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Now we are free to debate the future, to envision the future, to work for the future. And if we'll do that, we can achieve it.

Let me just leave you with this last point. I spent a lot of time in the last year reading the history of the 19th century, because I came to realize that, like most Americans, I knew a fair amount about our founding and what happened in Philadelphia, I knew a fair amount about Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War, and I knew a fair amount about what had happened from Theodore Roosevelt forward. Most Americans don't know much about what happened after Andrew Jackson until Abraham Lincoln, and what happened after Abraham Lincoln until Teddy Roosevelt—they just don't.

And what I got out of that study was a more unified picture of the history of America. And if you go back to our founding and study the history of America, I think you'll see that, at its best, our progress through time has always been about three things: widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of our freedom and our liberty, and strengthening our Union, our sense of national union.

Thomas Jefferson's greatest achievements—well, he wrote the Declaration of Independence. He changed us from being a colonial country to a continental country when he bought Louisiana—giving me a chance to become President, thank you very much—[*laughter*]—sending Lewis and Clark on their great expedition.

Abraham Lincoln strengthened the Union and deepened liberty. But also—a lot of people forgot about it—he signed the bill in the middle of the Civil War to establish the system of land grant colleges, widening the circle of opportunity.

In the 20th century our party—we haven't always been right, as I've said, we've been wrong from time to time, and we haven't always been up to date, but we have always, from the time of Woodrow Wilson forward, been in the vanguard of widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the meaning of freedom, strengthening the Union of the United States. And if we will do that all year, on the stump, but also at work, then I believe that the chances that the American people will say, "We like this, and we will elect people who believe this," are quite extraordinary. And you have made it possible for us to have a chance to do that.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Edward Rendell of Philadelphia; dinner hosts Martin and Diane Weiss; Gwen Holden, wife of Representative Tim Holden; Joe Hoeffel, candidate for Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District; and Representative Martin Frost, chairman, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

The President's Radio Address
February 14, 1998

Good morning. Our most important task in the coming years is to strengthen America for the 21st century. Nothing weakens our families and the fabric of our Nation more than the use, abuse, and sale of drugs.

Today I want to talk about what we all must do to protect our children and keep our communities safe from drugs. I'm very pleased to be joined by the leader of our antidrug efforts, General Barry McCaffrey. Let's begin by recognizing that the fight against drugs must be waged and won at kitchen tables all across America. Even the world's most thorough antidrug strategy won't ever do the job unless all of us pass on the same clear and simple message to our children: Drugs are wrong; drugs are dangerous; and drugs can kill you. That is our most powerful antidrug strategy.

We've had some very encouraging news in recent months. We're finding that more and more of our young people are saying no to drugs, and we can all take great pride in the fact that the number of Americans who use drugs has fallen by one-half since 1979. But that number is still too large. That's why I'm proposing a new 10-year plan to meet one unambiguous goal: We can and must cut drug use in America by another 50 percent. This plan

builds on our strategy of tougher punishment, better prevention, and more partnerships to shut down the international drug trade. It proves that we can balance the budget and win our fight against drugs.

First, we must keep our children from ever trying drugs in the first place. We'll send prevention educators to 6,500 schools nationwide. Our national youth antidrug media campaign will ensure that every time our children turn on the TV, listen to the radio, or surf the Internet they'll get the powerful message that drugs destroy lives. Because most young people get in trouble after school and before their parents get home, we'll expand after-school programs dramatically to help keep our children off the streets, away from drugs, and out of trouble.

Second, we'll hire 1,000 more Border Patrol agents, work closely with neighboring countries, and use the latest technologies to keep more drugs from coming into America in the first place.

Third, we will strengthen law enforcement by finishing the job of putting 100,000 more community police on our streets, hiring 100 more DEA agents to crack down on methamphetamines, and launching a new effort against heroin.

And finally, we will stop the revolving door between drugs and crime by expanding testing and treatment of prisoners and parolees. Our prisons simply must not be allowed to become finishing schools for a life of crime.

A study released by the Justice Department today confirms that our policy of testing and treatment is working. It shows that Federal inmates who received drug treatment were 73 percent less likely to be re-arrested and 44 percent less likely to test positive for drugs in the first 6 months after their release than those who did not receive treatment. Not too long ago, there were some who said our fight against drugs and crime was hopelessly lost. Well, crime has fallen every year for the last 5 years, and now the tide is turning against drugs.

With this comprehensive strategy, I am confident that we can build a stronger drug-free America for the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 5:20 p.m. on February 13 at the Wyndham Hotel in Philadelphia, PA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on February 14.

Remarks at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia

February 17, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Vice President, for your remarks and your leadership. Thank you, Secretary Cohen, for the superb job you have done here at the Pentagon and on this most recent, very difficult problem. Thank you, General Shelton, for being the right person at the right time. Thank you, General Ralston, and the members of the Joint Chiefs, General Zinni, Secretary Albright, Secretary Slater, DCI Tenet, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Berger. Senator Robb, thank you for being here, and Congressman Skelton, thank you very much, and for your years of service to America and your passionate patriotism, both of you, and to the members of our Armed Forces and others who work here to protect our national security.

I have just received a very fine briefing from our military leadership on the status of our forces in the Persian Gulf. Before I left the Pentagon I wanted to talk to you and all those whom you represent, the men and women of our military. You, your friends, and your colleagues are on the frontlines of this crisis in Iraq. I want you and I want the American people to hear directly from me what is at stake for America in the Persian Gulf; what we are doing to protect the peace, the security, the freedom we cherish; why we have taken the position we have taken.

I was thinking, as I sat up here on the platform, of the slogan that the First Lady gave me for her project on the millennium, which was "Remembering the past, and imagining the future." Now, for that project, that means preserving the Star-Spangled Banner and the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution