

plete freedom of emigration its citizens now enjoy. Czechoslovakia has benefited from most-favored-nation trade status since November 1990. Bulgaria and Mongolia have also made impressive progress toward de-

mocratization and free emigration. We anticipate according MFN status to both countries pending ratification by the respective legislatures of the bilateral commercial agreements signed in April 1991.

Remarks to the National Federation of Independent Business

June 3, 1991

Thank you very, very much for that welcome. Listen, I should be the one clapping to thank you all for the fantastic support that NFIB has given to this administration as we work towards common goals.

First, let me thank John Sloan not just for the introduction but for the leadership he has given to these sound business principles. I'm also very pleased that with us here, with John and me here on this platform, is Pat Saiki. She has joined our team in the administration, having been a key member of it when she was in the Congress, and she already has brought new energy to the SBA. And we're very proud of her. And I know you will enjoy working with her.

Let me warn you ahead of time, I gave four commencement addresses last week. And if I lapse into saying things like, "Your future lies ahead of you,"—[laughter]—or "You're at a crossroads in your life," you'll know exactly why. [Laughter]

Actually, my favorite commencement line of all comes from that great philosopher, Woody Allen. [Laughter] That's right, Woody Allen. He once told a graduating class, "Mankind is at a crossroads. Down one path is despair and utter hopelessness. Down the other, total destruction." [Laughter] Then he goes on and finishes, "Let's hope your generation has the wisdom to choose correctly." [Laughter]

Well, this is one place I don't have to worry about that. You offer something other than hopelessness and destruction and despair. You create opportunity and hope. You've played a leading role—and I don't say this just in passing, I mean it—you've played a leading role in helping this administration advance the cause of free markets and economic growth. And thanks for help-

ing us win some important victories in the Congress, victories in pushing back this endless flow of mandated programs—mandated parental leave now, and helping us in pushing for parental choice in child care, a wonderful step forward for our country that strengthens the family of the United States. And thanks for helping us persuade Congress to preserve a crucial device for securing free and fair international trade, the Fast Track procedures.

And now, we need your help in securing civil rights legislation that ensures the most basic civil right of all: the right of all people to pursue their dreams without fear of discrimination or fear of unfair lawsuits.

In that regard, I notice some of the buttons out there. I like the buttons. And I don't know anybody who disagrees with that sentiment, as a matter of fact. You've got mine, as a matter of fact.

Calvin Coolidge once told a gathering of newspaper editors that "the chief business of the American people is business." And that much-maligned quote contains an important truth. We are an enterprising people, and our economy thrives because people with ideas establish businesses like yours. They risk money. They risk comforts. They risk failure. And they achieve greatness.

The Government can help advance the cause of economic freedom in three ways. First, it can promote it. It can create an environment that enables entrepreneurs to flourish, especially the men and women who run small businesses. Our economic growth package offers a series of positive inducements to growth. We want to bring down the tax on capital gains. That reform won't just reduce the cost of capital but to

reform. And it won't just reduce the cost of capital, it will encourage investors to risk money on new businesses, therefore expanding job opportunities for all Americans, including small businesses. It also will encourage people to sell assets such as real estate that they won't sell now because the taxes are too high.

This administration also is determined to put a lid on the growth of Federal spending. Last year's controversial budget agreement—the largest deficit reduction program in history—imposed real, long-term caps on spending. You now see Members of Congress trying to retreat from the spirit of that agreement, urging us to raise taxes so they can buy political pork. No way. Congress must keep its word. Congress must keep its word. And if it doesn't, I will veto spending bills that violate the caps and violate our budget accord.

Our growth package also includes a comprehensive set of long-overdue banking reforms. These reforms are designed to bring our banking system up to date and to make banks, large and small, stronger and better able to serve their customers. The business community—particularly yours, the small business community—needs strong banks that can provide much-needed financing for jobs and for economic growth.

This administration believes in free and fair trade. In an age of international economic competition we cannot afford, simply cannot afford, to shield ourselves from competition or to lose the vast benefits that free and fair trade will produce. We will use the Fast Track procedures to pursue three vital trade agreements: the Uruguay round of the GATT talks, the North American free trade agreement, and the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. These agreements would open the world to American products and would create fantastic opportunities for American businesses.

We also want to create a work force that can propel America into the 21st century, to make that 100 years the next American century. Our America 2000 strategy for education lays out a series of bold challenges: to create better and more accountable schools that parents can choose, to reinvent the American school by developing a new generation of American schools, to

turn our land into a nation of students and, in the process, me into a computer genius. [Laughter] But no one's too old to learn. That's part of our fundamental thesis. And to create communities where learning can happen.

I understand the vital importance of a well-educated work force to the small business sector in particular. You depend on schools to educate our kids. You don't have the resources to provide remedial education. You depend on schools to provide sensible measures of educational achievement. That's one of the reasons we are developing a series of voluntary national achievement tests.

I'll be talking today to groups—when I leave here, I'll go over to speak to one of them—to groups that are helping us develop sound educational goals and measurements. And you can be sure that I'll stress that their business will give a big boost to America's businesses.

But it's not enough just to encourage growth. Government's second role must be to remove some of the obstacles that it has created. Regulations cost the economy at least \$185 billion—that's billion dollars—last year. That's \$1,700 for every taxpayer. The Government generated 5.3 billion hours' worth of paperwork during the same period. I think that we can all agree we don't need this much paperwork and regulation. You've seen the volumes of regulation. Maybe the Surgeon General can help—[laughter]—make them put a warning label on the *Federal Register*: Do not attempt to lift this unless your name's Arnold Schwarzenegger. [Laughter]

The Vice President's Council on Competitiveness has zeroed in now on regulations that turn would-be Edisons into paper-pushers. It helps weigh the costs and the benefits of regulation so that when the Government issues rules it will produce more benefits than redtape.

Health care costs also have become a major factor for many businesses. Although some people think it makes sense to establish our own brand of federally mandated national medical care, I disagree strongly. And we have offered reforms to hold down medical costs without reducing the amount

of available medical care. Some encourage people to take care of themselves. Others encourage people to resolve disputes with doctors instead of hauling everyone involved off to court. Too many of our medical dollars go to pay off lawyers—with all respect to you guys out there. Our medical money ought to pay for healing, not suing.

And thirdly, this administration will fight legislative proposals that threaten small business, that threaten the heart and soul of our economic system. We will resist mandated benefits programs. You know them all too well, Washington's one-size-fits-all solutions to problems that come in all sizes and shapes.

We will also oppose striker replacement legislation. The bills in Congress, believe me, could have catastrophic consequences for small businesses, regardless of whether they have union representation. As you know, small business creates most of our jobs in this country. A survey published just last week showed that firms with 100 or fewer employees generate 58 percent, 58 percent, of our new jobs.

And finally—and this is timely—we will fight for a civil rights bill that pursues the cause of civil rights, the cause of equal opportunity. Our civil rights package—and you haven't read anything about it because the debate is being dominated by the Democrats that control the Congress—takes dead aim at those who discriminate unfairly. But it also encourages people to work together, rather than employing quotas or other devices; encourages them to work in the name of equality, instead of inviting people to squabble and to feud.

You know, let me talk from the heart here. I have been accused of playing election politics with this issue. And very frankly, it's the other way around, and it has been for some time. My opponents won't even consider my civil rights bill. They keep changing theirs to attract different blocks of voters. Their obvious move to convert the bill into a "women's issue" is just plain, pure politics—a politics of selective inclusion and exclusion. Our bill would properly protect women's rights, everyone's rights.

The beltway interest groups and their spokespersons want to make me accept or veto a quota bill. And the fact is we have

tried to compromise, but not to accept quotas. And at one point last year, we had an agreement that would bring all sides together. But the beltway interest groups refused. They wanted a political win. They wanted to grind me into the political dirt.

And we have a good record on civil rights. And we had a good history of fair play. And I want a fair, strong antidiscrimination bill that will guarantee worker's rights, women's rights, workplace rights, but will not create quotas. And P.S.—P.S.—[laughter]—I want a bill that will help all working men and women and not one that will produce a bonanza for avaricious lawyers. And now you know my position.

If you listen to these talk shows you wouldn't even know we have a civil rights bill up there. [Laughter] You see the same ones, hey? [Laughter]

Today, you have my word: Whatever happens to this bill—and I feel this in my heart—I will continue to work for racial harmony and fair play and against discrimination in the workplace.

We want to build a society of shared hopes and helping hands, a society in which all benefit from growth and prosperity. We want to make this kind of society—a good society—the hallmark of our administration.

In closing, let me say that this administration will not waver in its devotion to free enterprise. All of us here know that no experience can match the scary thrill of striking out and starting a business. Nothing better tests your mettle. And as we prepare to launch ourselves into the next American century, we must do the three things I've outlined today: We must encourage enterprise, sweep away unnecessary barriers to growth, and fend off attempts to place chains on entrepreneurs.

We want a free society, a just society, a fair society. But we also want a society brightened by growth and hope. And you know, each in your own way, in your own communities, you promote that dream every day. And we will encourage you every single step of the way.

Thank you. May God bless you all. And may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much.

Note: The President spoke at 1:04 p.m. in the Regency Ballroom at the Capitol Hill Hyatt Regency. In his remarks, he referred to John Sloan, president and chief executive officer of the National Federation of Independent Business; Patricia F. Saiki, Adminis-

trator of the Small Business Administration; humorist and film director Woody Allen; and Arnold Schwarzenegger, Chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Remarks to the National Education Goals Panel

June 3, 1991

Well, thank you very much, Governor Romer. And what I really wanted to do is to come over and join my colleagues from the Department of Education—particularly our Secretary—in thanking this busy and distinguished group of Governors who are taking the lead on our educational reform.

Roy, at the outset, thank you, sir, as chairman. And let me say, we are enthused over your concept of this interim council—very much so—and delighted that you and Carroll are willing to undertake that commitment.

I'm pleased to be here with the National Education Goals Panel as you tackle tough work on behalf of the entire country. And all of us feel that you're doing a great job. And I want especially to thank the Governors who spent so much of the past year traveling—as Roy said—around the country and traveling to Washington to deal with this challenging assignment. We all owe a great debt to Governor Romer and to his colleagues for their important work on this panel. And so, thank you all very, very much.

You know, there are only a few moments in our lives when we are called upon to join a crusade, and I honestly believe this is one of them. We have a crisis in American education, and we've simply got to do something about it.

I just came from a meeting with the National Federation of Independent Businesses, NFIB. And I talked to them about economic growth—something we can't achieve without an educated, motivated work force. Education is vital to everything we are and everything we can become. But look at the facts. Eight years ago, the Na-

tional Commission on Excellence in Education published its powerful indictment of our schools. And yet today, ours is still, remember, a "nation at risk."

And at the same time, we remain devoted to education. If you talk to parents, you'll hear that nothing is more important. No nation on Earth believes as deeply as we do in the value and the importance of education. People from coast to coast have begun the hard work of educational reform.

I had an inspiring day with Lamar out in Minnesota the other day. You could just feel their commitment to revolutionary new methods in this one little corner of our great country.

The nonpartisan Federal-State—and let me emphasize that word again, nonpartisan—Federal-State partnership brought this issue to the forefront of the national agenda a couple of years ago. And we brought the Nation's Governors together, or they came together with us for an unprecedented education summit at the home of Thomas Jefferson, a true education President. The Governors weren't worried about their place in history. They came to work. And as they did, a compact emerged, one that rests not on flowery promises but on a challenge to raise our expectations and achieve concrete results.

We resolved then to become an America of tougher standards, higher goals, and bigger dreams. And 5 months later, after reaching out to educators and parents and civic leaders, the Governors and I adopted six national education goals for the year 2000. This audience is familiar with them, but let me click them off: readiness for school; school completion; student achieve-