POINTS of VIEW

COMMENTARY AND ANALYSIS

INSIDE

The Lobbying Disclosure Act may be amended yet again, but this bill isn't enough. *Page 26*

The Clinton and Dole campaigns are chock full of dumb legal ideas, says Stuart Taylor Jr. *Page 27*

Letters *Page 29*

Shaping the Rules for Belonging

Immigration and Affirmative Action Can Work Together

BY FRANK H. WU

As demonstrated by ballot referendums in California, pending bills in Congress, and a seemingly endless series of speeches and books, immigration and affirmative action are among the most controversial issues of the day. In an increasingly multiracial society, the immigration debate has much to teach us about the affirmative action debate, and vice versa.

Yet, although the two subjects should be discussed together, they rarely are. And when such debate has occurred, it has been has been based on the false assumption that liberal immigration and affirmative action cannot be reconciled.

The crux of the tension is the widely held perception that African-Americans are the beneficiaries of affirmative action, while Latinos are the beneficiaries of liberal immigration laws. Underlying this is the premise that these groups must compete against one another in a zero-sum game of sorts.

For example, the Federation for American Immigration Reform—an anti-immigrant lobbying group—argues that immigration should be stopped because of affirmative action. FAIR spokesman Mark Kirkorian has written that "if race-based affirmative action continues as a means to right historical wrongs, it is immoral to allow large-scale immigration of covered ethnic groups." He contends that it is "immoral" because "black immigrants, at least partly aided by affirmative action, are actually displacing black Americans less able to compete." Kirkorian gives a new version of an inflammatory cliché: "a wealthy, Oxford-educated, Peruvian doctor [could] immigrate to the U.S. and claim affirmative action benefits at the expense of the son of a coal miner from Appalachia."

KAREN PEACOCK

'WHITE RACIAL NATIONALISM'

One leading figure in the movement to close the borders has linked the alleged evils of affirmative action to immigration in explicitly racial terms. In his best-seller, *Alien Nation: Common Sense About America's Immigration Disaster* (recently reissued in paperback), journalist Peter Brimelow—himself an immigrant from England—proposes that immigration should be banned because it exacerbates the effects of affirmative action: by making more people of color the beneficiaries of these programs, to the detriment of deserving whites.

Brimelow spends page after page asserting such things as: "The American nation has always had a specific ethnic core. And that core has been white." In the words of Michael Lind, a *New Yorker* reviewer who, like Brimelow, believes that immigration levels are too high, Brimelow's argument "looks very much like a defense of old-fashioned white racial nationalism."

At the same time, those such as Terry Eastland, who urges a broad legal and moral colorblind approach to governing, have relied on immigration policies as the basis for a new argument against affirmative action. An official in the Reagan administration, Eastland recently published *Ending Affirmative Action: The Case for Colorblind Justice*, in which he attacks affirmative action as "a policy begun to remedy historic discrimination against blacks [that] is now [as a result of immigration] a policy for which Hispanics and Asians stand to be the principal beneficiaries."

Eastland, unlike Brimelow, however, rejects the notion that race should figure into the test for American citizenship. His conclusion, then, also differs from that of Brimelow. Instead, he suggests that a race-neutral immigration policy is a compelling reason to end affirmative action. According to Eastland, "the question that the American experiment" of being an immigrant nation "ultimately raises is whether we have any choice but colorblind law."

Similarly, Lawrence Fuchs, a pro-immigration chairman of a former federal commission on the subject, has opined in *The Washington Post* that immigrants should be denied affirmative action. He argued that allowing immigrants affirmative action is "bad for them and bad for the United States" because it implies "special benefits merely because of their membership in a designated group . . . contrary to the American civil rights compact . . . of individual not group rights."

Brimelow and Eastland (and Fuchs) cannot all be right. Advocates like Brimelow

SEE **BELONGING RULES,** PAGE 28

Frank H. Wu is an assistant professor at Howard University School of Law. This article is based on his article, "The Limits of Borders: A Moderate Proposal for Immigration Reform," in 7 STANFORD LAW & POLICY REVIEW 35 (1996).

PHOTOCOPY PRESERVATION

The Washington Post
FINAL
Inside: The Weekly, Classified, Washington Home
Today's Contents on Page A2
Prices May Vary in Areas Outside Metropolitan Washington (See Box on A4)
25¢

Clinton Avows Support For Affirmative Action

'Mend It, but Don't End It,' President Says in Speech

By John F. Harris
Washington Post Staff Writer

Five months after questioning the future of affirmative action, President Clinton yesterday reached into his past for the answer, reciting the nation's racial progress since his days growing up in segregated Arkansas and vowing to support continued government intervention on behalf of minorities and women.

"My experiences with discrimination are rooted in the South and in the legacy slavery left," Clinton said at the start of a solemn speech at the National Archives. He concluded: "The job of ending discrimination in this country is not done. . . . We should reaffirm the principle of affirmative action and fix the practices. We should have a simple slogan: Mend it, but don't end it."

The president sketched in broad terms the changes he would like: a crackdown on fraud in government contracts steered to minorities and women under "set-aside" programs, for instance, and ensuring that firms only benefit for a fixed period of time.

The thrust of the speech, though, was a full-throated endorsement of government preference programs, not the political retreat that the administration had mulled last February when Clinton began a government-wide review of affirmative action by saying, "We shouldn't be defending things that we can't defend."

Many of the leaders of minority and women's groups who earlier had expressed deep resentment of Clinton's review were in the audience for his speech and roared their approval. Jesse L. Jackson, who has been threatening to challenge Clinton for the presidency, offered lavish praise in a telephone interview from California. By contrast, Republican presidential candidates rushed out statements accusing Clinton of supporting reverse discrimination and promising to make the issue a centerpiece of the 1996 campaign.

Some moderate Democrats, who had urged Clinton to aggressively restructure affirmative action to put less emphasis on race and more on helping low-income people of all sorts, offered tepid comments. Sen. Joseph I. Lieber-

See CLINTON, A12, Col. 4

Moving Back To Liberal Side Of the Divide

By Ann Devroy
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Clinton yesterday interrupted his long summer of moving to the political center with a full embrace of affirmative action, bringing into sharp focus a fundamental difference with Republicans he once thought of blurring.

"This is what I believe," Clinton said in arguing that affirmative action programs that give job, contract and educational preferences to women and minorities to make up for past discrimination are fair, necessary and in need of some reform but not repeal.

NEWS ANALYSIS

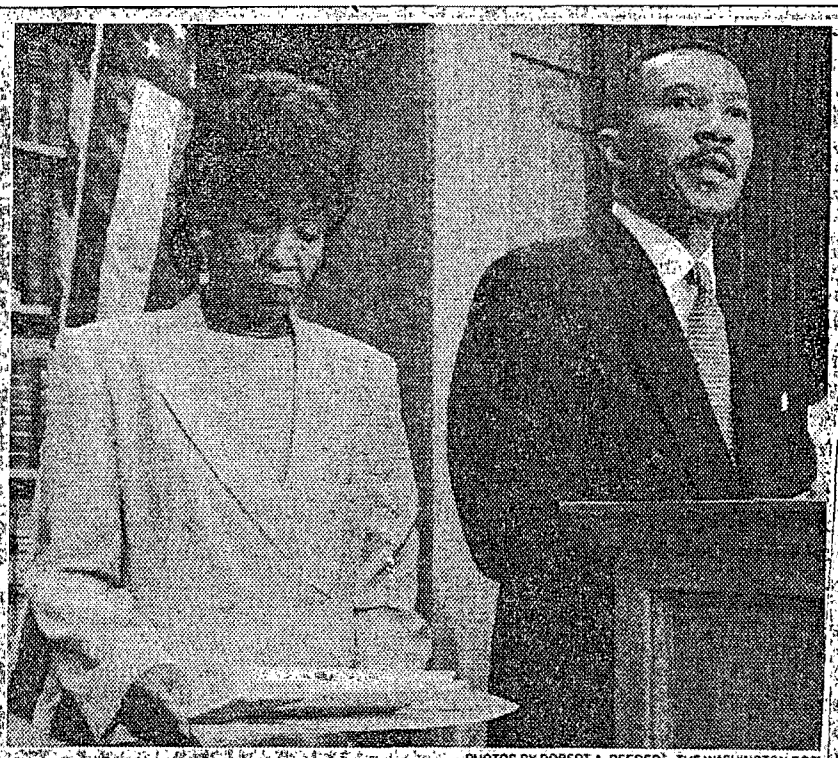
The "mend it, don't end it" slogan for Clinton's current views put to rest five months of uncertainty as supporters weighed presidential statements, watched Clinton tack to the center and waited for the administration's journey into the substance and politics of affirmative action to come to an end.

Republicans roundly rejected what Clinton called "common ground" on the issue. California Gov. Pete Wilson, who is seeking the GOP presidential nomination, represented the view of virtually all the GOP presidential contenders when he said of Clinton's new/old policy, "He should have said end it. You can't mend it."

Virtually every organized affirmative action constituency group and ad-

See ANALYSIS, A13, Col. 1

PHOTOCOPY PRESERVATION



PHOTOS BY ROBERT A. REEDER—THE WASHINGTON POST

Rep. Kweisi Mfume (D-Md.), right, gives Congressional Black Caucus reaction to president's speech as Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) listens.

Clinton Avows Support For Affirmative Action

CLINTON, From A1

man (Conn.), chairman of the centrist Democratic Leadership Council, did not criticize Clinton but took an opposite interpretation of recent Supreme Court decisions. He said rulings such as *Adarand v. Pena*, which requires that preference programs be narrowly tailored to achieve a "compelling" government interest, mean that the days are unavoidably numbered for many race-based programs.

But Clinton, faced with a sure fight next year, decided that he was more comfortable politically and personally with the traditional allies of affirmative action by his side. Despite his equivocating last winter, he ultimately decided he could defend virtually everything the government is doing to push educational institutions and private firms to open doors wider for minorities and women.

His argument was that widespread prejudice still exists and that greater inclusiveness in education and hiring benefits the economy as a whole.

He recalled that in 1960 Atlanta gave itself the slogan, "The city too busy to hate." While acknowledging that some residents of that former segregationist redoubt did occasionally find time to resist integration, Clinton said, "I am confident that Atlanta's success—it is now home to more for-

EXECUTIVE ORDER

As part of his just-concluded review of affirmative action, President Clinton yesterday signed an executive order directing Cabinet secretaries and agency officials to review all affirmative action programs to see that they meet four tests.

"Any program must be eliminated or reformed," Clinton said, "if it:

- **creates** a quota.
- **creates** preferences for unqualified individuals.
- **creates** reverse discrimination.
- **continues** even after its equal opportunity purposes have been achieved."

The order, Clinton said, is an effort to bring the government into compliance with the Supreme Court's recent ruling in *Adarand v. Pena*, which held that federal affirmative action programs must meet a higher legal standard to be judged constitutional. Among other things, the

PHOTOCOPY PRESERVATION

corporations than any other American city, and one year from today it will begin to host the Olympics—all began when people got too busy to hate."

Much of the current backlash against affirmative action, Clinton said, comes not from cases of reverse discrimination, which he argued are rare, but from the "sweeping historic changes" taking place in the global economy that have left many lower- and middle-income whites struggling to keep pace.

"Affirmative action did not cause the great economic problems of the American middle class," Clinton said. "It is simply wrong to play politics with the issue of affirmative action and divide our country at a time when, if we're really going to change things, we have to be united."

Those words won Clinton the warmest praise he has received in months from Jackson, who earlier had accused the president of contributing to a "scapegoating" trend.

"He set a strong moral tone for the country, and I thought it was presidential in the best sense of the word," Jackson said in an interview, before adding that "it will take more than one speech" before his concerns about Clinton are sufficiently allayed to rule out a presidential bid.

While Clinton often spends too much time figuring the political angles, Jackson said yesterday, "his heart and his head were synchronized."

Many women's groups struck a similar note. Marcia Greenberger, of the National Woman's Law Center, said Clinton's speech "was extraordinary in the president's ability to articulate the country's stake in affirmative action, both as a practical matter and a moral necessity."

GOP leaders were almost uniformly derogatory in their comments. Clinton said his concept of affirmative action does not include rigid "quotas," only flexible goals, and does not allow the hiring of unqualified people. But Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.), a presidential candidate and affirmative action supporter turned critic, called this a dodge.

> Among other things, the court said that race-based programs must serve a compelling government interest and be narrowly tailored to reach their goal.

The issue is not the quota vs. goal distinction, he said in a statement, but "the practice of dividing Americans through any form of preferential treatment. . . . The real issue here isn't preferences for the unqualified, which virtually every American opposes, but preferences for the 'less qualified' versus those who are 'more qualified.' "

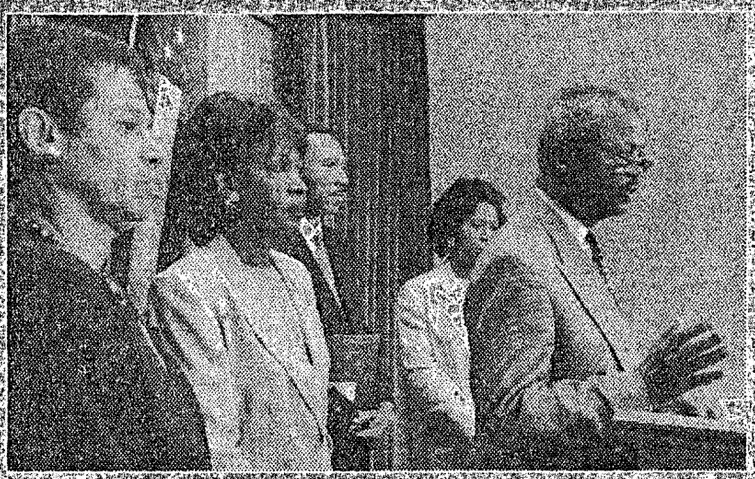
GOP presidential candidate Patrick J. Buchanan said "affirmative action belongs in the same graveyard as Jim Crow."

And another Republican contender, California Gov. Pete Wilson, drew special ire from the White House with his comment that Clinton's policies were encouraging "tribalism" in American life. "For Governor Wilson to use a word like 'tribalism' is the kind of code-word politics that Republicans have engaged in for generations," said White House senior adviser George Stephanopoulos, who oversaw Clinton's review.

Republicans in Congress are divided about the scope and focus of efforts to overhaul affirmative action. But there are two principal legislative thrusts: One is a sweeping bill, being sponsored in the Senate by Dole and in the House by Rep. Charles T. Canaday (R-Fla.), that would eliminate gender and race-based federal affirmative action programs. Dole said he would introduce his bill next week; Canady plans his before the August recess.

The other initiative is an attempt to eliminate set-asides for minorities and women in federal contracting through amendments to appropriations bills scheduled to reach the floors of the House and Senate next week. Leading that effort are Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) and Rep. Gary A. Franks (R-Conn.).

Staff writer Kevin Merida contributed to this report.



Also giving reactions were Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), left, and Reps. Waters and Mfume, Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Tex.) and Donald M. Payne (D-N.J.).

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

After Series of Moves to Center, Clinton Stakes Out Traditional Position

ANALYSIS, From A1

vocate—almost of all of whom are aligned with traditional Democratic Party principles—rose to applaud. Women's rights groups and civil rights groups. Hispanic groups and groups representing African Americans. Congressional liberals and organized labor. Jesse L. Jackson. All those that have spent long, anxious months lobbying the president to stick with them on affirmative action, but fearful that he would not.

Since the November elections, when Republicans seized control of Congress and Clinton began actively planning his own reelection, he has made a series of moves, large and small, to the center of the political spectrum. The largest was his endorsement of a balanced federal budget within 10 years, followed by addresses that emphasized the constitutionality of silent school prayer, his opposition to television violence and his call for a return to traditional community values.

But he has drawn the line on two traditionally liberal Democratic positions: his support for abortion rights and for gun control.

On affirmative action, Clinton seemed of two minds, and sometimes more. In February, he opened what one of his aides called "the Pandora's box" of affirmative action when he warned congressional Democrats that the GOP would try to use the issue of racial preferences to slice into his—and their—traditional multiracial coalition. The Republicans' goal, he said, was to use the issue to respond to the fears of white voters, especially men, and bring them to the GOP fold and keep them there.

Ordering a review of all the government's affirmative action programs, Clinton said the party had to stand behind the "best principles" of affirmative action but recommend changes where there are problems.

The review produced a full-scale anxiety attack among traditional Democratic groups, made worse a month later, when the president expressed a preference for programs based on economic need, not race or gender. "I want to emphasize need-based programs where we can because they work better and have a bigger impact and generate broader [public] support," he said.

Speaking of programs that provide special advantages to people based on race or gender alone, he said, "It is difficult to draw a conclusion that they even do what they were intended to do in the first place."

But Clinton, who is passionately attached to the concept of finding "middle ground," now stands, by most political measurements, on the liberal side of the divide over affirmative action. Yesterday, he staked his ground as between a government that declares discrimination illegal and leaves it at that, and one that takes "draconian" measures like imposing quotas.

Republicans, who were united in saying that preferences for one group can only mean discrimination against another, are unlikely to play on the ground Clinton has set out. But some advisers said he had no real choice.

One Democrat whose advice was sought said the president "would have looked so incredibly political" and we told him over and over that because everyone, including the white males he might be trying to impress, would see this as politically motivated—moving away from supporting something he has backed all his career—he wouldn't have gotten any credit from them anyway.

The president, she said, "did the principled thing. I think it will also be the politic thing."

Like most, she was uncertain until she heard the speech if Clinton would do what White House officials said he would do. Tuesday night, preparing for the address, the White House began lining up groups to issue statements of support, a routine procedure. A leader of one of the groups, reflecting the distrust that has grown between such groups and the Democratic president, said, "I told them I was prepared, of course, to issue the statement—after I hear the speech."

A member of a women's rights group put out a similar word: "If the president says what he told us he was going to say, we are very excited and delighted and will put out statements. If he doesn't, we're prepared for that, too."

PHOTOCOPY PRESERVATION

'Give All Americans a Chance . . .'

— Associated Press

Following are excerpts of President Clinton's remarks yesterday on affirmative action:

In recent weeks I have begun a conversation with the American people about our fate and our duty to prepare our nation not only to meet the new century but to live and lead in a world transformed to a degree seldom seen in all of our history.

Much of this change is good, but it is not all good, and all of us are affected by it. Therefore, we must reach beyond our fears and our divisions to a new time of great and common purpose.

Our challenge is twofold: first, to restore the American dream of opportunity and the American value of responsibility; and second, to bring our country together amid all our diversity into a stronger community so that we can find common ground and move forward as one.

More than ever, these two endeavors are inseparable. I am absolutely convinced we cannot restore economic opportunity or solve our social problems unless we find a way to bring the American people together. To bring our people together we must openly and honestly deal with the issues that divide us.

Today I want to discuss one of those issues: affirmative action. It is in a way ironic that this issue should be divisive today because affirmative action began 25 years ago . . . by a Republican president with bipartisan support. It began simply as a means to an end of enduring national purpose: equal opportunity for all Americans.

It is a moral imperative, a constitutional mandate and a legal necessity.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Our whole history can be seen, first, as an effort to preserve these rights, and then as an effort to make them real in the lives of all our citizens.

We know that from the beginning there was a great gap between the plain meaning of our creed and the meaner reality of our daily lives. Back then only white, male property-owners could vote. Black slaves were not even counted as whole people, and Native Americans were regarded as little more than an obstacle to our great national progress.

Emancipation, women's suffrage, civil rights, voting rights, equal rights, the struggle for the rights of the disabled, all these and other struggles are milestones on America's often rocky but fundamentally righteous journey to close the gap between the ideals enshrined in these treasures here in the National Archives and the reality of our daily lives.

When we allow people to pit us against one another or spend energy denying opportunity based on our differences, everyone is held back. But when we give all Americans a chance to develop and use their talents, to be full partners in our common enterprise, then everybody is pushed forward.

[Over the last three decades,] we opened our hearts and minds and changed our ways. But selection of any employee or student solely on the basis of race or gender without regard to merit.

Let me say that affirmative action has also done more than just open the doors of opportunity to individual Americans.

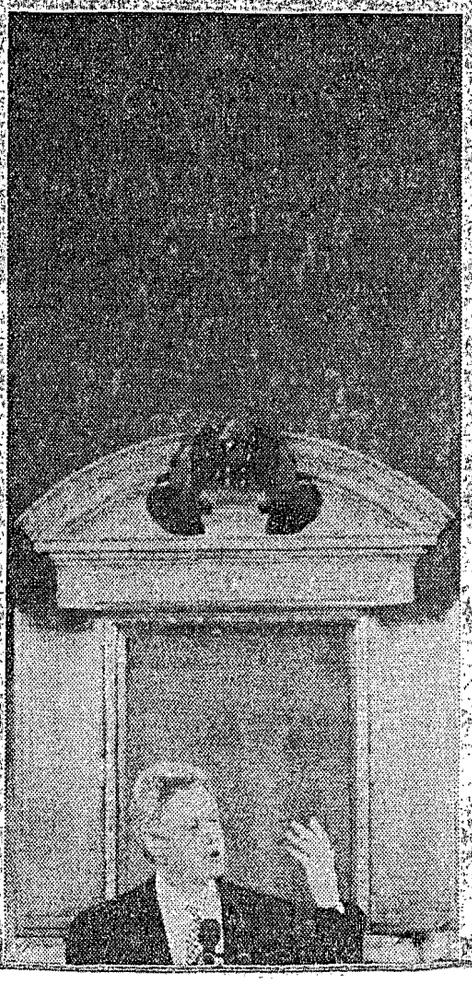
Most economists who've studied it agree that affirmative action has also been an important part of closing gaps in economic opportunity in our society, thereby strengthening the entire economy. . . .

Now, there are those who say, my fellow Americans, that even good affirmative action programs are no longer needed, that it should be enough to resort to the courts or to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in cases of actual provable individual discrimination, because there is no longer any systematic discrimination in our society.

In deciding how to answer that, let us consider the facts. The unemployment rate for African Americans remains about twice that of whites. The Hispanic rate is still much higher. Women have narrowed the earnings gap but still make only 72 percent as much as men do for comparable jobs.

The average income for an Hispanic woman with a college degree is still less than the average income of a white man with a high school diploma.

According to the recently completed glass



honest debate about how we all got into the fix we are in and what we are all going to do together to get out of it.

That explanation, the affirmative action explanation for the fix we're in is just wrong—it is just wrong. Affirmative action did not cause the great economic problems of the American middle class.

And because most minorities and women are either members of that middle class or people who are poor who are struggling to get into it, we must also admit that affirmative action alone won't solve the problems of minorities and women who seek to be a part of the American dream.

To do that, we have to have an economic strategy that reverses the decline in wages and the growth of poverty among working people. Without that, women, minorities and white males will all be in trouble in the future.

I must say I think it is ironic that some of those, not all, but some of those who call for an end to affirmative action also advocate policies which will make the real economic problems of the anxious middle class even worse.

They talk about opportunity and being for equal opportunity for everyone, and then they reduce investment in equal opportunity on an even-handed basis. For example, if the real goal is economic opportunity for all Americans, why in the world would we reduce our investment in education, from Head Start to affordable college loans? Why don't we make college loans available to every American instead?

If the real goal is empowering all middle-class Americans and empowering poor people to work their way into the middle class without regard to race or gender, why in the world would the people who advocate that turn around and raise taxes on our poorest working families or reduce the money available for education and training when they lose their jobs or they're living on poverty wages, or increase the cost of housing for lower-income working people with children? Why would we do that?

If we're going to empower America, we have to do more than talk about it, we have to do it. And we surely have learned that we cannot empower all Americans by a simple strategy of taking opportunity away from some Americans.

So to those who use this as a political strategy to divide us, we must say no. We must say no.

But to those who raise legitimate questions about the way affirmative action works or who raise the larger question about the genuine problems and anxieties of all the American people and their sense of being left behind and treated unfairly, we must say yes, you are entitled to answers to your questions. We must say yes to that.

Now that's why I ordered this review of all of our affirmative action programs, a review designed to look at the facts, not the politics of affirmative action. This review concluded that affirmative actions remains a useful tool for widening economic and educational opportuni-

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

hearts and minds and changed our ways, but not without pressure—the pressure of court decisions, legislation, executive action and the power of examples in the public and private sector.

Along the way, we learned that laws alone do not change society, that old habits and thinking patterns are deeply ingrained and die hard, that more is required to really open the doors of opportunity.

Our search to find ways to move more quickly to equal opportunity led to the development of what we now call affirmative action. The purpose of affirmative action is to give our nation a way to finally address the systemic exclusion of individuals of talent, on the basis of their gender or race, from opportunities to develop, perform, achieve and contribute. Affirmative action is an effort to develop a systematic approach to open the doors of education, employment and business development opportunities to qualified individuals who happen to be members of groups that have experienced long-standing and persistent discrimination.

It is a policy that grew out of many years of trying to navigate between two unacceptable paths. One was to say simply that we declared discrimination illegal, and that's enough.

We saw that that way still relegated blacks with college degrees to jobs as railroad porters, and kept women with degrees under a glass ceiling, with a lower paycheck. The other path was simply to try to impose change by leveling draconian penalties on employers who didn't meet certain imposed, ultimately arbitrary and sometimes unachievable quotas. That too was rejected out of a sense of fairness.

So, a middle ground was developed that would change an inequitable status quo gradually but firmly by building the pool of qualified applicants for college, for contracts, for jobs, and giving more people a chance to learn, work and earn.

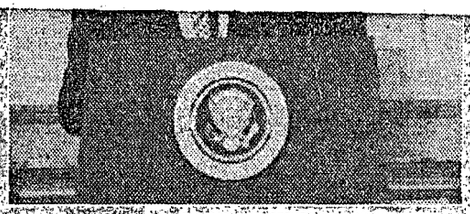
When affirmative action is done right, it is flexible, it is fair, and it works. I know some people are honestly concerned about the times affirmative action doesn't work, when it's done in the wrong way. And I know there are times when some employers don't use it in the right way.

They may cut corners and treat a flexible goal as a quota. They may give opportunities to people who are unqualified instead of those who deserve it. They may in so doing allow a different kind of discrimination. When this happens it is also wrong, but it isn't affirmative action, and it is not legal.

So, when our administration finds cases of that sort, we will enforce the law aggressively. The Justice Department files hundreds of cases every year attacking discrimination in employment, including suits on behalf of white males.

Most of these suits, however, affect women and minorities for a simple reason: because the vast majority of discrimination in America is still discrimination against them. But the law does require fairness for everyone, and we are determined to see that that is exactly what the law delivers.

Let me be clear about what affirmative action must not mean and what I won't allow it to be. It does not mean—and I don't favor—the unjustified preference of the unqualified over the qualified of any race or gender. It doesn't mean—and I don't favor—numerical quotas. It doesn't mean—and I don't favor—rejection or



BY JAMES M. THRESHER—THE WASHINGTON POST

President Clinton speaks at National Archives.

ceiling report sponsored by Republican members of Congress, in the nation's largest companies only six-tenths of 1 percent of senior management positions are held by African Americans, four-tenths of a percent by Hispanic Americans, three-tenths of a percent by Asian Americans. Women hold between 3 and 5 percent of these positions. White males make up 43 percent of our work force but hold 95 percent of these jobs.

Just last week the Chicago Federal Reserve Bank reported that black home loan applicants are more than twice as likely to be denied credit as whites with the same qualifications, and that Hispanic applicants are more than 1½ times as likely to be denied loans as whites with the same qualifications.

Last year alone, the federal government received more than 90,000 complaints of employment discrimination based on race, ethnicity or gender; less than 3 percent were for reverse discrimination.

Evidence abounds in other ways of the persistence of the kind of bigotry that can affect the way we think, even if we're not conscious of it in hiring and promotion and business and educational decisions. Crimes and violence based on hate against Asians, Hispanics, African Americans and other minorities are still with us.

And I'm sorry to say that the worst and most recent evidence of this involves a recent report of federal law enforcement officials in Tennessee attending an event literally overflowing with racism, a sickening reminder of just how pervasive these kinds of attitudes still are. If anybody who works in federal law enforcement thinks that that kind of behavior is acceptable, they ought to think about working somewhere else.

If affirmative action has worked, and if there is evidence that discrimination still exists on a wide scale in ways that are conscious and unconscious, then why should we get rid of it, as many people are urging?

Some question the effectiveness or the fairness of particular affirmative action programs.

Some question the fundamental purpose of the effort. There are people who honestly believe that affirmative action always amounts to group preferences over individual merit, that affirmative action always leads to reverse discrimination, that ultimately, therefore, it demeans those who benefit from it and discriminates against those who are not helped by it.

If you say now you're against affirmative action because the government is using its power or the private sector is using its power to help minorities at the expense of the majority, that gives you a way of explaining away the economic distress that a majority of Americans honestly feel.

It gives you a way of turning their resentment against the minorities or against a particular government program instead of having an

ly.

The model used by the military, the Army in particular—and I'm delighted to have the commanding general of the Army here today because he sets such a fine example—has been especially successful because it emphasizes education and training, ensuring that it has a wide pool of qualified candidates for every level of promotion.

That approach has given us the most racially diverse and best-qualified military in our history. There are more opportunities for women and minorities there than ever before. And now there are over 50 generals and admirals who are Hispanic, Asian or African Americans.

This review also found that the executive order on employment practices of large federal contractors also has helped to bring more fairness and inclusion into the work force.

We also looked at the way we award procurement contracts under the programs known as set-asides. There's no question that these programs have helped to build up firms owned by minorities and women, who historically have been excluded from the old-boy networks in these areas. It has helped a new generation of entrepreneurs to flourish, opening new paths to self-reliance and an economic growth in which all of us ultimately share.

Today I am directing all our agencies to comply with the Supreme Court's Adarand decision, and also to apply the four standards of fairness to all our affirmative action programs that I have already articulated: no quotas in theory or practice; no illegal discrimination of any kind, including reverse discrimination; no preference for people who are not qualified for any job or opportunity; and as soon as a program has succeeded, it must be retired.

Any program that doesn't meet these four principles must be eliminated or reformed to meet them.

But let me be clear: affirmative action has been good for America.

Now affirmative action has not always been perfect, and affirmative action should not go on forever. It should be changed now to take care of those things that are wrong, and it should be retired when its job is done. I am resolved that that day will come, but the evidence suggests, indeed screams, that that day has not come. The job of ending discrimination in this country is not over.

We've got to find the wisdom and the will to create family-wage jobs for all of the people who want to work, to open the door of college to all Americans, to strengthen families and reduce the awful problems to which our children are exposed, to move poor Americans from welfare to work.

This is the work of our administration: to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives, to give families and communities the tools they need to solve their own problems.

It is in our moral, legal and practical interest to see that every person can make the most of his own life.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The full text of the speech is available on Digital Ink, The Post's on-line service. To learn about Digital Ink, call 800-510-5104, ext. 9000.

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION