

Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION CODE
001. memo	Stan Greenberg to POTUS et al; re: The Academic Retreat (5 pages)	01/04/1994	P5
002. memo	Todd Stern to Gergen, Dreyer, Boorstin; re: State of the Union (2 pages)	01/06/1994	P5

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COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Robert Boorstin (Speechwriting)
OA/Box Number: 419

FOLDER TITLE:

SOTU 1994 - Theme Memos

Jimmie Purvis
2006-0460-F
ip1739

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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To: Gergen, Dreyer, Boorstin
Fr: Todd Stern
Re: State of the Union
Da: January 6, 1994

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Having looked over the transcripts of the two Oval Office State of the Union meetings, the following is a stab at addressing the President's desire to distill what he stands for into two or three memorable ideas, like he did in Arkansas (jobs and schools) and like Reagan did as President (cut taxes, government off our backs, stand up to the Soviets).

It seems to me that the two or three ideas that the President could be seen to stand for would have to involve a conception of what the government can and cannot do as distinguished from specific substantive ideas or initiatives, since its hard to imagine ever being able to boil down this President's activities into two or three main ideas.

The most compelling precedent here is FDR. He also was a whirling dervish of activity, but what he came to stand for was the idea that government had a responsibility to help ordinary people in distress and could do so successfully, while the Republicans of the time embodied inaction and insensitivity. This unifying idea tapped so powerfully into the mood of the country that, while we ran through that historical period, there was no way the Republicans were going to win. They were on the wrong side of that era's Big Idea.

Reagan was obviously different because he really had only two or three big things that he wanted to do. But, even in his case, these ideas were, at least in significant part, about a conception of government. And, as in FDR's case, once Reagan had articulated and positioned himself on the right side of what the public wanted government to do (or not do), it was very tough for the Democrats to get off the mat.

It seems clear now that people are looking for a government that has the energy, drive and commitment to tackle problems -- like health care, job insecurity (education and training), violence -- that were neglected in the anti-government '80s. Yet, at the same time, people remain wary of too much government and skeptical about government's competence to do anything complex (an obvious hurdle on the health care front).

What this President can effectively be seen to embody -- in contrast to the "do-nothing, government-has-no-role-in-fixing our-problems" opposition -- is a government that (i) cares about and has the vision to understand the problems of America and ordinary Americans; (ii) has the energy, commitment, determination and never-quit doggedness to find answers; but (iii) is keenly aware of its own limits -- wearing a green eyeshade fiscally (to hold down the deficit and because the

taxpayers pay the bills), using the private sector as much as possible in crafting solutions, and insisting on responsible behavior from anyone who asks for government help (e.g., limiting welfare, requiring work, imposing material disincentives for illegitimacy, etc.).

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In shorthand, a government wise and caring enough to understand the challenges confronting our era; vigorous enough to address those challenges effectively; and smart enough to know its own limits.

Does any of this advance the ball?