

**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**

Post SOTU
Buffalo, NY
January 20, 1999

Post-State of the Union Tour
Remarks by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
Buffalo, NY
January 20, 1999

(Applause)

Thank you all. Thank you very much. I think you probably could tell when the four of us walked out, how overwhelmed we were by your welcome. There isn't, I don't care what the weather forecasters say, any warmer place in the entire United States than this particular community right now. (Applause) I also know, I know that you've been here for a while, and you had some wonderful entertainment. And I want to thank the Niagara Falls All-City Marching Band, the Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts Chorus, Buffalo South Park High School Concert Band, Sounds of Glory of the Outreach Ministry, the African American Cultural Center Drum and Dance Performing Troop, the New Beginnings Choral Ensemble, the people of the Long House, and the Albion Marching Band. Thank you all very much.

I also wanted to thank all of the people who worked so hard to put this event together, but more than that I want to join your mayor in thanking you for what you do every day to make Buffalo and Erie County and Western New York truly a village. You know, the mayor was quoting from and referring to a book I wrote that "It Takes A Village To Raise A Child." And I believe that. And here in Buffalo and in Erie County, you are proving that with your strong families, your strong commitment to education, and the kind of future you are building together. It takes all kinds of people to do that.

You heard from the county executive about the kind of jobs that have been created and the work that the public and private sectors have done together. And you heard from the congressman, Congressman John LaFalce, about the cooperation and partnership between the federal and the state and the local governments that is trying to create better opportunity. But ultimately, whether any community, any village, is successful depends on the quality of the people. And so many of you -- day in and day out, in your homes, in your workplaces, in your churches, in every place you are -- you are making the kind of effort that enables the rest of us to stand and say congratulations for the progress that we have seen take place here. And up on the stage are some representative citizens who have made contributions in ways that might make headlines, or may only quietly be celebrated by the few people who are touched. And I want to thank these local heroes -- some of whom were introduced here before, and some of whom are on the stage -- and I'd like to ask all of them to stand and be recognized for what you do and what you represent for this community. (Applause)

I want to thank my friend, Tipper Gore, for her introduction. I expected, after Connie introduced her, to see her come up to the podium on rollerblades, but she didn't bring them with her today. (Laughter) I want to thank her for the work she's done. But as she was up here

speaking, I remembered the wonderful day back in the summer of 1992, in August, when we went to Chitaqua and then we came here to Buffalo. (Applause) And we were able to meet some of you and talk to many others about what this President and this Vice President wanted to do for our country. Well, here we are. It's a little colder outside, but the enthusiasm is even greater, because it wasn't just a speech that was given on a hot August afternoon. We now have six years of solid results and accomplishments that have really kept faith with the people of America. (Applause)

On that bus trip, my husband talked about how we needed to raise wages for working Americans; how we needed more jobs so that people could make a decent living; how we needed to improve child care and strengthen our schools; and how we needed to do all we could to give parents the support they needed to do the most important job in the world -- raising our children; how we needed to provide health care; and the other challenges that we were facing in our nation. Well, I am very, very proud that over the past six years, my husband has never, ever taken his eyes off those fundamental goals that he talked to you about all those years ago. (Applause)

For the past six years, I've had the honor of traveling around our country -- sometimes with the President, sometimes with the Vice President and Tipper, sometimes on my own -- and what I've enjoyed more than anything is just sitting and listening, talking about what we all wanted for our futures, what we cared about for our children, what kind of America we wanted to contribute to. And I've learned more than I could ever tell you. I've learned about how it is that all of us are attempting to deal with the challenges of our everyday lives: parenting, schooling, working, making contributions to our community. And how there are ways -- very explicit ways -- that our government can either help us or hinder us. And there are so many examples we could call on. I just want to mention a few. I've learned, very importantly, how we have to give parents time off from work to do what they need to do to care for a child or to care for an older relative. (Applause) That's why the most important piece of legislation that the President could have signed first was the Family and Medical Leave Law. And last night he asked the Congress to expand the Family and Medical Leave Law to 10 million more working Americans. (Applause)

I've also learned from listening to people that sometimes parents are penalized at work for being parents, and we need to end any discrimination in the workplace against parents, just as the President called for in the speech last night. (Applause)

I've also learned what all of you know: that we need more affordable, quality child care. Too many low- and middle-income families can not afford the child care they need. And so the President is proposing, once again, that the Congress adopt his plan to provide more quality child care, but he's also proposing new tax relief to help over a million parents who stay at home with their young children, because they need our support as well. (Applause)

We also know that if we provide after-school care and summer school opportunities, more young children will be able to succeed at school. And as the President said last night, let's make it possible for every child to be a success. Let's not turn our backs on those children who aren't

doing well. But let's not promote them if they're not doing well, let's help them to do better and to be successful in school. (Applause)

So for all of us who care about families, who care about supporting parents, who care about our children, last night was a wonderful occasion, because we heard a new agenda that builds on what's already been done. We can celebrate how far we have come since that August day in 1992, but we cannot be complacent. We have to continue to work, we have to do all we can to make sure that the promise of America is available for all of our children.

And it is now my honor and privilege to introduce someone who is committed to that promise, committed to America's families, a visionary leader, and a dear friend, Vice President Al Gore. (Applause)