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but one is a democracy. We are working hard on these things.

One of the things that I want you to understand—I have not much to add at this moment to what I have already said yesterday in my speech at the Pentagon about the situation in Iraq, but I want you to think about this. There will never be a time as long as we're on this Earth when there won't be people who seek absolute, arbitrary, abusive power. This country was established by people who were fleeing absolute, arbitrary, abusive power. That's how we all got started. And we have been jealous about that from the beginning.

One of the things we know is that the more open our global society gets, the more we can all get on the Internet and share information with people around the world, the more we can get on an airplane and fly around the world, the more we can hop from continent to continent to continent, the more we get in touch with each other, the more vulnerable we are to one another's problems and the more open we are to the organized forces of destruction.

That's why I tried to take such a hard line against terrorism. That's why I tried to take such a hard line against the development of chemical and biological weapons and very small-scale nuclear weapons. Why? Because you don't want people to carry stuff like that around from airport to airport. You don't want to have any unnecessary exposure when people can get on the Internet and find a webpage that will tell them how to make a bomb like the bomb that blew up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City.

We cannot make the world perfectly safe, but we have to do everything we can in our time to imagine what the security problems will be like when this young lady here is grown, and she has children of her own. That is our obligation.

So what all of this is about at bottom, it is about what kind of world our children will live in and what we have to do, not to make it perfectly risk-free—we can't do that—but we have to do everything we possibly can to minimize the risks that we and our children and our grandchildren will be exposed to as we move into a globalized society where the organized forces of destruction will cause us enough trouble anyway, whether they're narcotraffickers, criminal syndicates, or terrorists. Anything we can do to minimize the chance that anyone will be able to put into play chemical and biological weapons against civilized people, wherever they live, we should do. That is the animating principle here for me.

I am doing the best I can with a difficult situation, because I'm thinking about what we have to do to strengthen America and the world for the 21st century.

We've got a lot to do. We're going to get a lot done this year. The thing I like about Jim Moran is that he will work with members of the Republican Party whenever they'll work with him in good faith. We know we're hired here to get things done for the American people, but we also know that when November rolls around, there will still be plenty of things on which we honestly disagree in good faith. What we want is to have honest disagreement and to see upright, honest, and truly courageous people like Jim Moran return to public office. America needs it. It's good for our future.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:03 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Dr. Jim D'Orta, reception host.

## Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner

*February 18, 1998*

Thank you very much. First of all, thank you, Ron and Beth, for having us here, and thank you for being such wonderful friends to me and to Hillary and to our administration and our party. Thank you for the wonderful words. A couple of days ago I actually got a picture of one of those billboards in Israel—not a particularly great picture of me—and that wonderful, wonderful message.

Let me thank all of you for being here. Most of you I have now known a long time, and you've heard me give a lot of speeches, so I

won't really give much of one tonight. But I would like to make just two or three very brief points.

When I came here in 1993, I did not come to the White House in probably the normal way, and in many ways I was not the normal person who came to the White House. I had never sought to live my whole life in Washington or, indeed, to be in the circle of Washington influence for my whole life. I came here with a determination to change the country, to change the direction of the country, to try to change the way we were living and working, and to try to make America work again. And I think the record is pretty clear that the approach we have taken has worked. And for all of you who played a part in that, I am grateful. I am grateful to Governor Romer and Steve Grossman and Carol and Cynthia and all the officers of the Democratic Party and the staff and all of you who have helped all along the way, those of you who helped me and Al Gore.

The State of the Union Address got an unusual response, even for the State of the Union Address, partly because more people watched it than normal, maybe. [*Laughter*] There are blessings everywhere you don't expect. [*Laughter*] But I think the thing I would like to say about that is that I really feel that I spent 5 years working very hard to try to fix things that weren't functioning very well. And we got the deficit down over 90 percent. And I presented a balanced budget. I think the budget will be balanced this year if the economy isn't slowed by the difficulties in Asia. And we're working hard on those to try to help our friends and, in the process, help ourselves.

And the crime rate has come down for 5 years and we now have a strategy that works, born of what people were doing in community after community—all we're doing is supporting that. We have the lowest welfare rolls in almost 30 years. And we have—now finally, last year, the lower 20 percent of our working people had their income increased by a higher percentage than American income went overall. So we're coming back together again after 20 years of drifting apart. So there's a lot to be grateful for.

And what I tried to do in the State of the Union was to say, "Okay, now if we have things going right and the country is essentially working, we should"—to use Hillary's phrase—"we should be imagining the future. We should be asking ourselves, what do we have to do to strengthen this country for the 21st century, so that when we get there, we really will have the kind of country we want?" And that's what the agenda I outlined was about.

And the thing that all of you can do that would be most helpful is to demonstrate to the American people every day in every way that the Democrats are committed to a public agenda that changes their lives for the better, that we do not believe that politics is about power, nor do we believe politics is about personal advantage, nor do we believe politics is about all the things that some people seem to think it's about. We think it's about bringing them a better future.

And that's what the—that's why I don't want to spend any of the surplus until we save Social Security for the next generation. Easy thing to do is—it's election year; give people a tax cut; spend a little more money. It would be a mistake. That's why I'm determined to reorder, do whatever we have to do to preserve the Medicare program in a way that works for the 21st century and honors our, sort of, intergenerational compact, why I think we have to keep working until we have not only—now we've basically opened the doors of college to anybody who will work for it. But we can't say—and everybody takes it for granted that we have the best system of higher education in the world. No one believes we have the best system of elementary and secondary education in the world, and until we do, we can't rest.

It's why I think we have to keep working until we have closed the remaining holes in our health care system. It's why I believe we have to prove one more time that we can deal with any environmental challenge and still grow the economy. We have within our grasp the technological means to reduce global warming, or at least do our share of it, and still continue to grow the economy. We have to prove we can do that. It's why I am committed to proving that the increasing diversity of America will be a blessing, not a curse, amidst all the troubles of the world based on ethnic and religious differences.

So I want you to keep going out there and talking to people about America in the 21st century. If you think about the present difficulty we're having with Iraq—I don't want to talk about it in any great detail tonight, but I want

to say it has—it is not a replay of what happened in 1991. It is a forerunner of what could or could not happen in 2010, in 2020, in 2030.

The very things we love about the world we're moving into—all this interconnection—we had 400,000 hits on our website after the State of the Union. We had a 650 percent increase in hits on the millennium website when we had our first lecture, when Bernard Bailyn talked the other night about how our country got started, and shut the thing down briefly. We can all get on a plane tonight and fly anywhere; we can do anything. The more open the world is, the more interconnected it is, the more vulnerable we will be to the organized forces of destruction, whether they come from drugrunners or crime syndicates or terrorists. And it is very important that we do everything we can to make the risk that those kinds of people can bring chemical and biological warfare into the lives of ordinary people anywhere in the world, including this country—we need to reduce those chances as low as we possibly can, whenever we can, however we can, as soon as we can.

And there are very often no easy answers because of the way the world is working now. But I want you to know that's what's driving me. I want tomorrow to be good for America. And to do it, you not only have to seize the opportunities, you have to try to create a structure that will minimize the challenges and the threats as well.

The last thing I'd like to say is this. I had a wonderful day 2 days ago. The Vice President and I went up and spoke to the Democratic caucuses, the Senators and House Members, and it was a great thing. We talked about our agenda for '98 and how excited we all were. And the Vice President was in overdrive that day; I said I was going to find out what he ate for breakfast and give it to everybody—[*laughter*]—for free, give it to everybody. [*Laughter*] But I was thinking, trying to explain to people, you know, we've talked a lot about finding a third way between believing Government was the solution and Government was the problem, using Government as a catalyst, Government as a tool to give people—a means to get people the tools to make the most of their own lives. We've talked a lot about the new Democratic Party. But I said something to them I'd like to close with you. I believe at every profound moment of challenge in the history of this country, the party that was doing the most for America has always stood unfailingly for three things: for widening the circle of opportunity, for deepening the meaning of freedom, and for strengthening the Union.

If you go back to the beginning of America, when people fled other countries to come here—why were they coming here? Because they despised absolute, arbitrary, abusive power. And they wanted to live in a country where there was a rule of law that restrained people and where no one was unaccountable. And they had to decide, can we do this with a collection of little States, or do we have to be a nation? And they decided that we had to be a nation. And then George Washington and all of his allies, and especially Chief Justice John Marshall, created a nation for us. They said it will take one nation to protect freedom and to provide opportunity or to allow, in Thomas Jefferson's words, the pursuit of happiness. Abraham Lincoln, that's what he did; he died to preserve the Nation and to deepen the meaning of freedom, stop making a mockery of the Constitution. The industrial revolution comes along, Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson basically applied those central values to the changes that were going on then.

Now, from the beginning of our party, we always said we believed in those things. But frankly, as a party, we didn't perform all that well from the end of Andrew Jackson's Presidency until Woodrow Wilson got elected, with minor interludes. As a result of that, we didn't have the Presidency very often either. [*Laughter*] But I think it is fair to say, even though I have tried to modernize the party and point us towards the future, from Woodrow Wilson to Franklin Roosevelt to Harry Truman to John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter and our administration, we have not always been right; we have not always been moderate; but in the 20th century, we have been the party that pursued not power for its own sake but was always dedicated to widening the circle of opportunity, deepening the reach of freedom, and strengthening our National Union.

And now that we are doing the right things in the right way, those old-fashioned, eternal elements of America's mission are more important today than ever before. You should be proud to be here, and I hope you can find a way to share that with as many of our country men and women as possible.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:43 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Ronald I. and Beth Dozoretz; Gov. Roy Romer of Colorado, general chair, Steve Grossman, national chair, and Carol Pensky, treasurer, Democratic National Committee; Cynthia Friedman, national cochair, Women's Leadership Forum; and Bernard Bailyn, professor emeritus, Harvard University.

## Remarks on the Situation in Iraq and an Exchange With Reporters
*February 19, 1998*

*The President.* Good morning. I have just had a very good conversation with the President of France, Jacques Chirac. We agreed that U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan's mission to Baghdad is a critical opportunity to achieve the outcome that all of us would prefer, a peaceful and principled end to this crisis.

The Secretary-General is backed by the unambiguous position of the Security Council. Saddam Hussein must give the weapons inspectors full, free, unfettered access to all suspected sites anywhere in Iraq. That is the clear standard which Saddam himself agreed to at the end of the Gulf war and that the Security Council has reiterated on many occasions since. He simply must adhere to that standard.

Let me also say that I have asked Vice President Gore to postpone his planned trip to South Africa. In the coming days I want my full national security team on hand to take part in our deliberations and decisions on this vitally important issue.

We hope the Secretary-General's mission will succeed. But let me be clear: If diplomacy fails, we must be—and we are—prepared to act. The choice is Saddam Hussein's. We hope he will accept the mandate of the world community. He has, after all, agreed to it already, years ago. If not, he must bear the responsibility for the consequences.

*Q.* Mr. President, what did you learn, sir—sir, what did you learn from the divided town meeting yesterday?

*The President.* Well, I thought it was a good old-fashioned American debate. But I would say, I was, first of all, very proud of the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and Mr. Berger. I thought they answered the questions well. And I believe strongly that most Americans support our policy. They support our resolve. I think an overwhelming majority of Americans also want a peaceful resolution of this, but if it's necessary for us to act, I believe America will do what it always does. I believe it will unite, just as we did in 1991. I believe it will unite behind taking the necessary action.

*Q.* Mr. President, do you think Saddam Hussein is emboldened to stiff-arm the international community based upon what happened in Columbus yesterday?

*The President.* Not if he understands the first thing about America.

*Q.* Mr. President, are you ready to deal with a deadline if Saddam Hussein——

*Q.* Does that mean you're going to start bombing next week?

*The President.* I've made no decision about a deadline.

*Independent Counsel's Investigation*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you prepared to assert executive privilege in connection with the testimony of Bruce Lindsey and John Podesta, other of your top assistants before the grand jury?

*The President.* It's my understanding that the White House Counsel is trying to resolve that issue today, and while he's working on it, I don't think I should comment about it.

*Q.* Thank you, Mr. President.

*Situation in Iraq*

*Q.* Mr. President, are you considering delivering a more formal address to the American people about the need to deal with Saddam—[*inaudible*]?

*The President.* Well, if further action becomes necessary, I will obviously speak directly to the American people about it.

*Q.* Mr. President, do you feel like you have articulated the goals of this policy, if we do indeed have to attack Iraq?