

The President. The people we saw outside either don't have coverage, or they're afraid of losing it. These children got this care because this hospital is open to all children and gives all children great care, without regard to their income. But not all children have access to hospitals like this. So the message is that all families with children should have some insurance coverage so they can get health care and so they can be well like this. It was great.

Roger Clinton's Wedding

Q. How are the wedding preparations going?

The President. Fine. We're excited.

NOTE: The exchange began at 8:22 a.m. at the Scottish Rite Hospital for Children. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's Radio Address

March 26, 1994

Good morning. This morning I'm speaking to you from Dallas, Texas, courtesy of station KRLD in Dallas, and from the Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, one of the finest pediatric medical centers in America. Today in the audience we have parents and children who have been patients here. I want to thank the president of the hospital, J.C. Montgomery, and Dr. Tony Herring and all the others who gave Hillary and me such a wonderful tour today.

Places like Scottish Rite don't ask children with severe disabilities or serious illnesses, "Can you pay?" They just ask, "How can I help?" The wonderful team of doctors, nurses, and other hospital workers here take all children in need. That's what we want for all of America.

Last Wednesday at the White House, Sister Bernice Coreil, a member of the Sisters of Charity, the religious order which runs the largest nonprofit hospital system in America, spoke about health care in a way seldom heard in the Nation's Capital. She pushed all the politics and complex arguments aside and said health care is about basic human values, about honoring the intrinsic value of every person.

She knows, as so many health professionals do, that if we don't do something now, the future of health care is in trouble in America, because more Americans are losing their health coverage or can't get it because someone in their family has been sick, because more people with coverage are losing the right to choose their doctors or their health plans, because more of our hospitals are in trouble.

Without change, the future of health care will include less choice and bigger bills and maybe lower quality, too. Instead of health care being available to all Americans, more Americans are losing their health coverage every month.

How can we change? How can we keep what's best about our system, our wonderful caregivers, our wonderful medical research system, and fix what's wrong, the fact that there aren't enough places like this Scottish Rite Hospital, that too many people are losing their coverage, that the financing system is a bureaucratic nightmare full of unfairness? I think we can do better simply by building on what works in the current system, using the workplace to guarantee private insurance for every American. It is the foundation of our plan.

Just a few days ago, the first of many committees considering health care reform in Congress approved a plan like ours, covering every American. In spite of all the special interest and TV ads, the committee made an important statement. After 60 years of gridlock, the American people are being heard. They want us to take care of their important business, like health care reform, and now we're beginning to do that.

The administration's approach to health care reform is straightforward: guaranteed private insurance for every American that can never be taken away. And we want to be careful to base our approach on the best of American values. Guaranteed private insurance, making sure everyone has good health care, not only those who can pay whatever it costs, is the ticket to opportunity.

When our plan passes and your health care can never be taken away, that means you'll be able to change jobs, move, start a small business without worrying that your health care or your family's health will be threat-

ened. Just this morning I met a fine couple here with twin boys. The boys have some undiagnosed medical difficulties, but they cannot get any health insurance because of that. The father and the mother have been under great stress and great difficulty. If it weren't for this hospital and others like it, I don't know what families like that would do. We can do better.

In addition to guaranteed private insurance, we want the freedom for all Americans to make choices in the American tradition, guaranteeing the right to choose a doctor and an insurance plan. We trust the American people with the freedom to choose every year rather than leaving that choice to an employer or an insurance company.

Third, health reform in our plan is about fairness, correcting abuses in the insurance practices today. No more denying people insurance because they are sick, no more lifetime limits that cut off coverage when you need it the most, no more higher rates for the elderly or for small employers or self-employed people and farmers. These things aren't fair, and Americans deserve fairness.

Fourth, health care reform is about keeping faith with those who came before us. We preserve and protect Medicare without reservation or exception. Older Americans simply must be able to continue to rely on Medicare and to choose their own doctor. We do want to cover prescription drugs under Medicare for the first time and provide the elderly and chronically ill children or disabled Americans of all ages the chance to get some long-term care in their home or in their community if they need it.

Finally, health care is about responsibility, about rewarding those who work. Under our approach, you get your insurance through work. Most jobs already have health care; why shouldn't all of them? Eight out of ten Americans without insurance belong to working families. We should always reward work in America, and the right to health care should be part of that reward. Opportunity, freedom, and fairness, honoring the senior citizens and those who take responsibility, these are the values that have helped to build America, and they are at the heart of our health care proposal.

This weekend marks the arrival of Palm Sunday and Passover. It's a special week of reflection for everyone of the Jewish and Christian faiths, a time when we step back from the concerns of daily life and think more deeply about our religious traditions and the values they teach us.

Sitting in this wonderful hospital for children, I'm reminded that providing health care and the peace of mind that comes with it is also a practical expression of our deepest faith and ideals. The wonderful doctors and nurses and volunteers here at Scottish Rite Hospital for Children take in every child. No family has been charged. They live our best values. But they'd be the first to tell you that more than 9 million American children have no health insurance and most don't have access to a hospital like this.

That's not right, and health care reform is about doing what's right, about having compassion and bestowing dignity on each of us as God's children. These are enduring values, the source of the moral authority that has made our Nation great. And they are the lessons each of us, in our own way, can take from Easter and Passover. With these values to guide us, I know we'll succeed.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:06 a.m. at the Scottish Rite Hospital for Children in Dallas. In his address, he referred to Dr. Tony Herring, chief of staff, Scottish Rite Hospital for Children.

Interview With Jim Nantz of CBS Sports in Dallas

March 27, 1994

NCAA Basketball Tournament

Mr. Nantz. We're here with President Bill Clinton. It looks like you're having a great time. What do you think of the game so far?

The President. Great game and our kids are playing well. But Michigan is playing a terrific game. They've done a great job defending our big guys in the middle. And we've had the 3-point shot, so we're a little ahead. But this is a good game.

Mr. Nantz. We saw you really excited after some Arkansas baskets, but we also want to show you a couple of other times where it