they want, walk wherever they want, become whatever they want. You need to close with a story of multiracial hope that sets the new story line, not just King, Lincoln, and Central High that track the old story line.

**A**

## POLICY DIRECTION: PROBLEM / SOLUTION

## 1. Education

- Access to college
  - Pell grant, HOPE
  - Mend it, don't end it; criticize Hopwood, 209
  - Real problem -- what happens on the front end; every child can learn if given opportunity...
- Failing inner city schools
  - Standards as necessary first element
  - Then, giving students the tools to meet them: reading, teachers and technology, accountability for failing schools

## 2. Economic opportunity

- Individuals and communities outside the economic mainstream
  - CD banks, E-zones, brownfields, CRA
- Continuing employment discrimination (Texaco, Denny's); EEOC backlog
  - Stepping up enforcement efforts.
  - Calling on companies to institute policies ensuring equal employment opportunities

## 3. Housing

- Travesty of public housing
  - Safety (cops/anti-gang measures).
  - Vouchers and other tools of empowerment.
- Discrimination in housing -- perhaps our biggest discrimination problem -- segregated neighborhoods leading to segregated schools, businesses, etc.
  - Partly government (HUD/DOJ enforcement of Fair Housing laws)
  - But lots in our hearts (accepting each other as neighbors)

## 4. Welfare/jobs

- Continuing underclass, living apart from world of work
  - Emphasizing value of work
  - Creating more jobs, improving access to child care and transportation
  - Guaranteeing the minimum wage
  - Challenging business to do its share
- Cutting off immigrants from safety net
  - Restore benefits

## 5. Crime

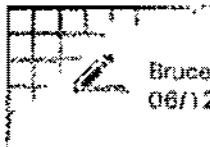
- Ravages of crime/systematic underprotection of minorities (segregation of safety)
  - More cops, fewer guns, anti-gang and -drug programs, prevention efforts
  - Continuation of Summit -- reaching out to at-risk kids

## 6. Ideals/models

-- There are places in society where race relations work -- where we at least come close to treating people of all races with equal respect and dignity and granting them equal opportunities.

-- Refer to military: policies ensure opportunity -- enable members of minority groups to make enormous contributions to society.

-- Every part of America should be like that -- every employer should adopt this model to get the most out of its workforce; every profession should construct itself along these lines; every citizen should learn from it about the duty we all owe one another.



Bruce N. Reed  
06/12/97 01:39:35 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Michael Waldman/WHO/EOP, James T. Edmonds/WHO/EOP, Carolyn Curial/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Race Speech

We have asked the DPC staff to generate a quick summary of policy accomplishments and initiatives that can be incorporated into the race speech. Much of what we've already done, and are doing, is about providing common answers to common problems in ways that will help minorities most of all.

I haven't seen a draft, and don't want to give you more advice than you need. My foremost concern is that this speech be consistent with what the President asked for in last week's meeting. As he said, we should make clear that this race initiative is a logical extension of everything he has done over the last four years. It should not come across as a new departure (since he has been talking and doing a great deal on this all along) or worse, an apology (for crime, welfare, balancing the budget, etc.). The press is already playing this in part as an effort to make up for those sins and make amends with the civil rights community. We should go out of our way to show them that everything we have done has been to expand opportunity (and yes, responsibility and community) to all Americans.

The President should say again, as he said so often in 1992, that the only way for us to come together as one America is to recognize our common obligations to ourselves and one another, to stop blaming our problems on someone else and start taking responsibility for our own actions and each other. The progress we have made, we have made together:

We recognized that crime was our common enemy, and should unite, not divide us. We put more police in neighborhoods that had been deprived of protection, and used community policing so we could attack this scourge together. Poor and minorities plagued by crime have benefited most from 5 straight years of decline.

We recognized that the failed welfare system was trapping millions in dependency, and that letting fathers get away without paying child support was tearing families apart. So we're making child support and responsibility a way of life, not an option, and we've moved 3 million people off welfare, and are giving everyone child care and health care and the chance to work. (We still have more to do etc. -- welfare-to-work and immigrant changes in budget bill)

We recognized that working people weren't in competition with each other, they were in competition with the rest of the world. So we expanded trade, cut the deficit, and created more jobs, cut taxes for working families with EITC, and we're about to give everybody the chance to go to college (HOPE) -- and we've seen the greatest drop in income inequality in 20+ years.

We have more to do, and we will do it. Expand education opportunity. Reduce crime. Mend not end affirmative action. Steer more jobs and capital to the inner city. We cannot rest until every child has the chance to rise as high as her God-given talents can take her.

But as we make all these changes from the outside in, each of us must work in our own lives to make changes from the inside out. The greatest progress we have made, and have yet to make, is in the human spirit. Taking responsibility for our own actions and for one another. This

nation can't come together with families that are coming apart. When 9-year-olds sell drugs and 12-year-olds plan funerals, we're not free. If we want a world where no child sees a difference between black, white, and brown, every parent needs to teach their child the difference between right and wrong.

Sorry to go on so long -- you've heard it all before, and you can write it better. But I worry that without some of this, we will undermine some of the real progress we have made on this issue. Let me know if I can do anything to help.

## POLICY DIRECTION: PROBLEM / SOLUTION

### 1. Education

- Inner city schools
  - Stds, reading, teachers and technology, acctability
  - Real problem -- back end/front end; every child can learn
- Access to college
  - Pell grant, HOPE
  - Mend it don't end it

### 2. Economic opportunity

- Outside the economic mainstream
  - CD banks, E-zones, capital, brownfields, CRA

### 3. Housing

- Public housing is a travesty
  - Safety (cops/gangs). Empowerment/Vouchers.
- Discrimination in housing -- segregated neighborhoods lead to segregated edue etc.
  - Part govt (HUD doing its utmost); but lots in our hearts (brother neighbor)

### 4. Welfare/jobs

- Ending the underclass, bring into the economic mainstream
  - Work/child care/more jobs/transportation/min wage/challenge to business
- Immigrant benefits

### 5. Crime

- Ravages of crime/Systematic underprotection of minorities (no segregation of safety)
  - More cops, less guns, after-school programs, gangs, drugs
  - Powell/Cisneros/at-risk kids/Summit

### 6. Racism

- There are places in society where this works, models of respect and progressive race relations. Military -- opportunities, policies, enormous contribution minorities make b/c of it. Every part of America should be like that -- every employer should follow it (Texaco, Dennys). Every citizen should learn from it -- duty we all owe one another. LAPD example.

*more resources  
DOS - HUD took force  
no tolerance for housing discrim.  
every one live where  
they want  
days of racial war  
barriers over  
twice as many cases*

1) State of the Cities Report (USCM)

- Cities doing better, challenges ahead: Jobs mismatch
- Future Agenda i.e. EZ Round II, CDFI, Brownfields. etc  
plus new announcements:

*Immig/race*  
*COPs next door*

1) Urban Homesteading -

- \* Officer next door - \$60m
  - \* empowerment vouchers (Section 8, Homeownership) - use it to buy a home, not just rent
  - \* FHA Premium reduction for cities - Im vouchers
    - extra .25 just for cities
    - FHA heading into cities
- Plug Brownfields + EZs, WTW, Immige.*

2) New HUD...

2) HUD Management Reform Plan

*institutionalized urban policy*

- \* Downsize 13-7
- \* Consolidate
- \* Enforcement/Empowerment

MEMORANDUMcc: EK, Joe  
+ return ASAP

To: President Clinton

From: Henry Cisneros

Subject: Saturday Speech in San Diego

There are huge expectations for your Saturday speech. The advance press coverage is more extensive than for any other Presidential speech I can recall. It ranges from intense hopefulness to dismissive skepticism that you will go beyond exhortation to substantive action. The speechwriters tell me the draft is short on substance now. With the build-up as big as it has been, you must offer some steps for action or unfortunately risk a very serious let-down.

The following are some ideas that can be fleshed out in the time remaining. They are intended to fall within budget constraints. If these ideas cannot be described at length in the speech, they can be part of the substantive actions you ask the advisory committee to review and recommend:

1. Direct that specific parts of the massive education spending you have championed be targeted to central city schools and depressed areas. Because large sums of the increased educational budget go to middle class families, it should be possible to target other programs to underserved schools and students, which statistically are heavily black and minority.
2. Request that General Colin Powell's follow-up to the Philadelphia volunteerism summit have as a component explicit actions to address the racial divide. America's Promise is designed to address at-risk children and youth and can be a magnet to coordinate corporate funding. General Powell is very articulate on the race dimensions of the risks to children and youth.
3. Launch a public-private project to raise scholarship money for blacks and other minorities for whom scholarships and college admissions at public universities are being limited by reversals on affirmative action in states such as California and Texas. A Presidential partnership with the United Negro College Fund and with the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund could create new private resources for college-bound minorities.
4. Direct the Department of Housing and Urban Development to strengthen its efforts to combat discrimination in housing transactions. The evidence is very strong that levels of discrimination against blacks remain very high. Patterns of segregated housing intensify every other kind of segregation in schools, at the work place, and in social settings.
5. Re-emphasize the welfare-to-work connection, including new training and employment efforts with the states. Failure to integrate into the workforce the millions coming off welfare will only deepen the isolation of the minority underclass.
6. Call on corporations to incorporate in their training programs for employees explicit and firm policies concerning any kind of racial discrimination. Incidents such as those at Avis, Wendy's and Texaco are destructive far beyond their immediate effects. Companies should adopt positive rationales and programs for racial fairness and not merely defensive, legalistic self-protections.

7. Call on national church leaders to create a national coalition of youth organizations to bring minority and white youth together. A few churches have made efforts at adult multi-racial dialogue, but the real hope for the future is in creating understanding among our young people. Linking the well-intentioned, mainstream resources of the nation's white churches with the central city centers of Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCA, YWCA, athletic leagues, and schools could create opportunities for one-on-one understanding.

#### Underlying Themes:

- Now that the economy is so strong it is time to make it work for everyone. You have worked to create durable and unprecedented prosperity for a purpose: so that the American dream can be brought within reach of all our citizens. Aside from their poverty, the common denominator that most characterizes those for whom the American dream is denied is race and ethnicity.
- This great unresolved issue of American history -- racial hatred -- is one of the very few things that can stop us in the next century. If we fail to address it, we will be more divided and squander our energies. If we master it, the next century will be an American Century of even greater accomplishments.
- Though skeptics will say there are insufficient new laws and new money in this initiative, the fact is that what is needed at this time is to execute the laws we have and to live out our creed through the resources we have. The challenge is to make our institutions work for racial fairness and our hearts value racial justice.

# FAX

Date 6/12/97

Number of pages including cover sheet 4

TO: Carolyn Wriell  
 Bruce Reed  
 Maria Echaveste  
 Phone Terry Edmonds  
 Fax Phone

FROM: SYLVIA ARCE-GARCIA  
 ASST. TO THE PRESIDENT  
 UNIVISION COMMUNICATIONS,  
 INC.

Phone 310/348-3600  
 Fax Phone 310/348-3645

CC:

REMARKS:  Urgent  For your review  Reply ASAP  Please Comment

Please Note: The attached is  
 a REVISED copy. Please disregard  
 the first copy.

Thank You.

Betty: I spoke to President Clinton by telephone on Thursday evening. He asked me to fax him through you the attached ideas for his Saturday speech in San Diego. Thank you for getting the memo to him. I look forward to seeing you soon!

TO: Elena Kagan  
FR: Mike Cohen  
RE: Education initiatives related to race and cities

I'm not sure this does the job, but here is an overview of what we have done in education that fits Bruce's description this morning of addressing universal problems that have disproportionate impact on minority groups.

### **I. Raising Academic Standards**

The heart of the President's education reform effort over the past 5 years is raising expectatinos and setting higher academic standards for all kids. This is especially important for disadvantaged and minority students, who have typically suffered from what Secretary Riley calls the "tyranny of low expectations" reflected in low standards, unchallenging expectations and low level tests which have particularly characterizes urban education. The Administration has worked to raise standards in a number of specific ways, including:

- In 1994, President Clinton signed legislation transforming Title I, the largest federal elementary and secondary program, to require that disadvantaged students be taught to the same challenging academic standards used for all other students in the state--ending separate, minimal expectations for students served under Title I. The new law also puts a stronger emphasis on involving parents in their children's education, a critical aspect of improving student academic achievement.
- In 1994, the President signed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, which supports state and local efforts to raise academic standards for all children.
- In 1996, the President won a record increase in Title I funding, assuring extra help in the basics and advanced subjects for an additional XXX disadvantaged students; and the budget agreement will help ensure strong funding of this key program for years to come.
- The President has called for increased funding to assist low-income high school students to take the challenging Advanced Placement exam in math and other core subjects.

### **II Getting Kids Off to a Good Start**

- Betwen FY93 and FY97, President Clinton increased funding for Head Start by 43%, from \$2.8 Billion in 93 to \$4.0 in FY97. The FY98 budget

proposed a \$324 million increase, and is on track to serve 1 million children in 2002. The program now serves 800,000 low income 3- and 4-year olds and their families.

### III. Reading

- The key to reaching high standards is mastering the basics, and the first basic is reading. Children who fall behind in learning to read in the early school years have a difficult time learning other subjects as they progress through school, and are more likely to drop out. The President has called for the entire nation to join a crusade to help insure that virtually every child in the U.S. can read by the end of 3rd grade.
- The budget agreement call for devoting 260 million in FY98 (and comparable amounts over five years) to a new literacy initiative consistent with the President's America Reads Initiative, which would mobilize one million skilled reading tutors to work with teachers and parents and help kids become independent readers.

### IV. Access to Technology

- Technology is vitally important to helping students reach high standards and get ready for the 21st Century. It's critical that technology not divide us into a nation of haves and have nots. While the biggest gap in access to computers is in the home, the President and the Vice President are deeply committed to working with our nation's schools to make sure that every child, no matter where they live or their economic circumstances, can log on to the Internet and take advantage of its rich possibilities for learning.
- Signed the Telecommunications Act and fought for the E-rate, which will allow Internet access discounts for schools and libraries. Discounts are on a sliding scale based on need, with poorest schools qualifying for a discount of up to 90%--nearly free.
- Working with private sector partners to connect every single school in each of the 15 Empowerment Zones to the Internet, so they can leap ahead in technology.
- To receive grants under our Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, states must spell out how they will target assistance to communities with the highest rates of poverty and the greatest need for educational technology.



Welfare/service items for race speech:

### Welfare

- Our efforts to reform the nation's welfare system have benefitted millions of people, many of whom are members of the minority community. Since January 1993, the welfare rolls have plummeted by over 20 percent -- a total of 2.9 million. A recent study by my Council of Economic Advisors showed that, while about 40% of the decline in the welfare caseload is due to the strong economy we have, about a third is due to the welfare waivers my Administration granted to 43 states, so that they could change the structure of their welfare programs.
- The welfare law that I signed will help us achieve our goal of transforming welfare from a way of life to a second chance. To make work pay better than welfare, we significantly increased the minimum wage; and we expanded the earned income tax credit to help 40 million Americans. The new law provides an additional \$4 billion for child care. We have increased child support collections dramatically -- by 50%. Now we are working to make transportation available for those leaving welfare for work and to expand health care coverage for the children of low-income working parents. We have urged the corporate community to do its part, and a new Welfare to Work Partnership has been launched to lead the welfare to work effort in the business community and extend job opportunities for those seeking to remake their lives.

**[Elena FYI: HHS, DOL, DOJ, ED, and maybe EEOC are working together on a joint letter to states, in response to the Leadership Conference's letter. It would not be formal guidance, but an education piece for states as to which anti-discrimination laws are relevant (Title VI, ADA, age discrimination). It will give examples of problematic situations, and offer states technical assistance. It's still probably a few weeks away from being done. It's weak and voluntary enough that it probably doesn't work to ask them to speed it up for the speech, but who knows....]**

- When I signed the welfare law, I stated that I opposed portions of the law that had nothing to do with moving people from welfare to work, and that I would work for changes to the law. I refer, of course, to the benefit cuts to legal immigrants and to the cuts in the food stamp program. Initially, no one thought we could get any changes to the law, but I am pleased that the budget agreement we reached with the Congressional leadership restores significant benefit cuts for legal immigrants and makes the food stamp changes much fairer.

### Service

- I am very pleased that we have spurred a new effort to reach out to children at risk through the Presidents' Summit on America's Future, with the participation of all the living former Presidents or their representative, and the critical involvement of Gen. Colin Powell. The summit focused the nation's attention on citizen service and voluntarism aimed at reaching an additional 2 million children at risk by the year 2000. General Powell is leading the effort to reach this goal -- to give these 2 million children a

chance for a caring adult in their lives, a healthy start, a safe place, a marketable skill through a good education, and an opportunity to give back to their communities.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DATA ON MINORITIES:**

### **African Americans**

**Declining unemployment.** The unemployment rate for African Americans was 10.3% in May --one of the lowest rates in 20 years --down from 12.5% when President Clinton first took office.

**Minimum wage increase.** The President raised the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour --directly benefitting 1.3 million African American workers.

**Small business assistance.** The Small Business Administration has approved more than \$1.1 billion in loans to African American business owners, and has helped over 470,000 African Americans to receive management training and counseling from a national network of business education and assistance programs.

**Home mortgage lending on the rise.** Since 1993 home mortgage lending to African Americans increased by 70 percent.

### **Hispanic Americans**

**Declining unemployment.** The unemployment rate for Hispanic Americans in May, 1997 was 7.4%, down from 11.3% when President Clinton first took office.

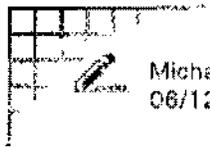
**Minimum wage increase.** The President raised the minimum wage to \$5.15 an hour --directly benefitting more than 1.6 million Hispanic American workers.

**More small business assistance.** Over 220,000 new Hispanic American-owned businesses were created in the first three years of the Clinton Administration. The Small Business Administration has approved more than 13,500 loans, totaling \$2.2 billion, for Hispanic American business owners, and has helped over 230,000 Hispanic Americans to receive management training and counseling from a national network of business education and assistance programs.

### **Asian Americans**

**More small business assistance.** The Small Business Administration has approved more than 15,000 loans, totaling \$4.7 billion, for Asian and Pacific American business owners, and has helped over 126,000 Asian and Pacific Americans to receive management training and counseling from a national network of business education and assistance programs.

**Targeted business training.** Funded a Small Business Administration program targeted to Asian Pacific American women that provides training and counseling to thousands in the Chinatown section of New York City.



Michael Waldman  
06/12/97 03:21:37 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: fyi

**THANKS** for your memo. I may want to use it instead of our current ending! Here, fyi, is the current draft -- the ending is, in fact, midway through a reconstruction...

**Draft 6/12/97 1:30pm [draft 3]**

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
ONE AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SAN DIEGO  
JUNE 14, 1997**

[Acknowledgments]

Today, you take your place as citizens of the great American community in a golden moment for our nation. The Cold War is over, with freedom ascendant around the globe. Our economy is the healthiest in a generation and the strongest in the world. Our culture, our science, our technology are on the cutting edge. Social problems -- from crime to poverty -- which for so long seemed destined to deepen, are now bending to our efforts.

On these issues, we have made more progress, in a shorter time, with less rancor, than many thought would ever be possible. Sooner, and to a greater degree than any other nation, we have made the transition from the old economic order to the new world of technology, information and free trade. Without fanfare, without crisis, quietly and in that very practical American way -- at the very moment when some were predicting our decline, we have entered a new era of American leadership. Today we stand on the eve of a second American century.

But there is one thing that can still hold us back -- a contradiction not yet resolved that lies at the heart of our history. More than 200 years ago this nation began with a pledge of equality, but then long continued to condone slavery. More than 30 years ago, at the high tide of civil rights, the Kerner Commission said that we were becoming two Americas, one black,

one white, separate and unequal. Now, in this new era of American leadership, there is one place where we continue to lag behind: we are in danger of becoming many Americas, separate, unequal, and isolated. Lincoln warned us, quoting the Scripture, that a house divided against itself cannot stand. And a nation not at peace with its identity cannot continue to move forward. We must be one America -- or we won't be America at all.

The great civil rights leader W.E.B. DuBois said that "the problem of the 20th century will be the problem of the color line." In so many ways, he was right. At times, in flames and in anger, racial conflict almost consumed us. And it was only during those hours of maximum danger that we faced this issue squarely. Now, at a time of gathering hope, when there is no firebell in the night, we must pledge: Our great and growing diversity will not be "the problem of the 21st Century." It falls to us to fashion for the next century the greatest multiethnic, multi-religious, multiracial democracy the world has ever known.

We must find our new unity in the face of stunning change: Within the next three years, right here in California, no single race or ethnic group will make up a majority of the state's population. And a half century from now, when your own grandchildren are in college, it is entirely conceivable that a majority of the population will be Latino, African American, Asian American, Native American and other people of color.

It is clear: the face of America is evolving. And, I will tell you, we cannot greet that fact with indifference; we cannot run away from it; we cannot retreat into racial and ethnic enclaves of isolation. And we cannot pretend that the changing face of America is invisible. We must look in the mirror and ask the question anew: What does it mean to be an American? The face of America is changing, and the soul of America must rise to the challenge.

I want us to define our greatness as a country based on our extraordinary achievements, the great freedom we enjoy, the texture of our relationships with the world and each other.

Alone among nations, America was founded not on race, or religion, or geography, but on an ideal -- an ideal so revolutionary and so profound it guides us still. "We are all created equal." This was the proposition to which Abraham Lincoln rededicated our nation at Gettysburg. This was the true meaning of our creed to which Martin Luther King summoned us a century later.

For two centuries, wave upon wave of immigrants have come to our shores, to work, to raise their families, to build a new life, speaking many tongues, wearing the garb of many cultures, but all drawn here by those same ideals. We have never lived up to our founding vision, but we have never stopped trying -- and our people, even those who have suffered the most, have never lost faith in the American creed.

For four years, as your President, I have worked to offer opportunity to all Americans, to demand responsibility from all Americans, and to bring our people together across all the lines that divide us, in a true national community. To that effort, we must turn as a nation with even greater fervor.

So today, and for the next year, and for the years to come, I want us to face honestly those things that divide us -- to embrace those things that unite us -- and to join in a national effort, aimed at action, that will move us forward.

### The divisions in our land

We must begin by acknowledging that our house is divided.

Scripture teaches us, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Too often in our past, and sadly even today, we have defined our greatness not by lifting each other up, but by putting each other down -- the sufferings heaped upon Native Americans, the enslavement of Africans, and the tragic litany of injustices inflicted upon immigrants of every race and color at various times in our history.

I am a son of the South and the grandson of a man who taught me a valuable lesson at a young age. He told me, yes, I was different than the black children who came into his small grocery store, but I was no better. But I could see that on the black side of town streets were left unpaved. And segregation was legally sanctioned. There were "whites only" signs at public restrooms. Blacks and whites could not swim together, we could not drink at the same water fountain, we could not even sit in the same section at the movies. I was 11 years old when President Eisenhower ordered troops into Little Rock so that nine black children could integrate Central High. And when I was your age and in school in Washington, DC, Martin Luther King was killed and the streets exploded in flames. My memory is forever singed by the pain and anger I saw.

In the time and place where I grew up, the color line was black and white. In other communities, the targets were different, but the hatreds were the same.

We have torn down the barriers in our laws. Now we must tear down the barriers in our minds. Even with more of us working together, living side-by-side, and intermarrying more than ever before, we know there is still more than one way of looking at an event, at the world, at each other. We know that blacks and whites can look at the same reality and see two different things; hear the same remark and hear two different meanings. And we know that stereotypes -- some of them ugly, some mild, but all destructive -- still keep us apart.

Many whites believe that the problem of racism is over. They honestly believe that the playing field is equal and blacks have the same opportunities as they do when it comes to jobs, and housing and education. But, feelings and reality are starkly different for blacks. We must tell the truth.

The truth is that more people than ever are benefitting from our strong economy. But there is another truth that must be told. African American and Latino workers still earn markedly less than what whites in the same jobs make. [In Los Angeles, unemployment east of the highway is  $x$ , and west of the highway is  $x$ .] And for many minority communities, there

are still glaring disparities in access to health care, educational attainment, the administration of justice, and housing.

But just as we must tell the truth about what racism is, we must also tell the truth about what it is not. Let's not hide behind the ugly wall of racism to explain away some of our worst behavior. Racism doesn't cause a 14 year-old boy to commit a murder in a street corner drug deal. It is not racist for a middle class family of any background to feel safer in a suburb away from the crime and drugs of some of our neighborhoods. Hatred and self destruction are their own demons, and as we banish racism, we must banish them too.

We must tell the truth. To whites I say, do not pretend there is no prejudice. We will never get beyond this problem unless we first acknowledge its existence. To minorities, I say, most whites are not prejudiced -- and the people who seek to sow hatred and division are their own very small minority.

To the grandchildren of European immigrants: do not pull up the ladder from the new immigrants who come here for the same reason and with the same values as your ancestors.

To the media both news and entertainment: understand that your depictions of people can either play on stereotypes or pull them down. Do not take your power -- or your responsibility -- lightly.

And to all our young people, especially young men, do not use race or racism as an excuse for hatred or violence against people who look different than you. Do not let real or imagined racism cause you to retreat into enclaves of rage and recrimination.

### **What unites us**

All these problems are real. But we must have the clarity of mind and charity of spirit to realize that they are not new -- and that the striving to surmount them is the story of America.

We are all, in Martin Luther King's words, woven into "one garment of destiny." We rightly celebrate the multiplicity of America -- our marvelous blend of cultures, beliefs and races. Yet despite this diversity, or above it, we possess a common identity -- as Americans and as human beings.

We must recognize that the same ethnic and racial ties that can offer us a sanctuary of meaning and personal strength also contain the possibility of a frightening fragmentation. We must honor our diversity; we must cherish the uniqueness of each culture that feeds into the American experience; we must find new ways of talking to one another with respect instead of disdain. But we must reach with even greater fervor across those lines that divide us, to honor and strengthen those bonds of community and shared values that have always united us.

Our national motto says: E Pluribus Unum, "Out of Many, One." What unites us as Americans?

We Americans are a people bound by faith. Every week we flock to our churches, mosques and synagogues. Religious observance in our nation is the most intense in the Western world. That is true across every ethnic line. We are truly "one nation under God."

We are a people united by respect for the value of work. It is our work that supports all our efforts to build strong families and strong communities.

We cherish our families; we expect that the lives of our children can be better than the lives of our parents; and we strive to give them that future.

And we are a people who still believe -- more than any other on earth -- that every individual has within himself or herself the spark of possibility, that still, 220 years later, we are all created equal.

Opportunity for all. Responsibility from all. Faith, family, community. These are the values of no one color or region or religion. These are America's values. And these are the values we must put to work as we prepare our nation for the century ahead.

#### **What we must do now**

First, we must press on with our nation's strategy of expanding opportunity. For far too long, poor and working people of all races have been told by political leaders that their problems were the fault of "them" -- minorities, immigrants, women -- "them," always "them." There is no "them." There is only "us." And it is clear that racism would be less of a problem if everyone had a good job. Racism would be less of a problem if everyone had a chance to get a good education, safe and decent housing and health care.

So we must continue the strategy for economic growth that has brought our nation the strongest prosperity in a generation. I am especially pleased that, this time, the economic gains of our expansion are being widely shared. Wages have begun, finally, to rise; income inequality, to shrink.

And we must work to prepare all our young people to take their place in this new economy. Our most important goal must be to give our young people the world's best education. We must hold all our children to the highest standards, and give them the tools and help they need to succeed. We must open the doors of college wider than ever -- and we can never allow them to be slammed shut.

We do not believe in guaranteeing equal outcomes, but we do believe in guaranteeing equal opportunity -- and that means education. A college education means stability, better jobs, a chance to join the middle class, another stakeholder in America. We cannot abandon any efforts to expand access to higher education -- and that includes affirmative action.

It is a stunning and dismaying fact that African-American and Latino enrollments at this university and all across California and Texas are plummeting, for the first time in

decades. We cannot afford to turn back the clock and resegregate higher education. I saw school segregation, and it took years to begin to turn back the damage it did socially and economically to the South. My home region to this day is grappling with the self-inflicted wound of segregation. America cannot make that mistake again.

And to those who say that any preferences are wrong, that scores on standardized tests should be the sole measure of qualification, I say: We give preferences to athletes, to musicians, to children of alumni. A diversified student body has value, too.

I want to be clear: We will continue to fight the rollback of affirmative action in higher education because it is wrong, it is hurtful to our progress and it divides our people.

### LEARN FACTS/REALITIES

The economy has created many jobs. But disparities remain. In some states, unemployment is so low there is a labor shortage; while in some of our cities, unemployment is quite high and so are the social ills that accompany poverty. We are working hard to encourage employers to locate in the cities, but businesses need to make a commitment to the cities, too. We cannot leave our cities behind.

Third, we must continue to be vigilant against discrimination, wherever and whenever it appears.

The fight against crime is a fight for the rights of all our people -- especially the poorest people in the poorest neighborhoods, who are most often the victims of violence. Community efforts across the country have brought crime to a 30 year low (ck). We are putting 100,000 new community police officers on the streets, but our minority communities are still underserved. Our police officers are the protectors of order in our society, putting their lives on the line every day to keep our people safe. But we have seen that authority can be abused and brutal force used on some of our citizens. So, as we call for our citizens to respect the law, we need the law to respect our citizens, no matter their color or economic condition.

And our civil-rights agencies are among the most critical law enforcement agencies in the government -- and we must give them the resources they need to end the crushing backlog of cases and get the job done. It's time for Congress to put our money where our ideals are.

These are all areas that need our focus. But we cannot come to solutions or even truly identify our problems unless we are willing to be honest with each other. It's time to let down our guards, and to be honest with people different from ourselves. We have talked at each other and about each other. It is high time we begin talking with each other.

Beginning today, I want to lead the American people in a great and unprecedented conversation about race. I have asked one of America's greatest scholars, Dr. John Hope Franklin to chair an advisory panel of distinguished Americans. [OTHER NAMES]

?

NO -  
why  
single out  
Cops?  
why not  
brag on  
military,  
where it's  
a crime?  
Blame  
Dem's,  
not cops.

We will examine the stereotypes and the facts – the myths and the reality – that hold us apart. We will ask Americans to talk to one another everyday, at home, in their communities, in school, at work. I will join this conversation with Americans across our nation at four town meetings over the next year.

And in one year's time, I will report directly to the American people about what I have found and what we must do.

The town meetings I will hold are just the start. I call on Americans of all colors to begin a "table fellowship" within their communities, to break bread together and begin to know each other. And I want every American to see this as an opportunity to learn about each other by doing with each other. Tutors are needed in many communities to teach reading and other skills; that kind of interaction pays dividends in many ways. Churches, mosques, synagogues could consider exchanging congregations for a day.

I know that honest dialogue and exchange will not be easy at first. We need to get past defensiveness, fear, political correctness and other barriers to honesty. That may open wounds, but that is how we begin the healing so that we may move past them.

What do we want from all this? If we achieve nothing more than talk, that will be too little. *too much burden on goat, too high a bar* If we propose nothing but policy ideas that are merely small gestures along the way, that will be too little. But if 10 years from now, people can look back and see that America's commitment to our ideals was renewed and reinvigorated and that the post-Martin Luther King generation finally shouldered its fair burden in this historic struggle, then this effort will have been a success. ?

From our earliest days, America has been a beacon to the world. For two centuries, on every continent, people struggling for freedom looked to see if our "great experiment" would succeed. Over the past century, we have taken our greatest strides when we knew the whole world was watching. Today, the people of Bosnia and Rwanda and the Middle East are watching. With American ideas and ideals ascendent, with ancient racial and ethnic hatreds once again flaring around the globe, we must be a beacon, we must be that last great hope for mankind.

We may not achieve as much as we want, but let us set our aim as high as we can. Let us resolve that we shall overcome in our day and generation. We cannot be many Americas. We must be One America. We are One America.

Thank you, God bless you and God bless America.

White House Press Release  
In Address To The Liz Sutherland Carpenter Distinguished Lectureship In The  
Humanities And Sciences

The White House  
Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

October 15, 1995

Remarks By The President  
In Address To The Liz Sutherland Carpenter  
Distinguished Lectureship  
In The Humanities And Sciences

The Erwin Center  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, Texas

9:34 A.M. Cdt

The President: Thank you. You know, when I was a boy growing up in Arkansas, I thought it highly -- (applause) -- I thought it highly unlikely that I would ever become President of the United States. Perhaps the only thing even more unlikely was that I should ever have the opportunity to be cheered at the University of Texas. (Applause.) I must say I am very grateful for both of them. (Laughter.)

President Berdahl, Chancellor Cunningham, Dean Olson: to the Texas Longhorn Band, thank you for playing Hail to the Chief. (Applause.) You were magnificent. (Applause.) To my longtime friend of nearly 25 years now, Bernard Rappaport, thank you for your statement and your inspiration and your life of generous giving to this great university and so many other good causes. (Applause.)

All the distinguished guests in the audience -- I hesitate to start -- but I thank my friend and your fellow Texan, Henry Cisneros, for coming down here with me and for his magnificent work as Secretary of Hud. (Applause.)

I thank your Congressman, Lloyd Doggett, and his wife, Libby, for flying down with me. (Applause.) And I'm glad to see my dear friend, Congressman Jake Pickle here. I miss you. (Applause.) Your Attorney General, Dan Morales; the Land Commissioner, Garry Mauro -- I thank all of them for being here. (Applause.)

Thank you, Lucy Johnson, for being here. (Applause.) And please give my regards to your wonderful mother. (Applause.)

I have not seen here -- there she is. And I have to recognize and thank your former Congresswoman and now distinguished Professor Barbara Jordan for the magnificent job you did on the immigration issue. (Applause.) Thank you so much. (Applause.) Thank you. Thank you. (Applause.)

My wife told me about coming here so much, I wanted to come and see for myself. I also know, as all of you do, that there is no such thing as saying no to Liz Carpenter. (Laughter.) I drug it out as long as I could just to hear a few more jokes. (Laughter.)

My fellow Americans, I want to begin by telling you that I am hopeful about America. When I looked at Nikole Bell up here introducing me, and I shook hands with these other young students -- I looked into their eyes: I saw the AmeriCorps button on that gentlemen's shirt -- (applause) -- I was reminded, as I talk about this thorny subject of race today, I was reminded of what Winston Churchill said about the United States when President Roosevelt was trying to pass the Lend-Lease Act so that we could help Britain in their war against Nazi Germany before we, ourselves, were involved. And for a good while the issue was hanging fire. And it was unclear whether the Congress would permit us to help Britain, who at that time was the only bulwark against tyranny in Europe.

And Winston Churchill said, "I have great confidence in the judgment and the common sense of the American people and their leaders. They invariably do the right thing after they have examined every other alternative." (Laughter.) So I say to you, let me begin by saying that I can see in the eyes of these students and in the spirit of this moment, we will do the right thing.

In recent weeks, every one of us has been made aware of a simple truth -- white Americans and black Americans often see the same world in drastically different ways -- ways that go beyond and beneath the Simpson trial and its aftermath, which brought these perceptions so starkly into the open.

The rift we see before us that is tearing at the heart of America exists in spite of the remarkable progress black Americans have made in the last generation, since Martin Luther King swept America up in his dream, and President Johnson spoke so powerfully for the dignity of man and the destiny of democracy in demanding that Congress guarantee full voting rights to blacks. The rift between blacks and whites exists still in a very special way in America, in spite of the fact that we have become much more racially and ethnically diverse, and that Hispanic Americans -- themselves no strangers to discrimination -- are now almost 10 percent of

our national population.

The reasons for this divide are many. Some are rooted in the awful history and stubborn persistence of racism. Some are rooted in the different ways we experience the threats of modern life to personal security, family values, and strong communities. Some are rooted in the fact that we still haven't learned to talk frankly, to listen carefully, and to work together across racial lines.

Almost 30 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King took his last march with sanitation workers in Memphis. They marched for dignity, equality, and economic justice. Many carried placards that read simply, "I am a man." The throngs of men marching in Washington today, almost all of them, are doing so for the same stated reason. But there is a profound difference between this march today and those of 30 years ago. Thirty years ago, the marchers were demanding the dignity and opportunity they were due because in the face of terrible discrimination, they had worked hard, raised their children, paid their taxes, obeyed the laws, and fought our wars.

Well, today's march is also about pride and dignity and respect. But after a generation of deepening social problems that disproportionately impact black Americans, it is also about black men taking renewed responsibility for themselves, their families, and their communities. (Applause.) It's about saying no to crime and drugs and violence. It's about standing up for atonement and reconciliation. It's about insisting that others do the same, and offering to help them. It's about the frank admission that unless black men shoulder their load, no one else can help them or their brothers, their sisters, and their children escape the hard, bleak lives that too many of them still face.

Of course, some of those in the march do have a history that is far from its message of atonement and reconciliation. One million men are right to be standing up for personal responsibility. But one million men do not make right one man's message of malice and division. (Applause.) No good house was ever built on a bad foundation. Nothing good ever came of hate. So let us pray today that all who march and all who speak will stand for atonement, for reconciliation, for responsibility.

Let us pray that those who have spoken for hatred and division in the past will turn away from that past and give voice to the true message of those ordinary Americans who march. If that happens -- (applause) -- if that happens, the men and the women who are there with them will be marching into better lives for themselves and their families. And they could be marching into a better future for America. (Applause.)

Today we face a choice -- one way leads to further separation and bitterness and more lost futures. The other way, the path of courage and wisdom, leads to unity, to reconciliation, to a rich opportunity for all Americans to make the most of the lives God gave them. This moment in which the racial divide is so clearly out in the open need not be a setback for us. It presents us with a great opportunity, and we dare not let it pass us by. (Applause.)

In the past when we've had the courage to face the truth about our failure to live up to our own best ideals, we've grown stronger, moved forward and restored proud American optimism.

At such turning points America moved to preserve the union and abolished slavery; to embrace women's suffrage; to guarantee basic legal rights to America without regard to race, under the leadership of President Johnson. At each of these moments, we looked in the national mirror and were brave enough to say, this is not who we are: we're better than that.

Abraham Lincoln reminded us that a house divided against itself cannot stand. When divisions have threatened to bring our house down, somehow we have always moved together to shore it up. My fellow Americans, our house is the greatest democracy in all human history. And with all its racial and ethnic diversity, it has beaten the odds of human history. But we know that divisions remain, and we still have work to do. (Applause.)

The two worlds we see now each contain both truth and distortion. Both black and white Americans must face this, for honesty is the only gateway to the many acts of reconciliation that will unite our worlds at last into one America.

White America must understand and acknowledge the roots of black pain. It began with unequal treatment first in law and later in fact. African Americans indeed have lived too long with a justice system that in too many cases has been and continues to be less than just. (Applause.) The record of abuses extends from lynchings and trumped up charges to false arrests and police brutality. The tragedies of Emmett Till and Rodney King are bloody markers on the very same road.

Still today too many of our police officers play by the rules of the bad old days. It is beyond wrong when law-abiding black parents have to tell their law-abiding children to fear the police whose salaries are paid by their own taxes. (Applause.)

And blacks are right to think something is terribly wrong when African American men are many times more likely to be victims of homicide than any other group in this country: when there are more African American men in our corrections system than in our colleges: when almost one in three African American men in their 20s are either in jail, on parole or otherwise under the supervision of the criminal justice system -- nearly one in three. And that is a disproportionate percentage in comparison to the percentage of blacks who use drugs in our society. Now, I would like every white person here and in America to take a moment to think how he or she would feel if one in three white men were in similar circumstances.

And there is still unacceptable economic disparity between blacks and whites. It is so fashionable to talk today about African Americans as if they have been some sort of protected class. Many whites think blacks are getting more than their fair share in terms of jobs and promotions. That is not true. That is not true. (Applause.)

The truth is that African Americans still make on average about 60 percent of what white people do: that more than half of African American children live in poverty. And at the very time our young Americans need access to college more than ever before, black college enrollment is dropping in America.

On the other hand, blacks must understand and acknowledge the roots of white fear in America. There is a legitimate fear of the violence that is too prevalent in our urban areas; and often by experience or at least what people see on the news at night, violence for those white people too often has a black face.

It isn't racist for a parent to pull his or her child close when walking through a high-crime neighborhood, or to wish to stay away from neighborhoods where innocent children can be shot in school or standing at bus stops by thugs driving by with assault weapons or toting handguns like old west desperados. (Applause.)

It isn't racist for parents to recoil in disgust when they read about a national survey of gang members saying that two-thirds of them feel justified in shooting someone simply for showing them disrespect. It isn't racist for whites to say they don't understand why people put up with gangs on the corner or in the projects, or with drugs being sold in the schools or in the open. It's not racist for whites to assert that the culture of welfare dependency, out-of-wedlock pregnancy and absent fatherhood cannot be broken by social programs unless there is first more personal responsibility. (Applause.)

The great potential for this march today, beyond the black community, is that whites will come to see a larger truth -- that blacks share their fears and embrace their convictions; openly assert that without changes in the black community and within individuals, real change for our society will not come.

This march could remind white people that most black people share their old-fashioned American values -- (applause) -- for most black Americans still do work hard, care for their families, pay their taxes, and obey the law, often under circumstances which are far more difficult than those their white counterparts face. (Applause.)

Imagine how you would feel if you were a young parent in your 20s with a young child living in a housing project, working somewhere for \$5 an hour with no health insurance, passing every day people on the street selling drugs, making 100 times what you make. Those people are the real heroes of America today, and we should recognize that. (Applause.)

And white people too often forget that they are not immune to the problems black Americans face -- crime, drugs, domestic abuse, and teen pregnancy. They are too prevalent among whites as well, and some of those problems are growing faster in our white population than in our minority population. (Applause.)

So we all have a stake in solving these common problems together. It is therefore wrong for white Americans to do what they have done too often simply to move further away from the problems and support policies that will only make them worse. (Applause.)

Finally, both sides seem to fear deep down inside that they'll never quite be able to see

each other as more than enemy faces, all of whom carry at least a sliver of bigotry in their hearts. Differences of opinion rooted in different experiences are healthy, indeed essential, for democracies. But differences so great and so rooted in race threaten to divide the house Mr. Lincoln gave his life to save. As Dr. King said, "We must learn to live together as brothers, or we will perish as fools." (Applause.)

Recognizing one another's real grievances is only the first step. We must all take responsibility for ourselves, our conduct and our attitudes. America, we must clean our house of racism. (Applause.)

To our white citizens, I say, I know most of you ever day do your very best by your own lights -- to live a life free of discrimination. Nevertheless, too many destructive ideas are gaining currency in our midst. The taped voice of one policeman should fill you with outrage. (Applause.) And so I say, we must clean the house of white America of racism. Americans who are in the white majority should be proud to stand up and be heard denouncing the sort of racist rhetoric we heard on that tape -- so loudly and clearly denouncing it, that our black fellow citizens can hear us. White racism may be black people's burden, but it's white people's problem. (Applause.) We must clean our house. (Applause.)

To our black citizens, I honor the presence of hundreds of thousands of men in Washington today, committed to atonement and to personal responsibility, and the commitment of millions of other men and women who are African Americans to this cause. I call upon you to build on this effort, to share equally in the promise of America. But to do that, your house, too, must be cleaned of racism. There are too many today -- (applause) -- there are too many today, white and black, on the left and the right, on the street corners and radio waves, who seek to sow division for their own purposes. To them I say, no more. We must be one. (Applause.)

Long before we were so diverse, our nation's motto was E Pluribus Unum -- out of many, we are one. We must be one -- as neighbors, as fellow citizens: not separate camps, but family -- white, black, Latino, all of us, no matter how different, who share basic American values and are willing to live by them.

When a child is gunned down on a street in the Bronx, no matter what our race, he is our American child. When a woman dies from a beating, no matter what our race or hers, she is our American sister. (Applause.) And every time drugs course through the vein of another child, it clouds the future of all our American children. (Applause.)

Whether we like it or not, we are one nation, one family, indivisible. And for us, divorce or separation are not options. (Applause.)

Here, in 1995, on the edge of the 21st century, we dare not tolerate the existence of two Americas. Under my watch, I will do everything I can to see that as soon as possible there is only one -- one America under the rule of law; one social contract committed not to winner take all, but to giving all Americans a chance to win -- one America. (Applause.)

Well, how do we get there? First, today I ask every governor, every mayor, every business leader, every church leader, every civic leader, every union steward, every student leader -- most important, every citizen -- in every workplace and learning place and meeting place all across America to take personal responsibility for reaching out to people of different races; for taking time to sit down and talk through this issue; to have the courage to speak honestly and frankly; and then to have the discipline to listen quietly with an open mind and an open heart, as others do the same. (Applause.)

This may seem like a simple request, but for tens of millions of Americans, this has never been a reality. They have never spoken, and they have never listened -- not really, not really. (Applause.) I am convinced, based on a rich lifetime of friendships and common endeavors with people of different races, that the American people will find out they have a lot more in common than they think they do. (Applause.)

The second thing we have to do is to defend and enhance real opportunity. I'm not talking about opportunity for black Americans or opportunity for white Americans; I'm talking about opportunity for all Americans. (Applause.) Sooner or later, all our speaking, all our listening, all our caring has to lead to constructive action together for our words and our intentions to have meaning. We can do this first by truly rewarding work and family in government policies, in employment policies, in community practices.

We also have to realize that there are some areas of our country -- whether in urban areas or poor rural areas like south Texas or eastern Arkansas -- where these problems are going to be more prevalent just because there is no opportunity. There is only so much temptation some people can stand when they turn up against a brick wall day after day after day. And if we can spread the benefits of education and free enterprise to those who have been denied them too long and who are isolated in enclaves in this country, then we have a moral obligation to do it. It will be good for our country. (Applause.)

Third and perhaps most important of all, we have to give every child in this country, and every adult who still needs it, the opportunity to get a good education. (Applause.) President Johnson understood that, and now that I am privileged to have this job and to look back across the whole sweep of American history, I can appreciate how truly historic his commitment to the simple idea that every child in this country ought to have an opportunity to get a good, safe, decent, fulfilling education was. It was revolutionary then, and it is revolutionary today. (Applause.)

Today that matters more than ever. I'm trying to do my part. I am fighting hard against efforts to roll back family security, aid to distressed communities, and support for education. I want it to be easier for poor children to get off to a good start in school, not harder. I want it to be easier for everybody to go to college and stay there, not harder. (Applause.) I want to mend affirmative action, but I do not think America is at a place today where we can end it. The

evidence of the last several weeks shows that. (Applause.)

But let us remember, the people marching in Washington today are right about one fundamental thing -- at its base, this issue of race is not about government or political leaders; it is about what is in the heart and the minds and life of the American people. There will be no progress in the absence of real responsibility on the part of all Americans. Nowhere is that responsibility more important than in our efforts to promote public safety and preserve the rule of law.

Law and order is the first responsibility of government. Our citizens must respect the law and those who enforce it. Police have a life and death responsibility never, never to abuse the power granted them by the people. We know, by the way, what works in fighting crime also happens to improve relationships between the races. What works in fighting crime is community policing. We have seen it working all across America. The crime rate is down. The murder rate is down where people relate to each other across the lines of police and community in an open, honest, respectful, supportive way. We can lower crime and raise the state of race relations in America if we will remember this simple truth. (Applause.)

But if this is going to work, police departments have to be fair and engaged with, not estranged from, their communities. I am committed to making this kind of community policing a reality all across our country. But you must be committed to making it a reality in your communities. We have to root out the remnants of racism in our police departments. We've got to get it out of our entire criminal justice system. But just as the police have a sacred duty to protect the community fairly, all of our citizens have a sacred responsibility to respect the police; to teach our young people to respect them; and then to support them and work with them so that they can succeed in making us safer. (Applause.)

Let's not forget, most police officers of whatever race are honest people who love the law and put their lives on the lines so that the citizens they're protecting can lead decent, secure lives, and so that their children can grow up to do the same.

Finally, I want to say, on the day of this march, a moment about a crucial area of responsibility -- the responsibility of fatherhood. The single biggest social problem in our society may be the growing absence of fathers from their children's homes, because it contributes to so many other social problems. One child in four grows up in a fatherless home. Without a father to help guide, without a father to care, without a father to teach boys to be men and to teach girls to expect respect from men, it's harder. (Applause.) There are a lot of mothers out there doing a magnificent job alone -- (applause) -- a magnificent job alone, but it is harder. It is harder. (Applause.) This, of course, is not a black problem or a Latino problem or a white problem; it is an American problem. But it aggravates the conditions of the racial divide.

I know from my own life it is harder because my own father died before I was born, and my stepfather's battle with alcohol kept him from being the father he might have been. But for all fathers, parenting is not easy and every parent makes mistakes. I know that, too, from my own experience. The point is that we need people to be there for their children day after day. Building

a family is the hardest job a man can do, but it's also the most important.

For those who are neglecting their children, I say it is not too late: your children still need you. To those who only send money in the form of child support, I say keep sending the checks: your kids count on them, and we'll catch you and enforce the law if you stop. (Applause.) But the message of this march today -- one message is that your money is no replacement for your guiding, your caring, you loving the children you brought into this world. (Applause.)

We can only build strong families when men and women respect each other: when they have partnerships; when men are as involved in the homeplace as women have become involved in the workplace. (Applause.) It means, among other things, that we must keep working until we end domestic violence against women and children. (Applause.) I hope those men in Washington today pledge among other things to never, never raise their hand in violence against a woman. (Applause.)

So today, my fellow Americans, I honor the black men marching in Washington to demonstrate their commitment to themselves, their families, and their communities. I honor the millions of men and women in America, the vast majority of every color, who without fanfare or recognition do what it takes to be good fathers and good mothers, good workers and good citizens. They all deserve the thanks of America. (Applause.)

But when we leave here today, what are you going to do? What are you going to do? Let all of us who want to stand up against racism do our part to roll back the divide. Begin by seeking out people in the workplace, the classroom, the community, the neighborhood across town, the places of worship to actually sit down and have those honest conversations I talked about -- conversations where we speak openly and listen and understand how others view this world of ours.

Make no mistake about it, we can bridge this great divide. This is, after all, a very great country. And we have become great by what we have overcome. We have the world's strongest economy, and it's on the move. But we've really lasted because we have understood that our success could never be measured solely by the size of our Gross National Product. (Applause.)

I believe the march in Washington today spawned such an outpouring because it is a reflection of something deeper and stronger that is running throughout our American community. I believe that in millions and millions of different ways, our entire country is reasserting our commitment to the bedrock values that made our country great and that make life worth living.

The great divides of the past call for and were addressed by legal and legislative changes. They were addressed by leaders like Lyndon Johnson, who passed the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act. (Applause.) And to be sure, this great divide requires a public response by democratically-elected leaders. But today we are really dealing, and we know it, with problems that grow in large measure out of the way all of us look at the world with our minds and the way we feel about the world with our hearts.

And therefore, while leaders and legislation may be important, this is work that has to be done by every single one of you. (Applause.) And this is the ultimate test of our democracy, for today the house divided exists largely in the minds and hearts of the American people. And it must be united there in the minds and hearts of our people.

Yes, there are some who would poison our progress by selling short the great character of our people and our enormous capacity to change and grow. But they will not win the day; we will win the day. (Applause.)

With your help -- with your help -- that day will come a lot sooner. I will do my part, but you, my fellow citizens, must do yours.

Thank you, and God bless you. (Applause.)

End

10:15 A.M. Cdt