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due. I hope like heck I'm right this time, but I really do feel that it's beginning to move. And with that there will be a return of this innate feeling of American optimism. And when it happens, let's all vow that we will save time to help the other guy, to do what we can to be Points of Light.

We've got the strength. We've got the spirit in our Government. We've got it. You can sense it even in the ravaged communities of Los Angeles. We've got it in ourselves to transform America into the Nation we've dreamed of for generations. So don't listen to those doomsayers. Don't listen to those top 20 seconds that tell you everything that's wrong with the United States of America. We are the freest and the fairest and the best country on the face of the Earth. And we are going to get the job done.

We have nothing to be apologetic for. We've got big problems. But the message, I think, is if we can try this new approach, I believe we can solve them and offer hope to those little kids we saw with their eyes bulging as we came by there today into these little community centers.

Thank you all very much for your support. Save a little energy for the campaign in the fall. I'm going to need you. But I believe we're going to win this election. Thank you very, very much.

Note:. The President spoke at 7:40 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the Hotel Atop the Bellevue. In his remarks, he referred to Peter Terpeluk, Jr., and David Girard-diCarlo, dinner cochairmen; Representative Lawrence Coughlin, Bush-Quayle Pennsylvania cochairman; Barbara Hafer, Pennsylvania auditor-general; Elsie Hillman, Bush-Quayle Pennsylvania chairman; Dexter Baker, Bush-Quayle regional cochairman; Bobby Holt and Wally Ganzi, Bush-Quayle national finance cochairmen; Charlie Kopp, Bush-Quayle Pennsylvania finance chairman; Willie Williams, Philadelphia police commissioner; Bob Martinez, Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy; and Edmond Notebaert, president and chief executive officer, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Statement on Urban Aid Initiatives

May 12, 1992

Today I am discussing with Congress a strategy to bring hope and opportunity to distressed communities. Our action is based on bedrock American values: personal responsibility, work, and family. We must end the cycle of dependency and give all Americans a place at the table of economic opportunity.

Clearly, the time has come to set aside old ideas and try something new. We in Government have a responsibility to act now to guarantee a hopeful future for the children of this Nation, a future where people are safe, neighborhoods can flourish, children can learn, and jobs can be created.

All Americans share the common goals of equal opportunity, advancement, and upward mobility. But the American dream is hindered by too many obstacles: unsafe cities, slow economic growth, an out-of-date education system, and dependency-creating Government programs.

We must start with policies that refocus programs to serve those who are most needy and increase the effectiveness of Government services through innovation, competition, and choice. Our approach is a radical break with the policies of the past. But as Abraham Lincoln once said, "It is time to think and act anew."

My action plan consists of six core components:

(1) "Weed and Seed": Our families cannot thrive and jobs cannot flourish in a climate of lawlessness and fear. Our "Weed and Seed" initiative to combat crime wins back our inner cities by weeding out gang leaders, drug dealers, and career criminals and seeding communities with expanded employment, educational, and social services.

(2) HOPE: When people lack jobs, opportunity, or ownership of property, they have little or no stake in their communities. Our HOPE (Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere) initiative fosters a sense of community pride by offering inner-city residents a chance for homeownership and management of public housing.

(3) Enterprise Zones: We must spark an economic revival in urban America to create jobs and opportunity. Our enterprise zones initiative encourages businesses to reenter our inner cities by creating tax credits, expanding capital investment, and bringing regulatory relief to some of the Nation's most economically depressed areas.

(4) Education Reform: It is time to reform and improve American education. Our education reform strategy, America 2000, envisions an America in which all parents have the choice of the best schools available, public, private, or parochial.

(5) Welfare Reform: While no one disputes that government has an obligation to provide a safety net to those in need, there is too much emphasis on programs that penalize ambition, promote alienation, and destroy individual dignity. We must encourage family formation and allow individuals to fulfill their potential for a productive, meaningful life.

(6) Youth Jobs—Youth Apprenticeships and Job Training 2000: The health of our cities and our economy depend on a skilled work force and facilitating the transition of students from school to work. Prompt enactment of our proposals can help provide job opportunities and training this summer.

Remarks on Urban Aid Initiatives and an Exchange With Reporters

May 12, 1992

The President. I will be talking to the leadership in a few minutes, and we will be proposing these initiatives, all of them designed to increase personal responsibility, offer hope to these communities. And it's a good program.

I think most are familiar with "Weed and Seed," to weed out the criminals and then seed the neighborhoods. We talked about this up in Philadelphia yesterday and in Los Angeles last week, and I think there's strong support for this program.

HOPE is a homeownership program. And we believe that owning the home is the best way to strengthen the family and to give the community stability.

On enterprise zones, that almost is universally accepted now. It's a proposal that will bring businesses, act like a magnet to bring businesses into these communities. We are going to increase the attractiveness of this proposal that we've had up there. But in any event, it's going to be—I think it will be accepted by the Congress. We're going to push hard for it, as we will for the others.

I think most are familiar in the country now with our America 2000, but again, we believe that educational choice will help. This is a little longer range proposal, but it fits in. Without education, we are not going to restore hope to our cities.

Welfare reform is important. We're going to go forward not just with waivers that encourage work- and learning-fare, but we're going to try to broaden out the amount of monies that a family can keep before they have to go off of welfare. I believe the limit now is $1,000, and I think we're talking now about $10,000, which would say to a person, if you save anything, you're not going to be thrown off of welfare right away.

Then on a youth job program, we have a program of $683 million, I believe it is. But with our apprentice program and our job opportunity program that I've announced and that we talked about down there in terms of job training, we want to go forward with some new legislation on that.

All of these are designed to restore hope and to bring some cohesion to these communities and offer these young people some opportunities. So I will be taking this to the