

*Aug. 6 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1994*

publican farmer from western Oklahoma, his wife, and their two beautiful daughters, one confined to a wheelchair. They've had almost no medical bills in the last 2 years. But they just got notice that in August, their health insurance premiums are going from \$3,400 a year to \$9,600 a year. And they are going to have to drop their health insurance.

Now, this is not a partisan political issue. Anybody working that hard with two kids to educate, one of them with a serious illness—injury in the past, deserves affordable health insurance.

The only State that has ever provided health care to all its citizens is Hawaii. For 20 years, employers and employees have had to provide health care. And you know what? Insurance premiums in Hawaii are 30 percent lower than they are in the rest of the country.

We can do this. I am tired of people saying, we cannot do this, we cannot do that, we cannot do the other thing. The violent, extremist interests in this country that are trying to keep health care out of the reach of ordinary American working people are a disgrace to the American dream. Most of them have health care, and most of them have parents on Medicare. Why do they not want you to have the same thing that they have? Why? Why don't they want you to

have what they can? Let them give up their health care and see how they like it.

Now, folks, we're going to have to make some tough decisions here. I don't mind being a controversial figure. You didn't invite me to go to Washington to sit in the White House and warm the chair. We are changing this country. We are rebuilding the economy, we're taking on crime, we're taking on welfare reform, we're taking on health care, we're taking on the tough issues. But I cannot do it alone; you have to help. Support the Members of Congress. Tell them you want them to move on the crime bill. Tell them you want them to move on health care. Tell them a simple message: We are coming to the end of this century; we have got to keep the American dream alive. The only way to do it is to restore the economy, empower individuals to take advantage of it, and rebuild our communities and families.

Let's make Government work for ordinary citizens again. That's what I'm fighting for. Thank you for being here to help me make the fight.

God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5 p.m. at Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

## Remarks at a Democratic Party Reception in Detroit *August 6, 1994*

Thank you very much. I'm glad to be back in Michigan and glad to be back in Detroit. I'm glad to be on this stage with all these wonderful Democrats, and I thank them for the work they have done for your State and for your country. I also would like to say a special word of thanks to all the people of Michigan who have been so kind to me and to Hillary and to our administration, for the victory we won here in the primary in 1992 and in the general election, and since then, for all the work that has been done, including the wonderful host we had in Detroit in Mayor Archer, when we had the jobs conference here a few months ago. I thank you for that.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ran for this job because I wanted to change this country. I was worried about the direction in which we were

going. I thought the economy was going down, the deficit was going up, the country was coming apart, we were in danger of losing the American dream, and our Government wasn't working for ordinary people. I wanted to change all that. And after a year and a half, I can tell you that the change is well underway.

A lot of people don't like it, and they've fought it every step of the way. When I try to unite people in Washington, there are always people there trying to divide us. When I try to talk in ordinary terms to ordinary people, there are always people there throwing around political hot air and divisive rhetoric. But I can tell you that we are moving forward.

Since this administration took office, we have implemented a national economic strategy. We have launched a full-scale assault on crime. We

have made a sweeping proposal on welfare reform. We have got bills to the floor of both Houses of Congress for the first time in the history of the United States to provide affordable health care to all Americans.

And I want to point out, when I came to Michigan in 1992, people told me they wanted something done about this economy. When I offered our national economic plan to the Congress, I was told in a meeting by the congressional leaders of the other party that there would be no votes from the other party for the budget, no votes for the economic plan, that they would not help us to reverse 12 years of exploding deficits, declining investment, and a declining economy. And so, by the narrowest of margins, we passed that economic plan. And they said the sky would fall, the economy would collapse, the deficit would go up, jobs would be lost, the end of the world had come. Chicken Little was on the floor of the Senate and the House with an elephant pin on. [*Laughter*]

What happened? We produced for the American people \$255 billion in spending cuts, tax cuts for 15 million working families, including 392,000 working families in the State of Michigan. We did ask 1.2 percent of the wealthiest people in this country to pay more so we could pay the deficit down, including 41,000 families in Michigan, one-tenth the number who got a tax cut. We made 90 percent of the small businesses in this State and this Nation eligible for tax reductions if they invested more to grow this economy. We made 20 million Americans immediately eligible for lower interest rates and better repayment terms on their college loans.

And what was the result? We're shrinking the Federal Government to its smallest point since Kennedy was President. We've got 3 years of deficit reduction in a row coming for the first time since Truman was President. We have 4.1 million new jobs, more jobs in a year and a half in Michigan than in the previous 4 years. We have a big drop in the unemployment rate, the largest number of new businesses formed in any single year since World War II. I plead guilty: We did it.

I just want you to remember this: In this United States Senate race, if it had not been for Congressman Carr, the plan would have gone down. We passed it by one vote. His opponent is against what we did. He is still proud of what we did. If you like where the economy

is going, elect Bob Carr to the United States Senate.

Now, let me say, we're fighting for some other things. We're going to try to pass a crime bill next week. We have to get it to a vote first. The crime bill has some controversial provisions. And a lot of Americans and some Members of Congress, in good conscience, don't agree with them. But it will put 100,000 police on the street. It will give the police a better chance to compete, because it eliminates assault weapons while protecting over 650 other hunting and sporting weapons from being fooled with, which I know is important. It says minors can't own or possess handguns unless they're under the supervision of an adult, which I think is very important. It provides funds for safe streets. It provides tougher penalties for repeat offenders, money for the States to build prisons, but money for prevention programs to give our children something to say yes to, as well as something to say no to. And we need to pass it because the security of our families and our communities and our workplaces and our schools demand it.

You know, I met a woman from Michigan out at the airport. She came to see me with her two children. Her husband was murdered in his workplace last year. He was taken to the hospital and died. And after he died, she got a \$24,000 bill from the emergency room. And because her husband was a small business person who couldn't afford to buy insurance, they didn't have any health insurance. So there she was, a widow with two little kids and a \$24,000 bill.

In 1943, Congressman Dingell's father introduced the first bill to provide affordable health care to all Americans. In 1945, '47, and '49, Harry Truman tried to do it. And now, here we are in 1994. We're the only country in the world with an advanced economy that doesn't provide health care to everybody. You've got the automobile industry in Michigan losing jobs and market share because they got \$1,000 in every car in health care, and they're paying for the cost of people who won't even pay their own way. There are 5 million working people in America, almost all of them working people and their children, who had health insurance 5 years ago who don't have it today. We're going in reverse.

We have a clear example in the State of Hawaii, where for 20 years the employers and em-

ployees have all had to buy health insurance, where small businesses have premiums that are 30 percent below the national average. People are healthier, they're doing better, and the small business community is doing better. And we are determined to see that we do not walk away from this.

Let me tell you, when we started this health care debate, there were two dozen Senators from the other party on a bill that would provide health care to all Americans. Today, there are zero there. Every time we have moved to them, they have run the other way. It is time to stop playing politics with the health care of the people of the United States of America.

Now, I knew we had to make some changes in our plan, and we did. We made it less bureaucratic, more voluntary, gave bigger breaks to small business, and we phase it in over a longer period of time. That's what the bills now before Congress do. But the issue is this: Are we going to keep spending more than everybody else and getting less for it, or are we going to continue to let more and more money go to insurance companies and bureaucracies instead of to keep people healthy, or are we going to run the risk of imperiling this fabulous recovery in the auto industry and this recovery in the economy, or are we going to keep punishing the small business people who do provide health insurance? Or are we going to do what's right for the American people? That is the issue. It should not be a partisan political issue. In this election year we ought to forget about the election and remember the people who elected us in the first place and take care of their needs.

And let me make one final remark to you about my friend, your nominee for Governor. For 12 years I had the honor of being the Governor of my State. It was an incredible experience. And I learned a few things about doing it. And I'll tell you, if you want to succeed over the long run, you have to recognize, number one, a lot of these problems cannot be solved in Washington. I can put in place good economic policies, good health care policies, good education policies, good anticrime policies, but still, in the statehouses and in the city halls, the shape of the future will be determined by the quality of the people who are elected. The President cannot do it; the Congress cannot do it. It matters.

The second thing I want to tell you is Governors understand that partisan politics doesn't

have much to do with whether kids get educated, jobs get created, streets are safer, if you're doing your job right. You need someone who can unify people; someone who believes that we don't have a person to waste, that we cannot afford to be divided; someone who will tell you hard truths but tell you hard truths in a way that will bring us together, not tear us apart; and you also need someone with an eye on the future.

This man I know well. He was the first member of your delegation to endorse my candidacy. I hope that doesn't hurt him here this year. And I can tell you, he will be a Governor you can be proud of. He will unite the people of this State, not divide them. And he will always be thinking about the future. We are living in a time when the average person will change jobs seven times in a lifetime. We cannot afford people to ever, ever, ever forget about the fact that politics can never be about what works in the moment. We have to be thinking about tomorrow. So I say to you: I want you to elect him Governor. I want you to elect Bob Carr Senator. I want you to return these Members of the House delegation, without whom this economic recovery would not be underway.

Every one of them will be attacked by their Republican opponents as being the same old tax-and-spend, blah, blah, blah, blah. [Laughter] The truth is, the crowd that was in there before in all the Reagan years and the Bush years, they cut taxes on the rich, raised taxes on the middle class, exploded the deficit, and the economy went downhill, and ignored things like what was happening to the auto industry.

We have an economic strategy. It includes fair taxation, but we're bringing the deficit down, investing in education and training, building the economy, and looking toward the future. I think that's what the American people want us to do. If they know what the record is, these people will all be returned. You make sure they know.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:08 p.m. at the Westin Hotel. In his remarks, the President referred to Mayor Dennis Archer of Detroit and Michigan Democratic gubernatorial candidate Howard Wolpe.