

---

Diana Fortuna

06/24/98 11:34:12  
AM

---

Record Type: Record

To: Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP

cc: Lesley A. Pate/OPD/EOP

Subject: here's the transcript; I bolded the paragraph Joe Fanaroff will use

----- Forwarded by Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP on 06/24/98 11:37 AM -----

**Joseph C. Fanaroff**  
06/24/98 11:27:42 AM

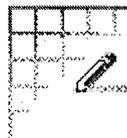
Record Type: Record

To: Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: 6-24-98 Remarks by the President at Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act Signing Ceremony

----- Forwarded by Joseph C. Fanaroff/WHO/EOP on 06/24/98 11:31 AM -----



Elizabeth R. Newman  
06/24/98 11:23:50 AM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: 6-24-98 Remarks by the President at Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act Signing Ceremony

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

---

For Immediate Release

June 24, 1998

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT  
At the Signing of The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998

The Oval Office

9:10 A.M. EDT

PRESIDENT CLINTON: Thank you very much Sonia. And Jonathan and Jesse, welcome to the White House. Thank you General Reno. Thank you Senators Kohl and DeWine for coming. And Congressman Hoyer, thank you for your hard work on this. I'd also like thank Congressman Henry Hyde who is not here for his leadership on this legislation. Welcome Judge David Ross, the Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement; United States Attorney Helen Fayhey; child support advocates and Leslie Sorkhe and Gerri Jensen, two other mothers who are here. I thank you all for being here.

I am very pleased to sign a vital new law that shows what we can achieve when we act in the national interest. For five and a half years now we have renewed our economy with a strategy that balances the budget while it invests and instills the future of our people and in the strength of our families. The key to expanding opportunity in this new century I want to say, though, is education.

I want to say a little more about child support in a minute but these two young men behind me and all the children of our country deserve a world-class education. I have asked the Congress to help me in that; to help us to reduce class size by hiring 100,000 teachers and building or repairing 5,000 schools. I have asked them to help me institute high standards to connect all classrooms to the internet and I've asked them to make child care for working parents more affordable.

Yesterday the Republicans in the House of Representatives took a huge step in the opposite direction. Last night they began to dramatically cut education investments from Head Start to after school to anti-drug programs. This is out of step with our values and with America's shared vision of our future. In the coming months I'll have more to say about this but you can be sure that I am going to keep fighting to advance education, to invest more in education, to lift education standards, to expand education opportunities. And if they continue to fight against all these things it will, I expect, be the major conflict of the coming months.

I still hope that I will not have to sign an education bill or veto one that short changes the future of our children. I don't intend to sign it. I hope a veto won't be necessary but there is no excuse for this. We have a balanced budget, we're going to have a surplus, we have the money, we ought to give it to the children and their future.

**This bill today is a gift to our children and the future. The quiet crisis of unpaid child support is something that our country and our families shouldn't tolerate. Our first responsibility, all of us, is to our children. And today we all know that too many parents still walk away from that obligation. That threatens the education, the health of our children and the future of our country.**

One of the main reasons single mothers go on welfare is that fathers have failed to meet their responsibilities to the children. Even when a family manages to stay out of poverty a father's failure to pay child support puts mothers who are raising children by themselves under terrible pressure. A lot of women are forced to work two jobs, to work at night or simply to worry sick about their children either because they're away from them all the time or because they're with them but they don't have enough to support them.

When fathers neglect support of their children it aggravates all the other problems a family faces. When I was governor, and then when I ran for President the first time in 1992 I made child support enforcement a big part of my concerns. I've always asked parents to take responsibility for their children. I've always pledged to do my best to force them to do so if they refused.

We have waged an unprecedented campaign to make deadbeat parents live up to their obligations. Thanks to tougher laws, more sophisticated tracking, and powerful new collection tools we've increased child support collections by 68 percent in the last five years. Almost a million and a half more children are getting child support today.

There are two other signs of success that I would like to report. Last year our effort to find out the identity of fathers allowed us establish paternity in 1.3 million cases, up from only 510,000 in 1992. Our new

national database for identifying deadbeat parents across state lines has found more than 1 million delinquent parents in just the first nine months of its operation. Before we created this database deadbeat parents found it easy to avoid paying up by skipping from job to job or state to state. But with this database there is no where left to run.

With these and other successful child support initiatives we believe that we've made a real difference for people like Sonia and her two fine sons. But we can and must do more. Current law is too soft on the most serious cases of neglect, the cases in which a parent flees across state lines or national borders and skips out on supporting children for a year or more. In 1996 I asked the Attorney General to draft legislation to crack down on this appalling practice. Senators DeWine and Kohl, and Congressman Hyde and Hoyer championed their cause, introduced versions of the legislation and help to secure an overwhelming bipartisan majority for the bill I am proud to sign into law today.

The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 deals with child support evaders in the most serious cases. From now on if you flee across state lines and refuse to pay child support you may be charged with a federal offense, a felony offense, and may land in jail for up to two years. One way or the other people who don't support their children will pay what they must.

I thank all the members of Congress and all the children's advocates who are here today to contributed this major victory to our children. Now we can work together to ensure that the progress we have made on child support is not accidentally undone; let me mention that, one more very important issue. Under bankruptcy reform bills now in the Senate and House some mothers could find themselves in competition with powerful banks and credit card companies to collect the child support they need. In that competition I think we all know who would lose, our children.

We are working with Congress now and we will continue to do so to produce a bankruptcy reform bill that demands responsibility from both debtors and creditors and stems abuse. But any bill must make protecting child support payments a high priority. It would be ironic indeed, after all this work we have done, to increase child support collections -- and here we are signing a bill today to make it more difficult to avoid the collections -- if we turned around and passed a bankruptcy bill that put mothers and their children back in the pack along with other creditors. That's not the right thing to do. So I hope that we will see action on the bankruptcy bills and on the education bills that will reflect the same priority for our children that this bill does today.

And again, let me thank all the advocates and all the sponsors and let me thank Sonia and her two fine sons for being here. This is a happy day for Attorney General Reno and me and I would like to ask you all to come around now and I'll sign the bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: You guys stand on either side here. Sonia you come up here and I'll show you how I sign a bill into law. See I have all these pens because there are all these people who want one. (Laughter.) I have to find a way to use everyone of these pens when I sign this. So don't start laughing at me, all right?

(The President signs the bill.)

Q Mr. President, hasn't this latest rebuff by China cast a really severe pall over your trip to China now? They've really turned you down --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: You mean the Radio Free Asia thing?

Q -- on special appeal -- visas.

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I think they made a mistake and before I leave here, as a matter of fact in just a few minutes, I'm going to do an interview with Radio Free Asia correspondents to send a clear signal that we do believe ideas need visas and that we support freedom of the press in our country.

I think in a way it will help to highlight some of the very important issues that we wanted to discuss. I hope that this trip will not only allow me to learn more about China and allow the American people to learn more about China but will help me to explain America and what we believe in and why to not only the government but to the people of China and this is a good beginning here.

Q Well, have they encouraged you to --

PRESIDENT CLINTON: And this is a good beginning here. I will do my best to do that. I think they made a mistake. And as I said the ironic thing is the Chinese granted more visas to more journalists from more different media outlets than they ever have before. So they were actually showing a greater openness than they have and because they reversed themselves on the Radio Free Asia visas, for reasons I don't understand, they have denied themselves that credit. So, I intend to press this issue by doing the interview in just a few minutes.

Q Is this going to mean that it will be harder for you to reach agreements with the Chinese on detargeting nuclear missiles, on market access -- is this disagreement going to make that a harder process?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I don't know. I hope that we can deal with all these issues independently. I think the Chinese understand, as we do, we've got a big common stake in non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I expect to make some progress. We have a big stake in the Asian economic situation and the difficulties there. We have a big stake in our own bilateral economic relations and the impact that a lot of this will have in terms of integrating China into the global economy.

So I would think that they would not let this get in the way of what is in their self-interest, just as I won't let it get in the way of what is in the interest of the United States, but our values are an important part of our interest.

We don't live by money alone, or even by power alone, but also by our ideals and convictions, so I think it is important to point this up. But I also think it's important that you see it in its proper framework.

The irony -- as I said, this is an ironic situation because the Chinese granted more visas to more different media outlets apparently than ever before. They granted this visa and then reversed themselves. I think it was a mistake and I'll do my best to make it clear why.

Q Are you going to see the dissidents now -- I mean, as a retaliation?

THE PRESIDENT: I'm going to see a number of people from different elements of Chinese society, and I'm going to do what I think is best to promote the cause of human rights.

Q Is the White House taking any symbols of democracy, as has been suggested by some Republican lawmakers such as copies of the American flag or the Constitution?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I'm sorry, I don't have anything to say about that.

Q What about detargeting? You didn't mention that specifically and I had asked you about it. Do you see an agreement on that?

PRESIDENT CLINTON: I think it would be a good thing if we could reach an agreement on it. I think it does two things. It literally delays significantly the amount of time it takes to arm a missile and aim it, therefore, eliminating the possibility of accidental firing. And it also really increases, I think, the confidence between the countries that were moving to reduce the nuclear threat. So I hope we can do that but I don't know yet. I don't have an announcement to make. But you know -- I've made it very clear that I would like to do that.

Thank you very much.

END 9:30 A.M. EDT

Message Sent To:

---

Diana Fortuna

06/23/98 06:03:13  
PM

Record Type: Record

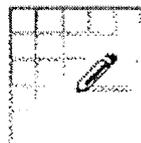
To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Here's the latest version of the child support speech

NEC may still tweak bankruptcy paragraph. 800,000 number is dropped.

----- Forwarded by Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP on 06/23/98 06:06 PM -----



Lowell A. Weiss  
06/23/98 05:01:52 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP, Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP, Sarah Rosen/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: are you going to send us a copy of the version you sent in?

Draft 6/23/98 4:40pm

Lowell Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
REMARKS AT CHILD SUPPORT BILL SIGNING  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
June 24, 1998**

Acknowledge: AG Reno; Sens. Herb Kohl, Mike DeWine; Rep. Steny Hoyer; Judge David Ross, Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement; U.S. Atty. Helen Fahey [FAY-hee]; Asst. U.S. Atty. Jerry Smagala [smuh-GAH-luh]; child support advocates; introducer Sonia [SAH-nya] Evans.

Parents' first and most fundamental responsibility is to support their children. But today, too many parents try to walk -- and sometimes run -- away from that obligation. They threaten the health and education of their children, and often throw their families into poverty. In fact, one of the main reasons single mothers have gone on welfare is because fathers have failed to meet their obligations to their children.

Even if the family manages to stay out of poverty, a father's failure to pay child support puts mothers who are raising children by themselves under terrible pressure. A lot of women are forced to work two jobs, to work at night, and they're worried sick about their children all that time they're away from home. When fathers neglect the support of their

children, it aggravates all of the other problems a family can face.

*When fathers  
pay then child  
support they  
need to flush  
about*

So as Governor and ever since I first ran for President in 1992, I have said to those parents who have chosen to abandon their children by neglecting their child support: "Take responsibility for your children or we will force you to do it." This Administration has waged an unprecedented campaign to make deadbeat parents live up to their obligations to their children. Thanks to tougher laws, more sophisticated tracking, and powerful new collection tools, we have increased child support collections by 68% over the past five years. Almost a million and a half more families are getting the support they need.

There are two other signs of success I want to report. Our effort to find out the identity of fathers allowed us to establish paternity in 1.3 million cases last year, up from only 510,000 in 1992. And our new national database for identifying deadbeat parents across state lines has found more than one million delinquent parents in just its first nine months in operation. Before we created this database, deadbeats found it easy to avoid paying up by skipping from job to job or state to state. But with this database, deadbeats have nowhere left to run.

With these and many other successful child-support initiatives, we have made a real difference for families like Sonia's. But we can do more and we must do more. Current law is too soft on the most egregious cases of neglect -- the cases in which a parent flees across state lines or country borders and skips out on supporting his children for a year or more. In 1996, I charged the Attorney General with drafting legislation to crack down hard on this appalling practice. Senators DeWine and Kohl and Representatives Hyde and Hoyer championed this cause, introduced versions of this legislation, and helped to secure an overwhelming, bipartisan vote. Today, I am proud to sign that bill into law.

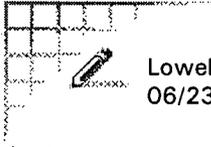
The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 deals with child support evaders in the most serious terms. **From now on, if you flee across state lines and refuse to pay child support, you may now be charged with a federal offense -- a felony offense -- and may land yourself in jail for up to two years. One way or the other, if you don't support your children, you will pay.** I thank all of the Members of Congress and all of the children's advocates here today who contributed to this major victory for America's children.

And now we must work together to ensure that the progress we have made on child support is not accidentally undone. Under both bankruptcy reform bills now in Congress, some mothers will find themselves in competition with powerful banks and credit card companies to collect the child support that they're owed. In that competition, we all know who will lose the contest -- our children. My Administration will work with Congress to produce a bankruptcy reform bill that demands responsibility from both creditors and debtors, while stemming abuse. But protecting child support payments must be our bottom line.

Together, we are showing that responsibility is the key to meeting difficult challenges like crime, welfare, and poverty. And by insisting on greater responsibility from parents, we have made remarkable progress on child support collections. And I am confident that we can

make even more progress with the bill I am signing today and with a careful approach to bankruptcy reform. But, ultimately, we will only meet this challenge if we recognize that governments don't raise children; parents do. We need everyone to take responsibility, to give children the love and support they deserve, to show them the meaning of right and wrong. If we do this, our families, our communities, and our nation will thrive in the 21st century. Thank you and God bless you.

###



Lowell A. Weiss  
06/23/98 02:43:44 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: staffed draft bill signing

Draft 6/23/98 1:20pm

Lowell Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
REMARKS AT CHILD SUPPORT BILL SIGNING  
THE WHITE HOUSE**

**June 24, 1998**

Acknowledge: AG Reno; Sens. Herb Kohl, Mike DeWine, Orrin Hatch, Patrick Leahy; Reps. Steny Hoyer, Henry Hyde, John Conyers; Judge David Ross, Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement; child support advocates; introducer Sonia [SOH-nya] Evans.

Parents' first and most fundamental responsibility is to support their children. But today, too many parents try to walk -- and sometimes run -- away from that obligation. They threaten the health and education of their children, and often throw their families into poverty. In fact, one in TK mothers on welfare today would be able to leave the rolls tomorrow if the father of their children would simply pay the child support he owes.

Even if the family manages to stay out of poverty, a father's failure to pay child support puts mothers who are raising children by themselves under terrible pressure. A lot of women are forced to work two jobs, to work at night, and they're worried sick about their children all that time they're away from home. When fathers neglect the support of their children, it aggravates all of the other problems a family can face.

So as Governor and ever since I first ran for President in 1992, I have said to those parents who have chosen to abandon their children by neglecting their child support: "Take responsibility for your children or we will force you to do it." This Administration has waged an unprecedented campaign to make deadbeat parents live up to their obligations to their children. Thanks to tougher laws, more sophisticated tracking, and powerful new collection tools, we have increased child support collections by 68% over the past five years. Almost a million and a half more families are getting the support they need.

There are two other signs of success I want to report. Our effort to find out the

identity of fathers allowed us to establish paternity in 1.3 million cases last year, up from only 510,000 in 1992. And our new national database for identifying deadbeat parents across state lines has found more than one million delinquent parents in just its first nine months in operation. Before we created this database, deadbeats found it easy to avoid paying up by skipping from job to job or state to state. But with this database, deadbeats have nowhere left to run.

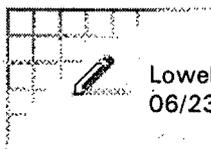
With these and many other successful child-support initiatives, we have made a real difference for families like Sonia's. But we can do more and we must do more. Current law is too soft on the most egregious cases of neglect -- the cases in which a parent flees across state lines or country borders and skips out on supporting his children for many months or even years. In 1996, I charged the Attorney General with drafting legislation to crack down hard on this appalling practice. Senators DeWine and Kohl and Representatives Hyde and Hoyer championed this cause, introduced versions of this legislation, and helped to secure an overwhelming, bipartisan vote. Today, I am proud to sign that bill into law.

The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 deals with the worst child support evaders in the most serious terms. **From now on, if you flee across state lines and refuse to pay child support for an extended period, you may now be charged with a federal offense -- a felony offense -- and may land yourself in jail for up to two years. One way or the other, if you don't support your children, you will pay.** I thank all of the Members of Congress and all of the children's advocates here today who contributed to this major victory for America's children.

And now we must work together to ensure that the progress we have made on child support is not accidentally undone. Under both bankruptcy reform bills now in Congress, some mothers will find themselves in competition with powerful banks and credit card companies to collect the child support that they're owed. In that competition, we all know who will lose the contest -- our children. My Administration will work with Congress to produce a bankruptcy reform bill that demands responsibility from both creditors and debtors, while stemming abuse. But protecting child support payments must be our bottom line.

Together, we are showing that responsibility is the key to meeting difficult challenges like crime, welfare, and poverty. And by insisting on greater responsibility from parents, we have made remarkable progress on child support collections. And I am confident that we can make even more progress with the bill I am signing today and with a careful approach to bankruptcy reform. But, ultimately, we will only meet this challenge if we recognize that governments don't raise children; parents do. We need everyone to take responsibility, to give children the love and support they deserve, to show them the meaning of right and wrong. If we do this, our families, our communities, and our nation will thrive in the 21st century. Thank you and God bless you.

###



Lowell A. Weiss  
06/23/98 10:33:26 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP, Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP, Cathy R. Mays/OPD/EOP, Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP

cc:  
Subject: child support draft (minus conclusion)

Folks,

We need to get this to the President at the beginning of his phone and office time -- 2 p.m. I'd appreciate changes and comments by 12 noon at the latest. Also, you'll notice that I've left two TKs -- one for the statistic on welfare rolls and the other for the introducer. If you can help fill either, please let me know. Thank you very much.

lw

Draft 6/23/98 10:30am  
Lowell Weiss

**PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON  
REMARKS AT CHILD SUPPORT BILL SIGNING  
THE WHITE HOUSE  
June 24, 1998**

*how many have we moved Barbara*

The quiet crisis of child support is an outrage our families and our nation cannot tolerate. Parents' first and most fundamental responsibility is to support their children. But today, too many parents try to walk -- and sometimes run -- away from that obligation. Too many parents believe it's fine to bring children into the world and then never lift a finger to help them make their way through life.

*or onto the welfare rolls.*

When a parent leaves the home and fails to pay the child support he legally owes, it can throw a family into poverty. In fact, one in TK mothers on welfare today would be able to leave the rolls tomorrow if the father of their children would simply pay the child support he owes. Even if the family manages to stay out of poverty, a father's failure to pay child support puts mothers who are raising children by themselves under terrible pressure. A lot of women are forced to work two jobs, to work at night, and they're worried sick about their children all that time they're away from home. When fathers neglect the support of their children, it aggravates all of the other problems a family can face.



So ever since I first ran for President in 1992, I have made child support a top priority. This Administration has waged an unprecedented and sustained campaign to make ~~deadbeat~~ parents live up to their obligations to their children. Thanks to tougher laws, better tracking,

and new collection tools, we have increased child support collections by 68% over the past five years. Almost a million and a half more families are getting the support they need.

There are two other signs of success I want to report. Our effort to help states find out the identity of fathers at the time a baby is born is now allowing us to establish paternity in almost all cases of out-of-wedlock births, up from just 42% in 1992. And our new national database for identifying deadbeat parents across state lines has found more than one million delinquent parents in just its first nine months in operation. That's one million deadbeats who would not have been found any other way.

*And our efforts to help states identify fathers at the time a baby is born have increased paternity by*

With these and many other successful child-support initiatives, we have made a real difference for families like TK's. But we can do more and we must do more. Current law is too soft on the most egregious cases of neglect -- the cases in which a parent flees across state lines or country borders and skips out on supporting his children for many months or even years. In 1996, I charged the Attorney General with drafting legislation to crack down hard on this appalling practice. Senators DeWine and Kohl and Representatives Hyde and Hoyer championed this cause, introduced versions of this legislation, and helped to secure an overwhelming, bipartisan vote. Today, I am proud to sign that bill into law.

by two-  
ad-  
half  
time.  
\$12,000  
→  
1-3 mi

The Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 deals with the worst child support evaders in the most serious terms. From now on, if you flee across state lines and refuse to pay child support for an extended period, you may now be charged with a federal offense -- a felony offense -- and may land yourself in jail for up to two years. As any family who has suffered this kind of willful neglect will attest, this is a reasonable response to an inexcusable act. I thank all of the Members of Congress and all of the children's advocates here today who contributed to this major victory for America's children.

And now we must work together to ensure that the progress we have made on child support is not accidentally undone. I am concerned that some versions of the bankruptcy reform legislation now under consideration in Congress would do just that. Under one leading proposal, when a father declares personal bankruptcy, a mother may have to compete with powerful banks and credit card companies for the money they're owed. If that competition starts, we all know who will lose that contest -- our children. Some changes to consumer bankruptcy laws are in order, but mothers and children should keep their priority under the child support laws. They shouldn't have to stand in line for the support they need.

*- new hires  
- quarterly wage  
- unemployment* } *it's all new*  
*and*