

The President's Radio Address *September 16, 1995*

Good morning. Last week I spoke with you about what I believe must be done to reform our Nation's broken welfare system. I said that real welfare reform should reflect the values all of us as Americans share: work, personal responsibility, and family. And I challenged the Senate to put aside its partisan differences to stand up to ideological extremism and to find common ground and higher ground.

Ever since the 1992 campaign, I've been appealing to Americans to join me in an effort to end welfare as we know it. Since I became President, I've been working to reform welfare State by State while pushing for national action in Congress.

Our administration has freed 34 States from Federal rules to enable them to move people from welfare to work. We've offered all 50 States the opportunity to set time limits on welfare, require people to work or stay in school, give private employers incentives to work. And it's working. The welfare rolls are down, the food stamp rolls are down across America. But we still need national action in Congress.

The votes taken this week by the United States Senate under the leadership of a bipartisan coalition of Democrats and moderate Republicans give us hope that a conclusion to this effort may only be days or weeks away.

After months of sometimes bitter debate, we are now within striking distance of transforming the welfare system in four fundamental ways: First, people on welfare will have to work in return for the help they receive. Second, no one who can work will be able to stay on welfare forever. Third, we will begin to make work possible by providing child care for mothers of young children. And fourth, we will put in place the toughest child support enforcement measures ever.

It wasn't always this way. Not long ago, some in Congress wanted to punish children for the mistakes of their parents, and some still do. Others wanted to pretend that States could require mothers to work without the child care they need.

But this week, an overwhelming bipartisan majority in the Senate rejected that course and began to insist that welfare reform should be

about moving people from welfare to work, not simply cutting them off. Senators in both parties agreed to provide resources for child care.

They agreed that States have a responsibility to maintain their own efforts to move people from welfare to work and to care for poor children and that States should have access to a contingency fund to protect against an economic downturn that would put people out of work and on welfare through no fault of their own. They also agreed on a revolutionary work performance bonus that I have urged that for the first time ever will reward States for placing welfare recipients into private sector jobs.

They agreed that instead of just cutting off young unwed mothers, we should require them to live at home, stay in school, and turn their lives around. And if their homes are unsuitable, this bill provides incentives for States to establish second-chance homes, a part of our national effort to reduce teen pregnancy and give young people a better start in life.

All these things have long been critical elements of my approach to welfare reform, from my service as Governor to my work as President. For 15 years I have worked on this problem. I know these things will make a real difference in moving people from welfare to work.

Soon, both the House and the Senate will have endorsed all the tough child support enforcement provisions I supported last year, including saying to parents who owe child support, "If you can pay up and you don't, we'll take your driver's license away."

Despite the progress we've made, our work isn't done yet. We'll be working hard on this bill over the next few weeks to make sure the right incentives are there to move people from welfare to work, to make sure children are protected, and that States not only share the problem but have the resources they need to get the job done. And we'll be working hard to build on the bipartisan progress we made this week. We must not let it fall apart when the House and Senate meet to resolve their differences.

Still, there are some on the far right who say they don't want welfare reform at all unless it meets all their ideological litmus tests. These

extremists want to cut off all help to children whose mothers are poor, young, and unmarried, even though the Catholic Church and many Republicans have warned that this would lead to more abortions. These same people want Washington to impose mandates, like a family cap, even though Republican and Democratic Governors alike agree that these decisions should be left to the States.

By an overwhelming bipartisan majority, the Senate showed wisdom and courage in rejecting those litmus tests this week. I challenged the conference committee of House and Senate Members to do the same. One of the primary reasons I ran for President was to reform welfare. I've done my best to do it without congressional action, but with the right kind of congressional action, we can do the job right. We can advance work and personal responsibility and family.

Finally, we're on the verge of coming to grips with one of the most fundamental social problems of our time, moving people from welfare to work. Now we must finish the job, and we

can't let ideological extremism and politics as usual get in the way. Make no mistake: If Congress walks away from this bipartisan progress, they will kill welfare reform.

But we've worked too hard, too long, to let partisan extremism kill this effort. Welfare reform will not work and cannot pass unless it's a truly bipartisan effort. And it will only become law if it truly reflects the spirit of our great Nation and the values of all Americans.

There's an important lesson in what took place this week. If we can find common ground on the issue of welfare reform, surely we can find it in our efforts to solve our other problems, especially in our effort to balance the budget in a way that will strengthen families and prepare our citizens to meet the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. Let's do welfare reform, then let's do the budget and do it right.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Presidential Determination No. 95-42—Memorandum on Travel to Lebanon

September 15, 1995

Memorandum for the Secretary of Transportation

Subject: Partial Resumption of Travel to Lebanon

By virtue of the authority vested in me by 49 U.S.C. 40106(b), I hereby determine that the prohibition of transportation services to Lebanon established by Presidential Determination 85-14 of July 1, 1985, as amended by Presidential Determination 92-41 of August 17, 1992, is hereby further amended to permit U.S. air carriers, solely through interline arrangements, to engage in foreign air transportation to and from Lebanon of:

- a) passengers who are not U.S. citizens; and
- b) U.S. citizen passengers who have received written approval from the Department of State for travel to Lebanon; and their accompanying baggage.

All other prohibitions set forth in the above-referenced Presidential Determinations, including the prohibition on direct operations to Lebanon by U.S. air carriers, remain in effect.

You are directed to implement this determination as soon as is practical, with due regard to the safety of travelers going to and from Lebanon.

You are further directed to publish this determination in the *Federal Register*.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 18, but it was not received for publication in the *Federal Register*.