

I'm pleased that Governors and mayors from all over the country, business leaders, and educators from States and cities, big and small, people of both parties, are joining in this effort. We're working to make sure this doesn't become a partisan issue.

Some people worry that the Federal Government would play too large a role in developing the test. To meet that concern, I have instructed my staff to rewrite our proposal to make sure these tests are developed not by the Department of Education but by an independent bipartisan board created by Congress many years ago. This will make sure these tests measure what they should, nothing more, nothing less.

Still, there are some in Congress who, even as our children are heading back to school, are working to undermine the very progress in education our children are counting on. They have proposed an amendment that would prevent us from developing a common test for math and reading and, therefore, would prevent your school district or your State or your child from choosing to take the test. That means you won't be able to find out if your child's school is meeting world-class standards.

The arguments they're using are the very same ones we've heard for years now. They amount to a determination to avoid accountability. Some say we shouldn't pay for test development even though it's being done by an inde-

pendent body. Some say the test will be misused, even though participation is voluntary and is clearly designed to show how students and schools are doing and to show the way toward improving them. Some say it's unfair to poor kids and kids of immigrant parents, even though many big-city school districts, including those in six of seven of our largest cities, say they want to be a part of the test and the national standards movement even if their States don't.

The fact is high standards are essential to providing our children the best education in the world, and I intend to do whatever is necessary to make sure we move forward.

The 21st century will be a time of remarkable opportunity. With high national education standards, we can make sure all our children have the education they need to seize these opportunities. Without them, our children will continue to pay for our own low expectations and our own limited vision for them. Our children, our schools, our future are far too important to be anything less than world class. Let us move forward into the 21st century with high standards and make sure we meet them.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 6:04 p.m. on August 29 at a private residence in Martha's Vineyard, MA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on August 30.

## Remarks in a Telephone Conversation From Martha's Vineyard With the WNBA Champion Houston Comets August 30, 1997

*Coach Van Chancellor.* Mr. President?

*The President.* Coach, congratulations.

*Coach Chancellor.* Well, thank you very much. You know, we're from neighboring States. I'm a Mississippi boy.

*The President.* You are?

*Coach Chancellor.* Yes, I am.

*The President.* Well, double congratulations.

*Coach Chancellor.* Well, thank you very much.

*The President.* I'll tell you what, I've followed the season this year. I've watched several games on television. I've really enjoyed it, and I had a chance to get to know some of the players

in the league when I went running with the women's Olympic team a couple of years ago, and I think it's just been a great thing. I hope it'll be a success and go forward. And you had a great season and a great team, and you had a good game tonight.

*Coach Chancellor.* Well, thank you very much. I do appreciate you taking the time to call our locker room. That means a lot to the women of this team and to this coaching staff.

*The President.* Can you hear me?

*Coach Chancellor.* Yes, I can hear you.

Aug. 30 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1997

*The President.* We're on a cell phone, but I think we're doing all right. I can hear you fine.

*Coach Chancellor.* Yes. I do appreciate your support of women's athletics in general.

*The President.* Well, I'm strongly supportive of it, and I hope that—like I said, I want you to stay with it, and I'll be supporting you all the way, and congratulate the players for me.

*Coach Chancellor.* I will. They're all in the dressing room, and they will be honored that you have called us.

*The President.* Cynthia had a great game, and any of us who has ever been through a child-birth were awful impressed when Sheryl Swoopes came back to play so quickly.

*Coach Chancellor.* Yes. I'm amazed that she was able to have a child and come back and

play for us. Cynthia's had some great games. This has just been a total team effort for us.

*The President.* Yes. Well, give them my best, and I hope to see you up here someday pretty soon.

*Coach Chancellor.* Okay. I would love to come up there.

*The President.* Thank you, Van.

*Coach Chancellor.* And thank you very much for calling us. I'm very honored.

*The President.* Bye-bye.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:50 p.m. from a private residence to the game site at The Summit in Houston, TX. In his remarks, he referred to Houston Comets players Cynthia Cooper and Sheryl Swoopes.

## Remarks in a Telephone Conversation From Martha's Vineyard With the WNBA Second Place New York Liberty

August 30, 1997

*The President.* Hello?

*Maureen Coyle.* We have a couple of people here who want to say hi to you.

*The President.* Oh, great. Congratulations on your season.

*Team members.* Thank you!

*The President.* I can't believe you're all there.

*Ms. Coyle.* Our head coach, Nancy Darsch, wanted to say hey to you.

*The President.* Great.

*Coach Nancy Darsch.* Hey, Mr. President, how are you?

*The President.* I'm fine, Coach. Congratulations on your season.

*Coach Darsch.* Well, thank you. We met this past fall at Ohio State, and I'm glad to say that I've moved on, taken this team to the WNBA championships, and I'm jealous of you being on Martha's Vineyard, my home State.

*The President.* Well, it's beautiful up here, and I tell you, I was really pleased with the way your first season worked out. I saw a lot of the games on television and tried to keep up with you, and I hope that there's a bright future ahead for it. I'm really enthusiastic about it, and I'm very pleased about all that you and all your players have done to keep it going.

*Coach Darsch.* Well, thank you very much. We're very happy that you've followed us and very pleased that you have been able to reach us here tonight.

*The President.* What are you doing? Are you having a party somewhere?

*Team members.* Yes!

*Coach Darsch.* We are having a celebration of our season. We're very proud of the way that we've played this season and of the WNBA inaugural season and also the fact that we all kind of separate here in the near future. So we're having a little get-together, and probably someone here that you are very well familiar with, Teresa Weatherspoon, as well as Rebecca Lobo, would like to say hello to you.

*The President.* Yes, I know them both. [Laughter]

*Teresa Weatherspoon.* What's happening, Mr. President? [Laughter]

*The President.* Well, I wish—

*Ms. Weatherspoon.* This is Teresa Weatherspoon talking to you.

*The President.* I wish I were there with you. How are you doing?