

June 14 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

and my body clock was off anyway, my wife called with her last-minute criticisms of my speech—[laughter]—which is a routine I have come to look forward to in life. [Laughter] And as usual, she was right, what she had to say, and I made three changes she suggested I make in it. But the last thing she said was, she said, “Now, you remind those people that you’ve only been there once, and I’ve been there twice, and I loved it both times.” [Laughter]

Again, Chancellor and all of you as part of the UCSD family, I thank you. I thank you on behalf of all of us who have come to visit with you today. I thank you for the ideas you have given me. Dr. Franklin, members of the board, you might be interested to know, around the table here they asked what they could do to help. And I said, well, we needed more credible research, and we needed more sources of information for the American people about basic things, delivered in understandable ways. We’ll never have the kind of national conversation we want until we first agree on at least most of the facts. You know, if you have a different

view of the same set of facts than someone else, it is wonderful because you never have to give up your bias, because you can say, “The poor soul just doesn’t know the facts,” so you can go right on with whatever you think and whatever you believe.

We are going to need the help of the university community and groups like the National Academy of Sciences and others, and we will be back to you on that. But the most important thing is, what I saw in the eyes of the students of this great university today convinced me without any question that we are doing the right thing, first, and secondly, that we will succeed.

Thank you all. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:24 p.m. in the Birch Aquarium at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography. In his remarks, he referred to Souley Diallo, incoming associated student body president, University of California San Diego; and historian John Hope Franklin, Chair, President’s Advisory Board on Race.

Statement on Senator Dale Bumpers’ Decision Not To Seek Reelection *June 14, 1997*

I have known and admired Dale Bumpers for over 25 years. He was a great Governor, and he has been a great Senator for the people of our native State and the entire Nation. We

will miss his courage to stand against the tide, his vision, and his eloquence. Hillary and I wish him and Betty all the best. We will miss him. So will the Senate. So will America.

Statement on the Murder of Policemen in Northern Ireland *June 16, 1997*

I am outraged by the callous murder by the IRA of two policemen in Northern Ireland. I condemn this brutal act of terrorism in the strongest possible terms. There can be no reason, no excuse for these vicious crimes. I extend my deepest sympathy to the families of the two slain officers.

There is nothing patriotic or heroic about these cowardly killings. The overwhelming majority of the people of Ireland, North and South, join me in repudiating violence and murder.

They know that a just and lasting peace is only possible through painstaking dialog and negotiation. Further violence can only play into the hands of those responsible for the vicious murders of the two policemen. The true heroes and patriots are the many people of both communities who work tirelessly and peacefully for reconciliation and understanding. I will continue to do all I can to support their efforts and the efforts of the political leaders participating in the Belfast peace talks.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner June 16, 1997

Thank you. Thank you very much. Mr. Mayor, my friend and neighbor, thank you for that generous introduction and for your great leadership in Memphis. I'd like to thank all of those who made this dinner possible tonight: I thank Richard and Janice and Ernie and Bob, who aren't here, and Weldon and Mel Clarke and Marianne Niles and Bill Kirk, Larry Gibson, Marianne Spragen, Jeff Thompson, everyone else who got all of you here tonight. I'm glad to see you.

You know, when you come to an event like this, even if you've been reelected President, right before you go in you're gripped with this recurring fear that you'll walk through the door and nobody will be there. [Laughter] So I'm very grateful to see you all here tonight. [Laughter]

Let me say, too, that I'm delighted to be joined tonight by two members of the White House staff, Craig Smith and Minyon Moore. And I see Carroll Willis from the DNC. There are a lot of other people from the Democratic Committee here.

I appreciate what the mayor said about my speech in San Diego, and I thought what I would try to do tonight just for a few minutes is to try to explain how that speech came to be. And we brought a few copies here tonight. If you want one on the way out, you can get it. But I thought I would like to explain how it came to be.

In 1992 when I ran for President, I had an idea that we could make this country work again if we could liberate ourselves from kind of traditional political battles and think about what we wanted the country to look like in the 21st century and then think backward and say, "Well, what would I have to do to get it that way?" Don't say in the first instance, "Well, you can't do both those things. They're inconsistent." Just ask yourself, what would you like our country to look like in the 21st century?

And I wrote a little answer down, and I have said it a thousand times since then. And every single day I think about it. I want my country to be a country where the American dream of opportunity is alive for every person, not just some. I want all citizens to be good, responsible citizens and assume the responsibilities of citi-

zenship. I want the United States to lead the world for peace and freedom 20, 30 years from now, just like we are today. And I want us to live together as one community where we respect, we even celebrate our differences, but we're bound together as Americans.

Now, those are the things I want. And I wrote it down over 5 years ago, and I've stuck with it ever since. Way back in 1991, before I made the decision to run for President, I said—nearly 6 years ago now—I said, "No point in me running unless I've got a better reason than I'd like to live in the White House." [Laughter] What will I say when people say, "What do you want to do? Why are you doing this?" And every single day I think about it.

So the first thing I wanted to do was to change the economic policy of the country. I said, "We can't keep on spending all this money we don't have; we're going to bankrupt the country. But we don't want to walk away from the poor or the dispossessed or the future of the country. So we have to find a way to reduce the deficit, for example, and spend more on education and spend more on preserving the environment, because they're our children and our future."

And most people didn't think you could do that. But you can, and we did. We had to do some things that weren't so popular. We got rid of hundreds of programs that I thought we could do without. And we got rid of 16,000 pages of Federal regulations. And by attrition, not firing, the Government's 300,000 people smaller than it was. But we're spending more money on education, we're spending more money on the environment, and we've cut the deficit by 77 percent. And that's a big reason, not the only reason, by any means, but a big reason the economy has done as well as it has.

On crime and social welfare, I thought to myself, there's got to be a way to protect the children and support people in moving from welfare to work but require them to do it, if they can, without hurting the kids. And that's what we've tried to do. We've had the biggest drop in welfare rolls in the history of America by far in the last 5 years.