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These actions on child support enforcement prove that welfare reform can and must be a bipartisan issue. Unfortunately, the House Republican bill still does not offer the kind of real welfare reform that Americans in both parties expect. Welfare reform must be tough on work and tough on deadbeat parents, not tough on children.

I look forward to working with Republicans and Democrats in both Houses of Congress to enact real reform that makes work and responsibility a way of life.

Statement on Senate Action on the Line-Item Veto
March 23, 1995

The Senate tonight has taken another step toward passing strong line-item veto legislation. I hope the House and Senate will now get together quickly to resolve their differences and pass the strongest possible bill.

The sooner such a bill reaches my desk, the sooner I can take further steps to cut the deficit.

Message to the Congress on Trade With the West Bank and the Gaza Strip
March 17, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

I am writing to inform you of my intent to designate the West Bank and Gaza Strip as a beneficiary of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). The GSP program, which offers duty-free access to the U.S. market, was originally authorized by the Trade Act of 1974.

I have carefully considered the criteria identified in sections 501 and 502 of the Trade Act of 1974. In light of these criteria, I have determined that it is appropriate to extend GSP benefits to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

This notice is submitted in accordance with section 502(a)(1) of the Trade Act of 1974.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 17, 1995.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 24. The related proclamation of March 17 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Welfare Reform
March 24, 1995

At a time when so many Americans without regard to party agree on the need for welfare reform, it's a shame the House of Representatives could not produce a real welfare reform plan that would promote work and responsibility and attract broad bipartisan support. I am disappointed that instead of joining in a real, bipartisan effort to move people from welfare to work, a narrow partisan Republican majority passed a bill that is weak on work and tough on children.

I am determined to work with Republicans and Democrats in Congress to produce the kind of welfare reform Americans, regardless of party affiliation, want and expect. To end welfare as we know it, we must be tough on work and tough on deadbeat parents not tough on children.

I commend the House of Representatives on one part of the bill that enjoyed true bipartisan support—tough measures on child support enforcement, including refusing drivers' and professional licenses to deadbeat parents who refuse to pay child support. The House passed every major child support element of our welfare reform plan, which will enable us to mount the toughest child support enforcement crackdown in history. It is time to demand responsibility from parents who bring children into the world, not let them off the hook and expect taxpayers to pick up the tab for their neglect.

Welfare reform can and must be a bipartisan issue. I look forward to working with Republicans and Democrats in the Senate to pass real welfare reform that will make work and responsibility the law of the land.

The President's Radio Address
March 25, 1995

Good morning. This morning I want to talk about how much we can accomplish when we work in a spirit of cooperation. Once again, this week demonstrated that Democrats and Republicans can come together to break gridlock when they put the American people first.

Our mission here is to keep the American dream alive for all our people; to grow the middle class and shrink the under class; to promote the mainstream values of work and family, community, and looking out for the future of our children; to reform Government to meet the challenges we face. There's a great debate here about how to change Government. On one side is the old view that big one-size-fits-all Government can fix all our big problems. On the other is the view that Government is the source of all our problems. In the real world that's a false choice.

We must go beyond the old way of big Government and the new rage of no Government to the idea of Government as a partner, a partner that works to expand opportunity while shrinking bureaucracy, to empower people to make the most of their own lives through education and training, and to enhance our security on our streets and around the world. That's what I believe. And I believe most Americans feel that way, too.

In short, I believe that Federal Government must be a savior—or cannot be a savior but must not sit on the sidelines. For our future we need a Government that helps us to create more opportunity but demands more responsibility from all our citizens. That's what I mean by the New Covenant: opportunity and responsibility.

Despite real differences between Republicans and Democrats, we see progress on three proposals I have supported for many years, proposals that I advocated when I ran for President. All of them impose more responsibility on the Federal Government. And it's high time.

First, Congress passed a bill, which I was proud to sign, requiring Congress to live by the laws it imposes on the private sector. Second, last week in the Rose Garden right outside the Oval Office where I'm speaking now, I was pleased to sign another bill which for the first time limits the ability of Congress to pass laws which impose unfunded mandates on State and local Governments. As a former Governor, I know this bill will make a big difference in the ability of State and local governments to improve the lives of our people without having Washington tell them how to spend the tax dollars you send them. Third, last week the Senate passed a line-item veto. I have favored this power for Presidents, no matter what their party, for a long time. It will bring more discipline to our spending process by enabling Presidents to veto particular projects which are unjustified but which today can be hidden in comprehensive bills the President has to sign. Now that the line-item veto in some version has passed both Houses of Congress, I urge Members from both parties to resolve their differences, pass a unified bill, and send it to me. Then the line-item veto can put our people ahead of pork.

Last week, we saw some progress on another crucial issue, welfare reform. We saw that we can find common ground, but we are not all the way there yet. In my radio address last