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These acts of good corporate citizenship are good for employees, but many, many thousands of American businesses have proved they're good for business, too. Our changing economy puts a real premium on skill, ingenuity, creativity, and loyalty of the work force. The quality and productivity of America's workers are our greatest source of economic strength.

Family flexible workplaces, health care and pensions, training, partnership, safe workplaces: five challenges many of America's best businesses are now meeting. We want others to follow their lead. Government should support them in doing so. That's the way to create strong, lasting growth for our economy, and that's the way to make sure that every American, every American, has the chance to reap the rewards of economic change and economic growth.

We can meet these economic challenges the way we best meet all our challenges, by working together as partners, all of us doing our part. Remember, the greatest lesson of our democracy is this: When we are divided, we defeat ourselves, but when we are united, America never loses.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:54 p.m. on March 22 in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on March 23.

Remarks in a Roundtable Discussion on Corporate Mentoring in Cincinnati, Ohio

March 23, 1996

[*Moderator John E. Pepper, chief executive officer, Procter & Gamble, and cochair, Cincinnati Youth Collaborative (CYC), welcomed the President and noted that the city of Cincinnati recently had achieved victories in referendums for schools and construction of sports stadiums, along with the University of Cincinnati's entry into the NCAA basketball regional tournament.*]

The President. Actually, I watched the game. They did very well.

Mr. Pepper. Looked really good. But we're pleased to be here and look forward to the dialog we can have and to answer your questions on these programs.

The President. Thank you.

[*Mr. Pepper said that the mentor program was driven by Cincinnati's commitment to children and education and that community involvement was widespread, through the sponsoring CYC and other organizations such as the United Way.*]

The President. Thank you very much.

Well, I don't want to spend a lot of time talking; I came here to listen to you. But let me just make a couple of comments. First of all, to reiterate what John said, it is perfectly clear that no matter how many jobs we can generate in the private sector in America—and our country has done a very good job in the last 3 years. We've generated 8.4 million new jobs, by far more than any advanced country in the world. The other six big economies together have netted out about zero. Three of them have created a few thousand jobs; three of them have lost a few thousand jobs. America is producing jobs.

But if we want all Americans to do well, to be able to get a job, keep a job, and have a growing income, we've got to raise the education levels of the country and we have to do a better job of connecting school to work.

Now there are some things the Government can do. We've worked hard to increase our investment in Head Start, for example, to give schools more funds to try to meet strong national standards, to improve access to college through a better college loan program and the national service program. I hope that Congress will adopt a balanced budget plan that will include a deduction of up to $10,000 a year for the cost of education after high school. I think these things will all help.

But the main role of Government, I think, today is to work with the private sector in trying to keep the market successful in generating new jobs but also to create the conditions in which at each community level in America, in every community in the country, the business and education and ordinary citizens can work to-

gether to try to develop the capacity of every person. I mean, basically, that's what I am trying to achieve by the time I finish my service as President. I want a framework out there where the Government's role is to help create the conditions in which communities can solve their own problems and get the most out of their own people.

And the school-to-work initiative that we started back in 1993 gives funds to projects like this one, not to tell you what to do but just to empower you to work together to move young people through education and then into the work force. And so I heard a lot of great things about it, and I heard that John Pepper and Procter & Gamble were particularly active and that there were 1,500 other volunteers in this program. So I just wanted us to get a little more personal exposure to it.

And so, having said that, I'd like to turn it back to you.

[*Mr. Pepper introduced Catherine Ingram, Cincinnati school board president, who addressed the need for linkage between the community, businesses, schools, and parents in mentor programs. She said that the 70 percent approval rate in the school referendum was a sign that people were starting to realize a connection between education and their economic concerns. Mr. Pepper then noted the importance of including the president and vice president of the school board as CYC members.*]

The President. I agree with that.

[*Mr. Pepper then introduced John Bryant, CYC executive director, who said the program had 1,000 mentors drawn from all walks of life, working with students in elementary school through high school. He explained that at higher grade levels, students gained exposure to the world of work and then were eligible to receive college scholarships raised by corporations and to use a college information center sponsored by a manufacturing company.*]

The President. Thank you.

[*Mr. Pepper introduced Schroeder Junior High School student Nathaniel Walker, saying it was his 13th birthday. Mr. Walker then described activities with his mentor in and out of school.*]

The President. You say you spend about an hour a week with her?

Mr. Walker. Yes.

The President. Do you look forward to that hour every week?

Mr. Walker. Yes. When she's on travel, she sends me a postcard and tells me when she's coming back. It tells me why she wasn't there or something like that.

The President. You like that because it tells you that it's important to her, right?

Mr. Walker. Yes.

The President. Do you know a lot of other students that have mentors?

Mr. Walker. Yes, I know one of them. It's a girl that went to my school. She said—we got in the same magnet school, and she's got a tutor.

The President. And does she like hers?

Mr. Walker. I don't talk to her about that. [*Laughter*]

The President. Thank you for coming.

Mr. Walker. You're welcome.

The President. Happy birthday.

Mr. Walker. Thank you.

The President. Hope you have a good day.

[*Mr. Pepper then introduced Miriam Mazuka, director of the CYC mentoring program in which Mr. Walker participated. She commented on the positive outcome seen in students who had mentors, including fewer school dropouts and fewer teen pregnancies.*]

The President. And you say you have about 1,000?

Ms. Mazuka. We have 1,007 serving as mentors in a one-to-one relationship, and we have about 200 people that are just tutoring youngsters. And we have this long, long waiting list of students who want to be matched.

The President. How many do you have who want to have mentors that don't?

Ms. Mazuka. Well, you know, we stopped keeping track of that, because the list goes on and on and on. It's a matter of supply and demand now. It's over 1,000.

The President. So it's virtually unlimited. So if you had a thousand more adults in the community who would do it——

Ms. Mazuka. We have a thousand youngsters——

The President. ——just your students.

Ms. Mazuka. Absolutely.

The President. Well, maybe my coming here will help you get some more mentors.

Ms. Mazuka. I certainly hope so.

The President. We are formally sending out an appeal to the Cincinnati community.

Mr. Pepper. I'll just add to that by——

The President. What's that?

Mr. Pepper. ——holding up that telephone number. [*Laughter*]

The President. That's right.

Mr. Pepper. You know, this is just relentless promotion if we go all around. That number is 475–4959, if you can't read it. And we literally have 700 youngsters right now who have held up their hand and asked for a mentor, and we don't have it. And this does work. This changes lives.

The President. That's terrific. Thank you.

[*Mr. Pepper introduced Taft High School student Verneilya Britten, who related her experience in the Taft Career and Academic Program, training to be an administrative assistant at W.R. Grace.*]

The President. Do you know other students that are in this program?

Ms. Britten. Yes.

The President. Do they all like it?

[*Ms. Britten replied in the affirmative, saying the program was giving her a head start on a career. Mr. Pepper next called upon Paul Laws of W.R. Grace, Ms. Britten's supervisor, who said that the program benefited students by giving them work experience and helping them make career decisions and it benefited employers by providing a pool of already trained workers. Mr. Pepper then said 79 companies were participating.*]

The President. And does each company essentially take one student?

Mr. Laws. We have two. We've taught enough volunteers—we have two mentors on site, actually formed two little teams, one for administrative and one for operations, where Verneilya will learn various duties in the administrative area and another mentee will learn the duties of operations and plant, lab, along those lines—engineering.

Mr. Pepper. It's typically one or two, but we do up to as high as six.

Mr. Bryant. We can go up to six, but at the present time, we don't have any more than four at the present time. But in terms of the original planning, anywhere from one to six.

The President. You know, I think this is so important because we as a nation, we for many years made a strict sort of division between a world of school and a world of work, and even within school between academic courses and vocational courses. And now all those lines are blurring, and that's a very good thing.

You know, for example, some people learn better, learn academic subjects better in practical settings. We know that—we also know that the world of work and the world of learning can no longer be easily divided, because people have to keep learning at work for a lifetime.

And one of the problems that I saw first when I was a Governor, working with both businesses and schools, and then when I became President, is that we have no real system in our country for acquainting young people with the world of work and moving them easily into the world of work. And I think it will strengthen their academic performance. That would be my guess. And I think it will also ultimately, therefore, be in the interest of the business community as well to have these kinds of programs. I thank you very much for your work you're doing.

[*Senator John Glenn asked about training for prospective mentors, and Ms. Mazuka described the mentor training program. Mr. Pepper explained that Federal funds were used for the job training pilot program and said he doubted the program would have been started if that money was not available. He then introduced Jan Leslie, Partners in Education director, who described the program to match companies with public and private schools to provide mentoring, tutoring, and assistance in developing curriculum and restructuring school business operations. She noted that public schools were able to decrease their administrative staffs by 50 percent as a result.*]

The President. Is that right?

[*Ms. Leslie affirmed the positive results and praised the high level of corporate support.*]

The President. Were you on the school board when this happened?

[*Ms. Ingram replied that she joined the school board 2 years after the corporate involvement began in 1991 but that some educators were still skeptical that corporate methods should be applied in schools, even in areas such as inventory and purchasing.*]

The President. I think it's very important. The administrative cost of American public education

has gotten very high. And part of it is because of the school districts get their money from the local district, from the State, from the Federal Government. Part of it is because these programs sort of built up over time that they have to manage. There are a lot of reasons for that.

But in a world in which administrative overhead is going down dramatically everywhere else because of computer technology and new management techniques and where there's a limit to how much money you can raise, it's very important to be able to demonstrate I think, for matters of good education, that you've lowered administrative costs and put it back into direct education.

The Federal Government today has 205,000 fewer people working for it than it did the day I became President. And we have very good severance packages, early retirement packages; we weren't just throwing people out, you know. But with the smallest Government that we've had since 1965, and by the end of the year it will be the smallest it's been since 1962, that helps us to get the deficit down and it also frees up money for real direct services to people. In the education context, that's real education programs, it's more of the things we're talking about today.

I know it's not the subject we came here to talk about, but you caught my attention. [*Laughter*] I have to go meet with—I'm going to meet with the Governors next week. They're having an update on the educational summit we held back in 1989. And it's one of the things that I've been trying to get updated on. So I thank you.

[*Mr. Pepper next introduced Sister Rose Ann Fleming of Xavier University, who welcomed the President to the campus and then described the university's various scholarship and mentoring programs, including those for university student-athletes. She mentioned that in the last 14 years, every Xavier men's basketball player who had played for 4 years had graduated.*]

The President. That's fantastic.

Sister Fleming. And we're looking forward to the same thing continuing. So I think for the underscoring of what has been said here today through the training and mentors and work with young people, like Nate here, a one-to-one relationship is the key to a successful development of the individual, and that's what the university is all about.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Pepper. That really completes the comments that we wanted to have the group make, and we'd obviously be glad to expand on any of that, or if you have any comments.

The President. I just want to ask one question of either Mr. Bryant or whoever else: How many students do you have in your summer jobs and summer school program?

[*Mr. Bryant replied that there were 460 students in their summer programs combined, in addition to about 1,200 jobs in the Youth Employment Services program. A participant then encouraged the President to ensure that the Federal Government would remain a partner in youth summer job training programs.*]

The President. If I might just offer one or two comments. First of all, I want to thank each and every one of you, not only for being here today but for what you're doing with your lives, because I think it's very important. And secondly, I want to thank a number of you for what you said about these programs, and John, what you said about the pilot project.

Let me say what the problem is. If you come from Washington and you come to Cincinnati and you say to yourself: What is the connection between the National Government and what we're doing? Do they have any responsibility in Washington to help us do what we're doing here, and if so, what is it?

You know, when I took office, the deficit was twice as big as it is now, the national debt quadrupled; we had to get it down. I've tried to take the position that in reducing the deficit, we ought not to be cutting our investments in education, and we ought to be not telling local communities how to deal with things like this but giving them some research fund or some pilot project funds, if you will, to help them explore what works, and then keep funding what plainly works, like the student loan programs and the summer job programs; these things plainly work. And there's not enough to serve everybody, so if we provide the base, then perhaps you can come in and raise money on top of the base.

So I've been quite heartened by what I've seen today because I know that most of this work has to be done at the community level, and that is a good thing. How could anyone in Washington know whether W.R. Grace in Cincinnati could take 2 young students or 5

or 3 or 25 or anybody? So this has to be done at the local level.

What we must do in Washington is to make the National Government relevant and trustworthy and effective for the 21st century. And that means we have to get our own house in order; we can't—we have to balance the budget, but we also have to decide what it is we're going to invest in and what our objective is.

It seems to me our objective ought to be to keep America the world's greatest job generator and then to make sure that our young people are trained to do good jobs and have successful lives so that they can be rewarded in this new world they're living in. And that means that a lot of the actual work and how it's done must be decided by these kinds of community partnerships, but the National Government has to create the conditions in which they can flourish. That's what I'm trying to do.

A lot of the times you hear these great debates in Washington, you know, they sound—they may sound abstract to you. But actually what the debate is, is a debate about everyone knows the economy's changed, that it involves more mind and less muscle and it's more global and less local, and everybody knows, therefore, that—and all businesses are changing and there again, the Government has to change. And we're trying to define—our great challenge is to define what it is our responsibility is to help you do what you're doing.

One of the things a President can do, of course, is to use the bully pulpit—I mean, I just made a plea for more mentors here—[*laughter*]—but also to try to make sure that if we are creating these conditions, that people know what you're doing here in Cincinnati with the Youth Collaborative, because I think this is a good model that could be carried all across America. You know, I wish every community had this level of intense and organized partnership, and I'm very grateful to you. And I also feel that I have learned, and I think Senator Glenn probably feels the same way I do, that at least I think I have a clearer idea about exactly what our responsibilities in Washington are to help you do what you're doing here. And I thank you for that, all of you.

Thank you.

Mr. Pepper. We're glad you're here, and thank you very much for coming. I guarantee it will leave us just more energized.

The President. Great day. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:40 a.m. in Schmidt Hall at Xavier University.

Remarks to the Community in Cincinnati
March 23, 1996

Thank you so much. Thank you for the wonderful welcome. Thank you, Mayor Qualls, for the kind things you said, for making me feel so welcome here, for your outstanding leadership for Cincinnati. And congratulations on the recent success of your education and your stadium referendum. That was a very impressive thing.

Thank you, Father Hoff, for making me feel so welcome here at Xavier. You know, I graduated from Georgetown. I tell everyone I'm the closest Baptist you'll ever get to a Jesuit. [*Laughter*] And I'm delighted to be here. The Jesuits have always been famous for their humility. I hope Father Hoff doesn't get in trouble for saying that now that I had seen the Pope three times I could finally come to Xavier. [*Laughter*] But I'm trying to move up in life, and I enjoyed it. [*Applause*] Thank you.

I want to say a warm word of thanks to my good friend Senator John Glenn. Hillary and I admire John and his wonderful wife, Annie, so much. I want all of you to know that one of the most challenging jobs we've had in Washington in the last 3 years is to figure out how to downsize the Government without undermining the quality of service we're giving to the American people. And we now have the smallest Federal Government in 30 years. It's 205,000 people smaller than it was when I took office; by the end of this year it will be the smallest Federal Government since John Kennedy was President. But if you want to do that in ways that first, are humane to the employees in-