

cers on the street. We should ban cop-killer bullets that are designed for one reason only, to pierce the bulletproof vests that police officers wear and kill them. And we have to work to create an environment for our children to grow up in free of crime, drugs, violence and free from the influences that make them more likely to get involved in those things or less sensitive to violence and crime when they occur.

One of the most remarkable things about the crime statistics—I'd just like to say in passing that I commend all of you—is the percentage of people who are now killed by people who don't know them. Just 20 years ago, about two-thirds of all killings in our country were people who knew their victims, family members, friends, others who had deep, personal feuds. Then in 1990, it had dropped to just a little over half. In these latest crime statistics, 55 percent of all the people who were killed in this country were killed by people who did not know them, who were the victims of crimes, drive-by shootings, random acts of violence. We have got to do what we can to continue to change the environment in which our children grow up as well.

I know we will never eliminate crime completely, but we proved we can turn it around. Four years in a row, the crime rate has dropped. It's now at a 10-year low. If we can bring it down for 4 more years, maybe we will create an America which at least when people come

home from work and turn on the television news, if the leading story is a report of a violent crime, they will be shocked, instead of numb to it as too many are today. That's the kind of America we can build if we work together.

And again, let me close with my heartfelt thanks to the law enforcement officials and the other officials from the city and the State and the county who are here with me today for the work they do to make our streets safe, our homes safe, our schools safe, our businesses safe, and the people they represent all across the United States. We have demonstrated, all of us working together, along with all the citizens who work in these citizens groups around America, that we can lower the crime rate. We need to keep going until we can bear it and feel that we're living in a safe country again.

Thank you all very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:12 a.m. on the tarmac at Denver International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Wellington Webb of Denver; David Michaud, Denver chief of police; Pat Alstrom, executive director, Colorado Department of Public Safety; and Aries Zavaras, executive director, Colorado Department of Corrections. H.R. 4137, the Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act of 1996, approved October 13, was assigned Public Law No. 104-305.

Remarks to the Community in Albuquerque, New Mexico

October 13, 1996

The President. Thank you. Hello, New Mexico! Thank you for making me feel so welcome. Well, you know, they asked me back in Washington why I was going to Albuquerque to prepare for my debate, and I said, "Well, we've done an exhaustive amount of research all over America, and Mayor Chavez was holding this balloon event, and there were going to be 800 balloons in the air at the same time. And it seemed to me that that meant that there was more hot air here already than any other place in the country, and a little more wouldn't do any harm." [Laughter] So I thought I should be here.

I want to thank all of you for coming out today in this magnificent crowd, stretching out in all of these directions. I want to thank those who are here who entertained us, the Danita Native American Dancers, the God's Way Community Church African-American Choir, Perla Padilla, the Rio Grande High School Marching Band, the New Mexican Marimba Band, and Francisco LeFebvre who painted the murals in front of the armory. Let's give them all a hand. They were great, and I thank them. [Applause]

I am honored to be here with our candidates today, with John Wertheim, Shirley Baca, Art Trujillo, my good friend Eric Serna. I hope you

will support them in this election just 23 days away. Will you do that? Will you help us? [*Applause*]

I want to thank your mayor for his friendship and support and for being one of the most innovative mayors in the entire United States. Thank you for that. I thank Secretary of State Stephanie Gonzalez for all that she said up here, for knowing and caring and supporting the work we are doing to try to build strong families and protect our children and give them a better future.

I want to thank my good friend Senator Jeff Bingaman, and I want to say one thing about that. Just the other day we announced—a couple of days ago—a major, major new contract for Los Alamos here, to build a new supercomputer with Cray, a new Cray supercomputer that will create a huge number of good paying jobs for our country, move us forward. And I want you to know not only that Jeff Bingaman had a lot to do with that contract, but more importantly, when our friends on the other side finally got ahold of the Congress and they proposed among other things to close down the Energy Department—

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. —and it was far enough away from election that they didn't come back and say, "Oh, I didn't mean New Mexico"—it's interesting, isn't it; you get close to the election, it's amazing how people's positions improve—[*laughter*—Jeff Bingaman said, "I will stand with you to the very end." We are going to save the laboratories of the Department of Energy, including Sandia and Los Alamos and the others as well.

I want to thank Bill Richardson for so many things, but you in New Mexico should be terribly proud of him that while working to represent his constituents and this State, he has also put in double time so that he could go all around the world on behalf of the United States in the cause of peace and freedom. There is no Member of the House of Representatives who has done as much to make this a safer world for our children as Bill Richardson. And you should be very proud of that.

Well, folks, I made a joke a minute ago about the debate, but they're deadly serious. You've already seen two of these three debates, the first one with Senator Dole and me and then the Vice President's debate with Congressman

Kemp. And Al Gore did a good job, didn't he? I was proud of him. [*Applause*]

What these debates reveal are two very different visions about how we should move forward as a nation into the 21st century. Do we believe that we ought to build a bridge big enough and wide enough for all of us to walk across?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. Or are they right that all these efforts don't amount to anything, and we ought to just say, "There's a river. You figure out how to get across it"?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Do we believe we're better off being told, "Well, you're on your own, but we hope everything will work out for you. Good luck"?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Or was the First Lady right when she said it does take a village to raise our children and build our country and move forward?

Audience members. Yes!

The President. These views have dramatic practical consequences that affect us all. And sometimes, I think, my fellow Americans, we spend too much time arguing that our opponents are in the grip of some special interest which takes hold of their minds and makes them do something they don't want to do.

The truth is that we just look at the world in different ways. And you can see it. Their budget would have cut Head Start; I just signed a budget that expanded Head Start. I believe we were right. They did everything they could to kill the family and medical leave law; I signed it because I thought it would make us stronger, and it has. We're better off because of it.

When I tried to change the college loan program to make it more affordable and to make it easier for our young people to repay their loans and to limit how much they could be required to repay in a year to a percentage of their income so that more of our young people could borrow money to go to college, they fought against it tooth and nail. We prevailed. Now millions of young people can do it. I think we were right and they were wrong.

Four years ago, this debate we had was somewhat theoretical, and you took me in New Mexico on faith. But now there's a record. Now you don't have to guess anymore. I see in the audience there are a couple of people who actu-

ally knew me. Besides the folks on the stage—my former colleague, Governor Anaya, former Governor Apodaca, Senator Harris—there are a few people here I knew. But most of you didn't know anything about me, and you couldn't be sure this would work.

You don't have to guess anymore; we've got a record now. There are 10½ million more jobs than there were 4 years ago. New Mexico has a much lower unemployment than it had 4 years ago. We've got record numbers of new businesses and new exports. We are moving in the right direction.

We learned last week that we had the biggest drop in childhood poverty in 20 years last year—we're moving in the right direction—the biggest drop in the inequality of working people in 27 years.

[At this point, the audio system malfunctioned.]

The President. Is it on? It is now.

And the census department told us that we have now the lowest rate of poverty among senior citizens in America since we started keeping statistics. We're moving in the right direction, and we ought to keep going.

Now, folks, today we learned that the FBI reports that come out every year say that our crime rate is at a 10-year low. The crime rate's gone down for 4 years in a row in this administration. I am proud of that. There are one million fewer victims. We're moving in the right direction. Our children should not be afraid in their homes, in their schools, and on the streets.

You deserve a lot of credit for what's happened. When you stood with me and Jeff Bingaman and Bill Richardson when they shut the Government down to try to force their budget eliminating the Department of Education and the Department of Energy and the Department of Commerce, which gave us our ability to compete for business abroad, cutting back on Medicare and Medicaid at unacceptable levels, reducing our commitment to education, crippling our ability to protect our environment, you stood with us, and you said, "We think they're right, and those folks that shut the Government down to try to force their budget on America to divide us and weaken us are wrong." And I thank you for that. You deserve the credit for it.

So we began to do sensible things again right before the Congress was over. Ten million Americans got an increase in their minimum wage. Right before the Congress was over, 25

million Americans will potentially benefit from the bill we passed that says you can't lose your health insurance anymore just because you change jobs or someone in your family has been sick. Just before Congress was over, we finally passed a bill that did something you had already done in New Mexico, ending those drive-by deliveries. Insurance companies can't force mothers and their newborns out of the hospital after only a day anymore in this country.

So we're moving in the right direction. And we're better off than we were 4 years ago, but we have to do more. And let me say to you, one of the things that I have tried to do is to change the way we think about our purposes and working together as a people, the way we think about our responsibilities as citizens. I don't think like all that debate that goes on, or did go on in Washington for 10 or 12 years: liberal this, conservative that; this is a Democratic issue, that's a Republican issue; this is on the left, that's on the right.

You know, if I could go to dinner with any of those 42 people or 67 people Bill says have invited me to dinner—I'd like to do that, by the way—[laughter]—if I could do that and I could just sit there and not say a word, I'll bet you \$100 that we wouldn't have that kind of sterile rhetoric. People would be talking about their hopes and their dreams for their children, the challenges they face on the job, how they can succeed in raising their kids and succeed in the work place, what's this country going to be like in 20 years. So that's the way I'm trying to get folks to talk and think in Washington.

And my program is simple: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, an American community that includes all of us without regard to our race, our gender, or when we showed up because, except for the Native Americans in the crowd, the rest of us are all immigrants. That's what I want to do.

So I say to you, that means that this old argument about Government that's been raging in Washington for 12 years doesn't have any relationship to your life. Yes, the Government cannot solve all your problems with a big bureaucracy. That Government is gone. It was our administration—not our friends in the other party, our administration—with the support of Jeff Bingaman and Bill Richardson, and the opposition of our friends in the other party, that cut the size of the Federal Government to its lowest since John Kennedy was President and

reduced more regulations in 3 years than they did in 12. We did that.

But I'll tell you what, I believe that the National Government's responsibility is to do those things that we must do together. My opponent says, "Oh, the President thinks the Government knows best." But I think you know best. Now, if we fall for that one again, we ought to be ashamed of ourselves. Their theory is, you know, that once you get elected to public office you no longer belong to the people, you lose all your common sense, and you become the enemy, unless you're a Republican, in which case you don't. [Laughter]

Their theory is that the Government is always the enemy. Read the Constitution: "We the people . . ." The Government is you. It belongs to you. It is a reflection of what you want. It is nothing more or less than yours. And I believe that our role is to create the conditions and then give you the tools to make the most of your own lives. I believe that we're supposed to help communities to fulfill their dreams and individuals and families to do the same. I'm glad to support more communities in doing what Albuquerque had done, for example, in establishing a curfew that's lowering juvenile crime and keeping our kids safer. I think that's one of my jobs.

I want to finish the job of putting 100,000 police on the street. All we're doing is funding it. Those police are working for you on the streets in all the communities of this country, and that's one of the reasons we've got a 10-year low in crime.

Those are the things that we are doing. The family and medical leave law has helped 12 million American families to get a little time off from work without losing their jobs when a baby is born or a baby, a spouse, or a parent is sick. And we have a stronger economy because of it, not a weaker economy. That's one of our jobs.

I believe there ought to be a national program to guarantee that every young person, and now not-so-young people, who want and need to go to college—every single person who is willing to work for it ought to be able to go. I think that's a good thing for our country.

I believe we were right to fight against our friends in the other party when they tried to cut the funds for safe and drug-free schools. I think we need to help our kids in the beginning and help them stay out of trouble so we

won't have to spend as much time and money and heartbreak and blood when they get in trouble. The safe and drug-free schools program is a good program, and I think we were right.

And let me say, because I believe we have to build a bridge to 21st century that will take us into a time full of greater prosperity and greater possibility than we've ever known, a bridge that's big enough for all of us to walk across, I want to say a special word of thanks to another community group that is here. We have hundreds of young people here today from the Bridge Builders to the 21st Century. Hold your hands up, everybody that's here. These young people have joined together to pledge that they will do everything they can to make their schools drug-free and to encourage every single citizen of the State of New Mexico to vote on election day. Let's give them a big hand. I'm proud of them. [Applause] Thank you.

So I say to you, there are big consequences to which path we choose to take. My bridge-building calls for the following path: Should we balance the budget? You bet we should. It keeps interest rates down, keeps the economy growing, takes the burden of debt off these children. But we have to do it in a way that honors our obligations to each other and continues to invest in the future. So, yes, balance the budget, but we can do it without wrecking Medicare, Medicaid, education, the environment, or abolishing the laboratories of the Department of Energy and undermining our research budget.

We should cut taxes, but we shouldn't embrace a big tax scheme that actually raises taxes on 9 million of our hardest working people, blows a hole in the deficit which will increase interest rates and weaken the economy and require bigger cuts than the budget I vetoed when they shut the Government down. Let's try my tax cut. It's targeted to education, to childrearing, to buying a home, to dealing with a medical emergency, and not paying taxes on your home when you sell it if there's a gain. We can pay for that, and we need it.

One of the biggest differences I had with our friends on the other side was their obsession with weakening our ability to work together to protect our environment. They said we were hurting the economy by protecting the environment. Well, all I know is that the air is cleaner, the drinking water is safer, we have raised the standards for food safety, we've cleaned up more toxic waste dumps in 3 years than the previous

administrations did in 12. And we've still got faster job growth than any administration under the previous party had since the 1920's, in 70 years. It's a good thing to protect the environment, and I intend to continue to do it.

Finally, and most important of all, we have got to build a bridge to the 21st century in which the education of every single American is our highest priority. Will you help me do that? [Applause]

Forty percent of the third graders in America still cannot read a book independently. I want to mobilize 30,000 volunteers, AmeriCorps volunteers, reading specialists, to work with parents and teachers so that in 4 years, when we start that new century, every 8-year-old in this country can pick up a book and say, "I can read this all by myself." Will you help me do this? [Applause]

I want to make sure we connect every single, solitary classroom and library in America to the information superhighway; to make sure we have the computers, the educational materials, the trained teachers; and most important, that all these classrooms are connected to the Internet, the World Wide Web, all these networks.

Now, if you're not a big computer person, you may not understand exactly what that means. Let me tell you what that means in practical terms. It means for the first time in history, children in the poorest rural school districts in America, children in every Native American schoolroom, children in every inner-city school, children in every suburban school, children in the poorest, the most middle class, and the wealthiest schools, public and private, in America for the first time ever, they will all have access to the same information in the same time in the same way. Will you help me do that? [Applause]

And finally, we can make a college education available to all Americans. And I propose to do it in three ways: Number one, I want you to be able to save in an IRA but withdraw from it without any penalties if you're spending your savings for a college education or medical costs or buying a first-time home. Number two, I propose to make 2 years of education after high school as universal as a high school diploma

is today by simply saying, "You can take off of your tax bill, dollar for dollar, the cost of the typical community college tuition for 2 years." Will you help me do that? [Applause] And finally, I believe you ought to be able to deduct from your taxes—you ought to be able to deduct up to \$10,000 a year from your taxable income for the cost of college tuition, any kind of college, for people of any age. Will you help me do that? [Applause]

My fellow Americans, we are better off than we were 4 years ago and not just in economic terms, for this is not just about the economy. This is about what kind of America we want our children to live in. And I think every day—every day I think, what do I want my country to be like when we start that new century? What do I want my country to be like when my daughter is my age, when her children are my age?

And before you vote, I hope you will take just a little time and see if you can ask yourself, "Can I say in 30 seconds or a minute what I want America to be like when we start that new century, when my children are my age, when my grandchildren are my age?" If you will ask the question, I bet you will get an answer not very different than mine.

And then we will build that bridge to America's best days. There are 23 days left. I ask every one of you here today to take some time not only to vote but to reach out to others, to be a good citizen, to influence those whom you can influence and say, "Will you help me build that bridge to the 21st century?"

Thank you. God bless you. Thank you, New Mexico.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. in front of the KiMo Theater. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Martin Chavez of Albuquerque; John Wertheim and Shirley Baca, candidates for New Mexico's First and Second Congressional Districts, respectively; New Mexico senatorial candidate Art Trujillo; Eric Serna, candidate for New Mexico corporation commission; and Toney Anaya and Jerry Apodaca, former New Mexico Governors.