

see the future through the prism of the past, but it will ask us to hold on to the old values that lifted our senior citizens from the burden of abject poverty to the dignity of a deserved good, solid old age.

Keep in mind, most of you who are sitting out here can look forward to a life expectancy well into your eighties. Most of you, by the time you get to be my age, if you live to be my age, your life expectancy will probably be by then 90 or more. We're going to have to rethink this whole thing. But we have to do it with a view towards preserving the principles and the integrity of our society, binding us together across the generations and across the income divides.

We can do this. President Roosevelt often called us to the spirit of bold, persistent experimentation. We will have to do that. But he also reminded us that our greatest challenges we can only meet as one Nation. And we must remember that. With our increasing diversity, in the way we work and live, in our racial and ethnic and other backgrounds, religious backgrounds, we still have to be, when it comes to treating people with dignity, in fulfilling our obligations to one another, one Nation.

Acting today for the future is in some ways the oldest of American traditions. It's what Thomas Jefferson did when he purchased the Louisiana Territory and sent Lewis and Clark on their famous expedition. It's what Abraham Lincoln did when, at the height of the Civil War, he and the Congress took the time to

establish a system of land grant colleges, which revolutionized the future of America. It's what we Americans did when, in the depths of the Depression, when people were only concerned about the moment, and 25 percent of the American people were out of work, our Congress and our President still took the time to establish a Social Security system that could only take flower and have full impact long after they were gone.

That is what we do when we do best, what Professor Quigley called "future preference." What I prefer is a future in which my generation can retire, those who are not as fortunate as me can retire in dignity, but we can do it in a way that does not burden you and your ability to raise our grandchildren, because I believe the best days of this country lie ahead of us if we fulfill our responsibilities today for tomorrow.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:53 a.m. in Gaston Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Father Leo J. O'Donovan, president, Georgetown University; former Congressman Timothy J. Penny, board member, Concord Coalition; John Rother, director of legislation and public policy, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP); and Mannone Butler, Georgetown Law School student, who introduced the President. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Remarks on Departure for Capitol Hill *February 10, 1998*

Thank you very much. Thank you, and good morning. Let me begin by saying how very pleased I am for the support we are receiving from all around the world for our stand against Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction program. Friends and allies share our conviction that Saddam must not be allowed to develop nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons or the missiles to deliver them.

Yesterday the Governments of Canada and Australia announced that they are prepared to join the United States, Great Britain, and other

allies in a military operation should one prove necessary. As I have said before, I hope we can avoid the use of force. The choice is up to Saddam Hussein. Let the weapons inspectors back on the job with free and unfettered access. But if Saddam will not comply with the will of the international community, we must be prepared to act. And I am very grateful that others are prepared to stand with America.

Now, today, as has been said, I am transmitting to Congress the annual "Economic Report of the President." Let me begin by thanking

the Council of Economic Advisers for their hard work in preparing the report. I also want to thank our wonderful economic team for all they have done to promote prosperity for the American people. As the "Economic Report of the President" makes clear, our economy is strong; our prosperity is deep; our prospects are bright.

For 5 years our Nation has pursued a new economic strategy for the information age. We have reduced the deficit to slash interest rates and spur private sector investment. We've opened markets to create high-wage jobs. We've invested in the skills and education of our people so that every American has the chance to reap the benefits of the new economy. All around us we see the results in revitalized basic industries, thriving new industries, an investment boom, a vibrant American economy.

In this report, the Council of Economic Advisers projects continued growth through at least the next year. That would mark the longest peacetime expansion in the history of the United States. As this report makes plain, the expanding economy is producing wider opportunity and rising incomes for American families. Since 1993 the income of a typical family has increased \$2,200 beyond inflation. We've seen the fastest growth in real hourly wages in 20 years, after 12 years in which real wages actually fell.

The standard of living is rising faster than the cost of living now. And America has grown together, not apart, with the poorest fifth of our families seeing the largest percentage jump in their income. While incomes are rising, taxes are falling. A typical family earning \$50,000 a year now has the lowest tax burden in two decades; families earning \$25,000 a year, the lowest tax burden in three decades.

This economy is the envy of the world. But the progress was not predestined. We must press forward with the strategy that is now expanding opportunities for American families, not abandon it. Above all, we must maintain our fiscal discipline. It is the foundation of our prosperity. My view is clear: Every penny of any projected budget surplus should be reserved until we have taken all the steps necessary to save Social Security for the 21st century.

I am heartened by the strong support this approach has gained from the American people, including the young people to whom I spoke yesterday at Georgetown University. And I am pleased by the strong support Members of Congress of both parties have given for saving Social Security first.

In the past week, some have said that before we save Social Security, we should repeal the iron laws of fiscal discipline. They want to weaken the longstanding pay-as-you-go rule for taxes, which says that any spending proposal or any new tax cut must be paid for in the budget. This rule has been a key to our drive to balance the budget.

Let me be clear: Fiscal irresponsibility gave us 12 years of exploding deficits, division, declining wages. Fiscal responsibility has given us the strongest economy in a generation. I will not allow a return to the policies that have failed us in the past. Let us maintain fiscal responsibility, save Social Security first, and prepare for an even brighter future for our people.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:40 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of David Satcher as Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health

February 10, 1998

I am extremely pleased that the Senate, with strong bipartisan support, voted to confirm Dr. David Satcher as the Nation's next Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health. I commend the Senate for voting to make Dr. Satcher the leading voice for our Nation's public health.

No one is better qualified than Dr. Satcher to be America's doctor. He is a mainstream physician who is an eloquent advocate for the health of all Americans. As Director of the Center for Disease Control, David Satcher has helped lead our fights to improve the safety of our food,