

## Remarks in a Teleconference With the Annual Meeting of the Public Broadcasting Service in Orlando, Florida

June 11, 1991

*The President.* Thank you for that kind introduction and for your generous comments about our approach to education. And I'll tell you, the Points of Light concept, something new with us—we're trying to put some focus on it. But believe me, it is taking hold across this country, and I think it's a wonderful thing. And I appreciate your interest in all of that.

I must confess I wish I were with you in Orlando. Instead, I'm stuck up here in Disney World North. [*Laughter*]

I love the idea of talking with you in this manner in a teleconference. Nothing could be more appropriate. Every day, PBS transforms ideas, lessons, and information from one side of this country to the other—big cities, small towns, and back again.

And some of us remember when PBS was called educational television. Your name's changed, but of course, that we understand. But your mission hasn't. And today, your 300 affiliates serve 63,000 elementary and secondary schools across this country. And your broadcasts reach 30 million kindergarten through 12th grade students. And some of your programs sustain inquisitive adults. And others go straight to college and university campuses.

Personally, I'd like your help. I'm looking for a good computer instruction course. But you probably need to find a truly qualified 7-year-old to make it credible.

I was out in Milwaukee the other day. And you should have seen—maybe you all have seen this—but you should have seen the competence of these young kids as they move into the computer age, their competence on computers. It's fantastic. We've got to do more.

In the past year, enrollment, if you want to call it that, in your electronic college classroom has grown 20 percent. These and other programs fit right into our America 2000 education strategy. As you know, that strategy follows a four-track path to achieving our six national education goals: creating better and more accountable schools for to-

day's students; inventing a new generation of American schools; becoming a nation of students, young and old; and making our communities places where learning can happen.

We've talked a bit about how you improve today's schools. Track one: Everyone should get involved. For instance, I'm happy to see that PBS will be donating a satellite dish to Slanesville, West Virginia, home of the Teacher of the Year, Rae Ellen McKee. Is that she I see smiling away on the monitor, maybe? And she'll be talking to you in just a few minutes. And what a person she is. You know, I visited her school in April, and I think you'll agree when you hear her that she deserves and has earned the high honor that she's received.

State-of-the-art hardware is just one way you help our schools step into their future. My kids tell me they used to dread it when a teacher rolled a television into the classroom because they knew they'd have to look at a black and white videotaped lecture from a teacher in a room with bad acoustics. Now, no one makes those complaints anymore. You've changed with the times. You've developed new programming. You've pioneered new broadcasting techniques, including closed-captioning for deaf students and the descriptive video service for blind students.

And now, as we prepare to create new American schools, you look to the heavens. Telstar 401, due to race into orbit in 1993, will let you transmit television signals nationwide. And that certainly won't hurt when it comes to developing new audiences for your shows.

Track three of America 2000, developing a nation of students, runs right through your studios. You mentioned Barbara, and I'm grateful for your very kind comments about her. But she and I cannot thank you enough for your work in giving previously illiterate Americans the gift of reading. Project Literacy U.S.—PLUS—helps turn Americans submerged in the darkness of il-

literacy into beaming points of light. You offer refresher courses, practical courses in programs that cause the viewer to pause, think, and explore the universe of ideas.

I can't think of any series that has done more to advance the study of American history, for instance, than Ken Burns' series, "The Civil War."

I'll be visiting some very special students just in an hour or so, in Delaware later today—a group of night school students who've worked hard to gain high school diplomas. And frankly, I'd be surprised if they didn't owe some of their inspiration in education to you.

So, my point is simple: The days of the little red schoolhouse are over. We find ourselves in an era of competition. And education, like any other vital industry, will benefit from the constant tug and pull of new ideas, new products. You push everyone in the education industry to do more, to do better. For years, your efforts—and I've talked only about a few of them—have promoted respect for learning and an appetite for education.

In launching our America 2000 project, I have asked each State and every American community to join in an ambitious effort, a crusade—and this one is—a crusade for educational excellence. In many communities across this country, individuals have already stepped forward to be the sparkplug that energizes businessmen, parents, community leaders, and educators to make America's schools better and more accountable.

I believe our schools will change for the better when parents and communities make change their mission. And so as the America 2000 project takes root in communities across this country, I would ask each of you to join us, to become involved in this enormously important revolution to transform American education.

Well, thanks for listening to my lecture. It is a pleasure to be with you in this marvelous electronic manner. And now, with no further ado, I would once again say thanks, and I'd be glad to take a question or two. Thank you very much.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. We appreciate your remarks to us. You talked about change. How will the role of

the States and local educational organizations change in the next century?

*The President.* Well, State Governors and legislatures, along with local school districts, are absolutely crucial to the success of our America 2000 strategy. Those who think that education problems can be solved in Washington ought to know better, because the American people know better. The Federal Government provides roughly 7 percent—7 percent—of the total dollars spent on education; State and local governments provide 93 percent. At the national level, we can set goals and standards that every community, every school, and every student can try to achieve.

That was the beauty of the Charlottesville conference with the Governors. But it is in our States, it's in our communities that we must become part of the crusade to invent a new generation of American schools, to figure out better ways of teaching and learning. The States will have to agree to hold themselves and their schools to much higher standards. This simply cannot be done from Washington. I am not anti-Washington, but that can't be done from Washington.

The Secretary of Education, Lamar Alexander, and I are committed to lead—to exhort everyone to a higher standard and to travel this country and highlight models of what works. Next week we'll join Governor Romer, for example, the Governor of Colorado, who's very active in education. I might say here, look, this is a totally nonpartisan effort. And Governor Romer, we'll be with him when he kicks off Colorado 2000, the first statewide effort to adopt the national education goals and develop the strategies to meet them. The State role is crucial as communities across the Nation compete to be America 2000 communities. Our new breed of education Governors—and they are fantastic—is essential to the success of our revolutionary new program, America 2000.

Q. And in addition to what you see as you go around the country, you often also meet with world leaders. Have you seen any education initiatives in other countries that you'd like to see incorporated in your educational goals for the United States?

*The President.* Well, yes, some are doing

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certain things better than we are. In Japan and Korea, the parents are actively involved in their children's schools—I'd say more so than here. Students do much more homework. This will go over well down there in Orlando with the public schools, but they do much more homework than the average student in American schools. In China, students routinely learn two or three languages. I happen to think we need to do better in multilingual disciplines.

In the Soviet Union, students are learning algebra in elementary school. You saw the reports the other day from this nationwide study, and it was appalling what we're not achieving in mathematics. Government leaders around the world tell me that students are learning math in different ways than American youngsters. They aren't just learning to use computers, but are applying math to everyday problems, everyday situations.

So, there is a lot to learn from other countries. I am not apologizing and saying that they're all right and we're wrong. But we should remember that we want to have American schools that countries everywhere are trying to emulate. Japan, for instance, is trying to introduce more creativity and get away from just learning by rote. And wherever we go, we're the world's grand champions in scientific research and technology. So, we can learn from them, and they can learn from us.

But the main point is, we're involved here in something that is really revolutionary. For America 2000 to succeed, we've got to think anew, as Lincoln said. We've got to do it in a way that approaches these

problems with no fixed conclusions as to how to solve them, but with innovative ideas. And that is why I am so delighted with the participation of the Governors. That's why I'm so delighted with what you referred to, sir, as the Points of Light approach where communities and public media and everybody are involved in innovating, in putting the focus where it needs to be put—and that is on getting this country better educated.

And we can do it. This isn't just a lot of hot air rhetoric out of Washington. Believe me, as I go around this country, I sense a determination in the communities to get the job done, to improve our educational system. And it's not simply a desire of Americans to be number one again, although I think we've got an awful lot that lends that description to us right now. It's a desire to see—it's an understanding—put it this way—that a better educated young people guarantees the future of this country.

So, look, thanks for letting me drop in on you from about 22,000 miles out there in space by satellite. And thank you all for all that you are doing to make America smarter. Thank you all, and I hope you have a wonderful meeting there.

*Note: The President spoke at 9:39 a.m. in Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building via a two-way video and audio hookup with the meeting in Orlando. In his remarks, he referred to Rae Ellen McKee, a teacher at Slanesville Elementary School, Slanesville, WV; Secretary of Education Lamar Alexander; and Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado.*

## Remarks in a Teleconference With the National Advertising Conference of the American Advertising Federation in Nashville, Tennessee

*June 11, 1991*

*The President.* Thank you. My heavens, what a welcome. I can see you all—the backs of your heads here. Oops, I can see you turning around. [*Laughter*]

Thank you all very much. What a marvelous technology. Howard Bell, ladies and gentlemen, it is a pleasure to join you today on a medium you understand so well and to