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We've got a new economy. And there was a new economy in 1893. And we've got to figure out how to make it work for everybody instead of just a few people.

We are overwhelmed by a big influx of immigrants from different kinds of countries, and so were we in 1893, and we have to bring everybody into the American mainstream. We are about to enter a new century with a lot of confidence but a lot of challenges. We have to do what we've always had to do at such times as Americans. We have to make sure we deepen the meaning of our freedom, we widen the circle of opportunity, we strengthen the Union of our people.

The Talmud says every blade of grass has its angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow, grow." Our children are blades of grass. You must be the angels.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:28 a.m. in the Regency Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Nan Rich, national president, National Council of Jewish Women; the Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY); and the First in the World Consortium. The President also referred to his memorandum of February 23 on helping schools end social promotions.

Statement on Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

February 24, 1998

Today a clear, bipartisan majority of the Senate voted for campaign finance reform. Now, only the obstruction of a minority stands in the way of a law that would strengthen our democracy. The opponents of reform are seeking to block this measure with partisan, unacceptable amendments, even an amendment to block the Federal Communications Commission from providing free air time to candidates. Let's be clear: A vote for these amendments is a vote for soft money, unregulated campaign contributions, and backdoor campaign spending. And that vote would be very difficult to explain to the American people.

Message to the Congress on Ordering the Selected Reserve of the Armed Forces to Active Duty

February 24, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to title 10, United States Code, section 12304, I have authorized the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of Transportation with respect to the Coast Guard, when it is not operating as a Service within the Department of the Navy, to order to active duty Selected Reserve units and individuals not assigned to units to augment the Active components in support of operations in and around Southwest Asia.

A copy of the Executive order implementing this action is attached.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
February 24, 1998.

NOTE: The Executive order is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.