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The American economy continues to demonstrate its remarkable strength, and we must do everything we can to keep it on a path of steady growth. That is why we will work to build broad bipartisan support for this legislation as it moves forward in Congress. It is vital that the Congress move as quickly as possible to support full funding for the IMF.

Remarks at a Screening of "From the Earth to the Moon"
March 5, 1998

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen, welcome to all. Thank you, John Kennedy, for those wonderful remarks. Thank you, Jeff Bewkes, for taking a chance on this project. I know it's a big, big project. I predict it will get a big, big response from the American people. Thank you, Tom Hanks, and thank all of you who were part of this.

I'd also like to thank the people at NASA, with whom you worked—I'm sure many of them are here—for the work they do every day. I thank all the astronauts who are here. And we're especially proud of Lieutenant Colonel Eileen Collins, who will be our first woman mission leader very soon.

There's not much more that needs to be said. But as one of the graduates of the class of 1968, I want to thank all of you for saving 1968 all over again. [*Laughter*]

Hillary, today, when we honored Eileen Collins, pointed out that when she was a young girl she wrote off to NASA and asked for information about how to be an astronaut. And she was told that, at the time, women were not welcome in the program. Today, we see that change.

The growth of the space program and the way it's changed and strengthened is in many ways evidence of the growth of America over the last three decades. And I think any of us who had anything to do with it have been profoundly proud of it. Hillary mentioned the Mars mission that seemed, once again, to sort of spark the popular imagination in our Nation for the space program with the wonderful *Sojourner* looking around for red rocks with wonderful names like Scooby Doo. [*Laughter*]

You know, the international space station will be up before long, and it will literally be the size of a football field. Now, the vehicle John Glenn went up in over 35 years ago was about the size of a compact car. And when the space station is there, it will change forever the way people can relate to the Earth and to the other planets in the solar system. All of this has happened for a lot of reasons.

There are Members of Congress here, and I thank them for their presence. Congress continued to support the space station and space program against the kinds of criticisms that are still current today that John so eloquently chronicled from the 1960's. President Kennedy wanted us to become the world's leading spacefaring nation, and we have. I want us to continue that distinction well into the 21st century. It is profoundly important to us. Colonel Collins, for example, will lead us in an effort to launch a telescope that will allow us to peer into the deepest reaches of outer space. The new balanced budget will support 28 more space missions, to help us decipher more of the mysteries of black holes, of ancient stars, of the Earth itself.

The knowledge we gain from these missions will help us to solve problems here on Earth, from osteoporosis to ovarian cancer. It will help to make our farms more productive. It will help us to deal with the crisis of global warming. And as the distinguished scientist Stephen Hawking, who will be in this place tomorrow night, has pointed out, it may well help us uncover the very origins of human life itself.

I hope all of you who are part of this project will be able to look back 10, 20, 30, 40 years from now with immense pride that you have once again sparked the imagination, the dreams, the hopes, and the courage of the American people to follow our astronauts into space and to follow our imaginations wherever they lead.

Thank you, and God bless you.

There are so many wonderful people here tonight, I hesitate to acknowledge anyone. But someone who helped us all get through that

era is here: Walter Cronkite, thank you very much for your presence.

And now Hillary and I would like to invite you all into the State Dining Room for a reception, where we will try to stay on both feet, on the ground. [*Laughter*]

Thank you, and bless you. Let's go in.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8 p.m. in the East Room at the White House, following the screening of an episode of the Home Box Office production. In his remarks, he referred to John F. Kennedy, Jr., son of President John F. Kennedy; Jeff Bewkes, chairman, Home Box Office; actor Tom Hanks; and former CBS News anchorman Walter Cronkite.

Remarks on the National Economy
March 6, 1998

Good morning. Today we received more good news for our workers and our families. Our economy added another 310,000 new jobs last month; real wages continued to rise; unemployment fell to 4.6 percent, the lowest level in a quarter century; and more Americans are sharing in the prosperity. Hispanic unemployment, for example, fell to a record low.

The American economy has now added more than 15 million new jobs since I took office. Inflation has remained low and stable. We continue to have the strongest economy in a generation, the lowest unemployment in a quarter century, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history. We're on track to have the longest peacetime recovery in the history of our country. These are good times for America.

But how shall we maintain this momentum? We must first press forward with this new economic strategy. It is working. We must do more also to continue to create high-wage jobs. And finally, we must make sure that our people have the skills to fill them.

The new economy is increasingly driven by creativity, innovation, and technology, with high-skill jobs growing at nearly 3 times the rate of other jobs. In the field of information technology, the hunt for employees with high-tech skills is becoming more and more intense. There are hundreds of thousands of vacancies out there in America right now.

The key to expanding opportunity is education and training. Through our new HOPE scholarships, the lifetime learning credits, education IRA's, expanded Pell grant scholarships, better student loans, we've opened the door to college for all people of all ages who are willing to work for it.

Recently, we learned that our high school seniors lagged behind the rest of the industrial world in math and science. We must do more there. We must work to raise standards, reduce class size, improve teaching, have people taking more challenging courses, and increase accountability.

But we also, to look at the immediate situation, must do more to reform our job training system. For more than 3 years, I have called on Congress to consolidate the tangle of training programs we have today into a "GI bill" for workers, to create a network of one-stop career centers, to increase accountability, to ensure results, to empower people to gain the skills that are in greatest market demand. Secretary Herman and Secretary Daley, who are here with me today, are working in particular to address the job shortage in the information technology area.

Now, last year a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives passed a bill that would achieve the goals that I have called for for years now. A similar bill has attracted bipartisan support in the Senate. I'm encouraged by reports that the Senate is likely to take up this legislation. In the wake of these employment numbers, with unemployment low and the crying demand for higher skills and still people in some of our inner-city neighborhoods and rural areas unemployed, I ask the Senate to pass this bill and send it to me so that I can sign it into law. The legislation is essentially to help more Americans win in today's economy and to keep our recovery going.