ican people about what we're trying to do and getting them to believe more in themselves and their future. We ought to be quite optimistic based on what is going on here in this country now.

Ms. Clapprood. Well, I'll tell you what, we'd like to be part of making this a regular morningside chat with you. And if it means anything, my sainted mother, who lives in fine Whiskey Point, in Massachusetts, always had a picture of John Fitzgerald Kennedy next to the praying hands and the palms from Palm Sunday. Now she's got a picture of you and Hillary there, as well.

The President. Oh, wow.

Ms. Clapprood. You've got a place of honor, sir. And I thank you very much for joining us. Can I ask one favor?

The President. Sure.

Ms. Clapprood. As you go out jogging around the Charles River Thursday morning, would you put on your little "walkwoman" and listen to Clapprood and Whitley right here on WRKO?

The President. If I can find one of those, I'll do that. Thanks.

Ms. Clapprood. Yes. You've pushed my buttons. I thank you, sir, for joining us. God bless.

The President. Goodbye. Bless you.

NOTE: The telephone interview was recorded at 11:05 a.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast and release at 7 a.m. on October 20.

Remarks on Signing the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 in Framingham, Massachusetts

October 20, 1994

Thank you. You know, we wanted to come here because this school has a reputation for academic excellence and because it is so diverse, because it's a school that really looks like America. But if I had known we were going to get such an enthusiastic reception, I would have come yesterday instead of today and just waited. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I also want to say a special word of appreciation to your student council president. I thought he did a fine job up here. I can tell you this, if he continues to speak so well, so much to the point, and so briefly, he'll win a lot more elections. [*Laughter*] Very impressive.

I'd like to thank your principal, Mr. Flaherty, your superintendent, Dr. Thayer, your school board chairman, Mr. Petrini, and all the people here who made this wonderful visit possible.

I'd like to thank all the Members of Congress who have joined us. I especially want to thank those who have come from other States, Senator Pell and Congressman Reed have come from Rhode Island, and Senator and Mrs. Jeffords are here. We're glad to see them. I thank Congressman Markey for hosting us. And I thank Congressman Kennedy for coming and bringing his wife and his mother. I'm glad they're all here. Thank you for coming.

I want to say just a brief word about those who have spoken. Governor Kunin, who was the Governor of Vermont, is now the Deputy Secretary of Education, spoke on behalf of the Department and Secretary Riley, who was the Governor of South Carolina. All three of us served as Governors together, working on these education problems. And I think we've made a real difference, bringing a whole different approach to education to Washington. We look at it from the grassroots up, from the point of view of the principals and the teachers and the school board members. And we like to think from time to time we even look at it from the point of view of the students, from the grassroots up, from education at the school level where it should be.

I want to say a special word of thanks to Senator Jeffords for what he said and to Congressman Ford and Senator Kennedy. Let me say that you read a lot and hear a lot about all the fights that go on in Washington and about how things don't get done. But when the history of this time is written, the progress we have made in education will be known chiefly

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for two things: One is, we really did write new ideas into the law, and secondly, we did it in a bipartisan fashion, with Republicans and Democrats, for all the children of this country.

I was sitting up here listening to these fine people speak, wondering what all of our words might mean to the students who are here, trying to remember what it was like when I used to sit over there in the band when I was their age and hold my saxophone. You did a great job today, by the way, and I thank you.

I'd like to try to tell you why this whole thing is important from your point of view, because this whole education issue is really about your future. Twenty-one months ago, when I moved to Washington to become President, I had some very clear ideas. I wanted to rebuild the American dream, to restore the health of the American economy, to make sure that your future would be the brightest future ever enjoyed by any generation of Americans, as you grow into the 21st century, a new and exciting, rapidly changing and very different time. I knew that we had to do some things that would matter to people in the short run. We had to begin to make our Government work for ordinary Americans again.

And we've done a pretty good job of that. We passed the family and medical leave law to protect parents when they need time off from work because their children are sick. And we're immunizing all the kids in this country under the age of 2 by 1996. [*Applause*] I see the nurses clapping there. Thank you.

Because we want to reward people who are trying to be good parents and good workers, we actually lowered the income taxes of 15 million working families, because they make modest wages and we don't want them to be in poverty if they're working full time and raising their kids. So we began to do these things.

And we started to work to bring the economy back, to bring the deficit down, to invest more in new technologies, to expand trade. And it is working, and the economy is coming back. But over the long run, the United States of America cannot continue to lead the world economically in a world where the average young person will change work six, seven, eight times in a lifetime, in a world where what you earn depends on not just what you know but what you are capable of learning, in a world that is incredibly fast-moving and diverse—we cannot do that unless we develop the learning capacities of every person in this country. That is the key to the long-term survival and strength of the United States.

When I was a Governor, my administration and especially my wonderful wife and I spent most of our time working on what we could do to improve our schools: how we could get the test scores up, how we could get more kids in foreign language, how we could improve mathematics achievement, how more of our young people could be ready to learn when they come to school, how we could facilitate more young people going to college. And I learned over and over again, as I think Governor Kunin said, that there are schools in this country, including this one, that are doing a very good job, sometimes against great odds. They are still doing a good job teaching and learning.

But we have some significant challenges we have to face. First of all, we are not as good as we ought to be as a country in taking the things that work well in some school districts and seeing them spread throughout the country. Secondly, we have great challenges because of all the great nations in the world, we are by far the most diverse, racially, ethnically, religiously, economically. Thirdly, we know that schools have become the home away from home for a lot of children who have enormous personal challenges to face. And all those things mean that we have to be constantly working overtime to try to meet the challenges that we face today and the challenges we know you will face in your lives tomorrow.

That's why I worked so hard several years ago to get our country to set a mission, a national set of education goals. Most of you may not know what they are, but I think they're good goals. They're worth repeating: that we will make sure every child shows up for school ready to learn; that we will raise the high school graduation rate to at least 90 percent of all students, which is the international standard, all over the country; that we will make sure our young people learn and are proficient in, by international standards of excellence, basic subjects in English and mathematics and history and geography and languages, and we will learn how to measure whether we are doing that or not at least three times during the course of a student's career; that we will lead the world in math and science achievement, not bring up the rear; that our schools will become safe, disciplined, and free of drugs; and that we will

develop a system of lifetime learning so that people, no matter how old they are, will always be able to develop new skills, acquire new knowledge, know what they need to know to move forward with confidence.

Those are the goals of this Nation educationally. They have been adopted by Presidents of both parties, by Governors of both parties. They have been embraced by educators all across this country. They are now the law of the land, thanks to this Congress.

The important thing about this bill is that it represents a fundamental change in the way the Federal Government looks at how we should do our job in helping you students achieve those goals. For 30 years, the Federal Government has shipped money to the States and the local school districts to try to help with problems that needed the money. But mostly, they have done it in ways that prescribed in very detailed manner the rules and regulations your schools had to follow, the rules and regulations your States had to follow in applying for the money and in complying with it. And very often, we had teachers at the grassroots level who said, "This doesn't make any sense."

This bill changes all that. This bill says the National Government will set the goals. We will help develop measurements to see whether Framingham School District is meeting the goals. But you will get to determine how you're going to meet the goals, because the magic of education occurs between the teacher and the students in the classroom, with the parents, with the principals, with the schools supporting it.

And you have to see all this stuff we're talking about up here in terms of that. We've expanded the Head Start program, as Senator Kennedy said. These goals have now been written into law, and 31 of the 50 States have asked for our help in devising a State strategy to meet the goals.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act, which the Senator mentioned, has now all 50 States working to try to develop statewide systems of apprenticeships so the young people who don't go to college but do want to have good jobs will be able to get at least some post-high-school training in ways that help them academically, help them practically, and give them a good start into the future. And that is a very, very important thing. Our Nation is the only advanced nation in the world that does not have a system that picks up every single high school graduate who doesn't go to college and gives them some further education and training so they can make a good living, be good citizens, raise a strong family, and contribute to our future. We're going to change that with this legislation.

And the college loan program and the national service programs I want to explain in tandem. You know, in the 1980's, the gap between what a high school graduate earns in his or her first year of work and what a college graduate earns in his or her first year of work doubled—doubled. Earnings for high school graduates in their first year of work in the United States actually declined in the 1980's, under the pressure of a global economy, where there are a lot of people around the world in developing countries doing jobs for wages we cannot live on. It is clear that it is in the economic interest of the entire United States to get as many young people to go on to college as possible. At the same time, you know we face even more social challenges, especially among younger children.

So we've done two things: One is, we've changed the college loan program to say you can borrow money at lower interest rates; you can pay it out over a longer period of time; if you take a job that doesn't pay a high wage, you can tie the loan repayment to the salary you make. You'll have to pay it back over more years, but there will never be a time when because of the cost of your college education, you can't make a car payment, you can't make your rent payment, you can't meet the basic responsibilities you have.

And the national service program, which you have well represented here in Massachusetts, simply says that if you join a community service program that's part of AmeriCorps, you can earn almost $5,000 a year against the cost of a college education while helping to solve the problems of people here in the United States. It's sort of a domestic Peace Corps.

And this morning I met with a couple of hundred National Service Corps volunteers who are in the City Year project in Boston, which a lot of you probably know about, each of them telling me about what they're doing to try to help solve a human problem in the State of Massachusetts, not with some bureaucracy but from the grassroots up, just young people helping other people to make their lives better and earning some money for a college education.

That is the ticket to America's future and the ticket to your future, as well.

Now, let me just say two or three things about this bill, and then I'll go sign it, because it's getting warm in here. [*Laughter*] It's getting so warm, I'm about to think I'm in Arkansas, not in Massachusetts in October. [*Laughter*]

But I have to say a few more things because now I'm getting to the part that you have to do something about. And this bill is a challenge to you as well. This bill does many things, and I won't tell you all about them, but I want to give you just a few examples.

The first thing this bill does is to encourage schools to take kids that are from underprivileged backgrounds and instead of separating them out from other students, bring them into the classrooms, have smaller classes, work with them, have kids help kids to get everybody into the mainstream, and everybody develop to the fullest of their God-given capacities. We know now that works better than separating kids out and trying to help them, instead of bringing them in and challenging them to do the best they can do.

Let me tell you what that means. That means that every one of you has to support that, not just the teachers. The school district needs to encourage that, especially for the younger kids. But if you have a friend in your class or if you know a student who is not necessarily a friend of yours who is struggling, you ought to see whether you or somebody else can help that student. We need to have more kids helping kids to learn in this country. We've got to have that.

There are a lot of studies today—and I won't bore you with all of them—but basically there are a lot of studies on learning and how people learn that show that some people learn best by just going home at night, opening the book, and working like crazy. But some people learn best in groups, from their friends and neighbors, from being free to ask when they don't know, and from getting help and from working through problems. There are a lot of young people who think they're not very smart who maybe just don't learn very well in the way that they're being asked to learn. And you need to try to help them do better.

The second thing I want to say is something that has already been alluded to here by the previous speakers. If we can't make these schools in this country safe, if children are not free of fear when they come to school, they are not going to learn very well. And this bill has a safe schools component, but it must be implemented. All we can do is give the means to make schools safe to local school districts. We in the National Government don't do anything to make the schools safe; you do that. And you must, and every school must. The children of this country, even if they are scared to death on the streets, ought to feel safe when they're in their schools so they can learn.

The third thing I want to say is—I'm getting sort of progressively more controversial maybe here—is there's an interesting provision of this bill that had enormous bipartisan support that provides opportunities for schools to get some help from this bill to develop what are now being called character education programs, programs that basically enable schools to develop values that can be taught to students in the public schools based on a consensus of people in the community. I made this National Character Counts Week, putting Government on the side of having the schools tell children that there is a difference between right and wrong. And there are some basic things that we ought to teach. There is a bipartisan Character Counts coalition in the Congress that's been working on this.

We disagree about a lot of things, but we ought to be able to agree that our schools should say people should tell the truth. They should respect themselves and each other. They ought to be good citizens, which means that we should assume responsibility for obeying the law and for helping others to develop themselves. We ought to practice fairness and tolerance and trustworthiness. These things should be taught in our schools, and we shouldn't gag our teachers when they try to do it. We ought to applaud them instead, and I hope we will be doing more and more of that.

And now I'm going to ask you young people to do one more thing. There is a lot of evidence, and there is a new survey that's been put out today, saying that in a modest but very clear way, drug use is going up again among young people in America—I hope you're clapping because you agree with what I said, not because you agree that it's a good thing—that more and more young people simply don't believe it's dangerous to use marijuana, for example, and that it's okay to do.

Let me tell you something: Every single scientific study that has been done in the last several years shows alarming increases in the toxicity and the danger of using marijuana, especially to young women and what might happen to their child-bearing capacity in the future.

All illegal drugs are dangerous. We have to drive down usage again. It has got to be not a good thing to do, not a cool thing to do. It is a stupid thing to do, as well as an illegal thing to do, and I want you to help bring it back down.

So this bill is about you. It's not about all of us politicians up here, it's about you. It's about your future. The age in which you are growing and the world toward which you are going can be the best time America ever had. It will be exciting. And our diversity in America is a gold mine of opportunity. No other country is so well-positioned to move into the 21st century, to live in a global society that is more peaceful and more secure—no one. But it all depends upon whether we develop the God-given capacity of every boy and girl in this country, no matter where they live, no matter what their racial or ethnic or religious background is. That is your challenge. Let's do it together.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:25 a.m. in the John F. Kennedy Gymnasium at Framingham High School. In his remarks, he referred to Jeremy Spector, student council president; Robert Flaherty, principal; Eugene Thayer, superintendent, Framingham Public Schools; and Christopher Petrini, chairman, Framingham School Committee. H.R. 6, approved October 20, was assigned Public Law No. 103–382. The National Character Counts Week proclamation of October 14 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Rally for Democratic Candidates in Framingham
October 20, 1994

Thank you so much for this wonderful, warm, enthusiastic, passionate welcome. And thank you for your commitment to reelect Senator Ted Kennedy on November 8th. I want you to send Kevin O'Sullivan and John Tierney down there to help us in the House of Representatives to move this country forward. And I want to congratulate Mark Roosevelt on giving debating lessons to the Republican Party in the last few days.

I loved Ed Markey's speech, except he said everything that Ted and I wanted to say. [*Laughter*] And he said it very well. It was a great defense of a great record by a great supporter of progress in this country. I thank Ed Markey.

I want to say one thing a lot of you may not know. This is serious. I want to thank Ed Markey because last spring he called my attention to the fact that we had one million military assault-style weapons coming into this country from China. And he said we ought to stop it, and we did. And I thank him for that. And I also want to thank him for paving the way for the information superhighway in Framingham and all along Route 128, the birthplace of high technology and the future of the information superhighway. Thank you, Ed.

Ladies and gentlemen, until the last few days this had the earmarks of an unusual election, where people were in danger of voting against what they're for and for what they're against because of the inordinate success of our opponents in talking things to death and confusing things, but the fog is beginning to clear in America.

Twenty-one months ago, you sent me to Washington to try to change this country, to make Government work for ordinary people, to bring the economy back, to make the world more peaceful and more prosperous, and basically to make us feel like we were going in the right direction again and that we were coming together again, that we could recover the American dream, that we could get to the next century with all the children in this room looking at America's best days ahead of us. And I come here to tell you that we've still got a long way to go, but America's in better shape than it was 20 months ago.

I know there are a lot of people who want jobs who still don't have them. I know there