

our economy. By joining the House in passing the interstate banking bill, the Senate has gone beyond gridlock to eliminate unnecessary barriers to the competitiveness and efficiency of our banking system while preserving essential prerogatives of the States.

We also welcome the bill's requirement that the Treasury, with the assistance of a broadly representative advisory committee, study and make recommendations on the future shape of financial services in the United States. American banks have shown over the last several years that they can combine high quality service for all with strong financial performance. Enactment of the interstate bill and the community development and regulatory improvement legislation will help them continue that record.

Remarks on the Reinventing Government Initiative

September 14, 1994

Thank you. You know, when the Vice President opened this occasion by saying that he would have to wear his full body suit for 2 years and that the Speaker of the House had been restored to full powers after his surgery came out all right, I couldn't help thinking, it took reinventing Government to get him on David Letterman—[*laughter*—and now this terrible accident—but he's actually become the funniest person in the administration as a result of these two projects.

There is no effort that he has spared to promote this project. You remember he even went on the Letterman show to smash an ashtray. And he has now been invited, as part of our followup to show we're making progress, to go on the show again, where he will read a top five list—[*laughter*—showing that we can do more with less, he will make each one of them twice as funny as any top 10 list that was there. [*Laughter*]

I want to thank Dr. Mendoza, Mr. Torno, Ms. Holstein for traveling here to tell your stories. For all the facts and figures and charts about the success of reinventing Government, the thing that really counts is that the benefits are being felt the way they ought to be by the American people, in a very personal and immediate way. And of course, we

hope as a result of this occasion today and the followup report, that the rest of the American people will see that we are changing the way the Federal Government works.

I want to thank the successful teams who made these particular stories possible: Erskine Bowles and the "Low Doc" team from the Small Business Administration who cut a 100-page application down to one page; Customs Commissioner George Weise, the Assistant Commissioner Samuel Banks, and Lynn Gordon for their team in the Miami office, who realized that becoming partners with airlines and shippers is a win-win situation; my old friend James Lee Witt and Bea Gonzales and the team that completely reorganized FEMA so that all its resources are available to respond to any emergency.

When I took office, the National Academy of Public Administration said this about FEMA: "FEMA is like a patient in triage. The President and the Congress must decide whether to treat it or let it die." There was even a bill pending in Congress to abolish FEMA. And in 1992, as I traveled the country, I never went a place that somebody didn't say something disparaging about it. Well, the bill is gone, and it may be the most popular agency in the entire Federal Government.

There's nothing that makes an ordinary taxpayer madder than to feel that those of us who work for the Government don't value their hard-earned dollars. One single, simple example of the waste of taxpayers' money can erase in the public mind thousands and thousands and thousands of examples of devoted service to the same taxpayers. That's especially true in these perplexing times when people have such conflicting feelings. We're going through a period of profound change. And by large margins, Americans say they want Government to address our great national problems. But by equally large margins, they say they don't trust our ability to do it right, or as we say down home, most of our folks think that the Government would mess up a two-car parade. [*Laughter*]

Now, this reinventing Government effort grew out of several sources: first, out of my experience as a Governor, where we tried to begin this effort; second, out of the encounters that the Vice President and I had with

each other and with citizens all during the campaign, with the literature we read and the things we learned that were going on in the private sector; thirdly, with the enormous energy and desire we got out of Federal employees themselves; next, with the leadership that was already coming out of the Congress—Senator Glenn and Congressman Conyers have already been acknowledged, and there were others who really thought that we ought to do it.

But finally we did it because it was necessary, because without it we could not fulfill the mission of the administration. The mission of this administration from day one has been to increase economic opportunity and maintain national security; to empower the individuals of this country to assume personal responsibility for their own futures; to strengthen the sense of community in America, to make our diversity a cause of celebration and unity, not division; and to change the way Government works for ordinary citizens.

Unless we can do the last thing, we cannot achieve the other three. Why is that? Well, one of the reasons we have so much economic opportunity today is that we reduced the budget deficit. You couldn't reduce the budget deficit and not hurt the public interest unless you're reinventing Government.

We want to empower individuals. One of the things that we did with our empowerment program is, through the Department of Education, to completely reform the college loan program so that 20 million Americans now with outstanding loans are eligible to refinance them with longer repayment schedules at lower interest rates. And starting this year, large numbers of new students will be able to do the same thing. We couldn't afford to do that except we actually save money by doing it, by converting the old expensive, cumbersome student loan program into, at least largely, a direct loan program and increasing our ability to recover delinquent loans, which is dramatically increasing.

If you want to strengthen the American community, people have to feel like we care about each other. If every place there is a disaster people think that FEMA has failed them, it's hard to say they're part of an American community. But from the people in Cali-

fornia who suffered from the earthquakes and the fires, the people all up and down the Mississippi River that were flooded out last summer, to the people in the Southeast that suffered drought last year and floods this year, I think they will tell you that FEMA is on the job.

Yesterday the Vice President mentioned national service. It is not a Government bureaucracy; it is a movement that the Government has made possible. None of this would have happened if we hadn't had a serious approach to reinventing Government. And none of that would have happened if we hadn't reinvented the relationship between the President and the Vice President.

Some people take it as a sign of weakness that I try to get the most out of everybody that lives around here or works around here—[laughter]—and that I try to find people who do things better than I do. I thought that was my job. The Vice President—whether it is leading our efforts in the environment, to develop a clean car, or performing with such superb leadership to get a compromise at the very important Cairo conference, dealing with reinventing Government or difficult foreign policy issues—is plainly the most active, productive, constructive Vice President in the history of this Republic. And that is a very important thing.

Historically, this argument about Government that politicians had was something designed to play into that feeling I just gave you when you all chuckled, when I said most folks think Government would mess up a one-car parade. For example, when we had meetings on our health care reform initiative, people would come in opposition, and they would say, "I don't want Government getting into this. I'm afraid Government will mess up my Medicare." [Laughter] We actually had people say this sort of visceral thing. So any politician worth a flip can figure out how to develop four or five one-liners that will make 90 percent of the voters shout hallelujah.

The problem is that this debate has normally stopped at the rhetorical level. Politicians garner the votes; Government grows in a sort of piecemeal fashion; Government employees and the citizens get more frustrated

every year, and real problems aren't solved. We had an idea that we could make Government smaller, but also different: that we could do more and cost less, that we could have more responsibility with less bureaucracy if we empowered the people who work for this Government and paid attention to the people who pay for it. We didn't see Government as the savior of America, but we knew our Government couldn't sit on the sidelines in a period of such profound change. So we tried to develop a partnership that makes sense.

This vision is at the heart of everything we're trying to do. It's at the heart of the national service program. It's at the heart of the crime bill that we signed yesterday where we made a pretty good swap: We would take all the savings from reducing the size of the Federal Government and just give it to the American people to make themselves safer on their streets, in their homes, in their schools.

This has been a very important endeavor. A lot of people were very skeptical when we began. But if you just look at what's happened in the time we've been in office, as evidenced by those charts over there, since I became President, the size of the Federal work force has been reduced by 71,000 positions. In 3 years we'll have the smallest Federal work force since President Kennedy was here, to go with 3 years of deficit reduction in a row for the first time since President Truman was here.

The savings already enacted by Congress or undertaken by the executive branch will amount to \$47 billion in this budget cycle, and we're on the way to saving \$108 billion. Most of these savings will pay for the crime bill and help to put 100,000 more police officers on the street, 100,000 serious criminals behind bars. There were those who said that these things would never pass through the Congress. But Congress has already enacted more than 20 bills that will save money and improve services by reinventing Government, and 50 percent of the items needing congressional action are already pending in Congress, many with real bipartisan support.

I'm proud to announce some more good news today. At the General Services Administration, Administrator Johnson saved \$1.2

billion by carefully reviewing construction projects that had been approved and not yet built, in other words, buildings we really didn't need. And just today, the GSA is announcing it saved \$23 million simply by managing the Government's motor pools more efficiently.

Today the Secretary of Defense set a goal to cut in half the time it takes to complete internal business processes, from hiring workers to building new weapons systems. This is very important. Senator Glenn has worked for years on procurement reform. If we are going to maintain the national security at a time when we have to impose budget discipline, we must find ways to make these dollars go further. We can't simply abandon our technological lead, our readiness, our preparedness, all the things that have been so carefully built up over the last 16 or 17 years.

At the Office of Management and Budget, Director-designate Rivlin tells me the Federal Government will offer buyouts to another 40,000 employees at the beginning of the new fiscal year next month. And next Tuesday the Vice President and I will release a report on the first-ever consumer service standards for the Federal Government. Over 100 agencies have prepared more than 1,700 specific pledges to the taxpayers of this country to improve the services that they provide.

I am more convinced now than ever that we have to keep doing this, that we have to make this reinventing Government a permanent process, and that there are serious structural issues which still have to be addressed. Washington needs to work for ordinary middle class Americans. And in order to do that, we have got to find a way to open this process up so that the public interest can always overwhelm particular interest in matters of great importance.

That's why Congress must also finish the job it has begun, passing a tough campaign finance reform bill, a lobbying reform bill, and the bill that requires Congress to live under the laws it imposes on the rest of Americans, before the end of this session. All three of these actions have broad bipartisan support in both Houses. Two of the bills have passed both Houses and await conference resolution. The House of Representatives has

overwhelmingly passed the third one. We need to move forward. These are actions that Americans deserve and demand, and they will help them to believe that the rest of these things are also occurring, as well.

Meanwhile, I assure you that we will be unrelenting in our efforts to continue reinventing Government, to give you a Government that costs less, does more, empowers employees, and listens to the people who pay for it. We will measure our progress not only in terms of bills passed and money saved but in terms of people better served. You met some of those satisfied citizens today. We're committed to making a lot more satisfied citizens in the months and years to come.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:45 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Emilio Mendoza, president/CEO, Galactic Technologies, Inc., San Antonio, TX; Art Torno, managing director, American Airlines, Miami, FL; Alameda Holstein, disaster victim, East Northridge, CA; and Beatrice Gonzales, FEMA disaster assistance employee praised by Mrs. Holstein for her help.

**Remarks to United States Attorneys
on the Violent Crime Control and
Law Enforcement Act of 1994**
September 14, 1994

Thank you very much, General Reno, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the White House, and I want to begin by just thanking you, all of you, for the work you did to help us pass the crime bill. It was one of the more interesting and rigorous legislative exercises we've had around here in a long time. I believe that you fought for this crime bill because you knew that there was so much in it that would actually work for this country.

And I'm encouraged as I saw some of the coverage on the crime bill last night that people are finally beginning to look at a lot of the provisions that weren't so hotly debated during the campaign for and against the crime bill that are really going to help us to make a difference to lower the crime rate and make the American people safer. We know that some of these things will work. We have example after example in America that more police, properly deployed in com-

munity policing settings, will actually lower the crime rate. We have example after example that if you can figure out how to lock up the repeat offenders and give the first-time folks a chance to build a better life, you can lower the crime rate. We know that if you can keep guns out of the hands of school-children, you can make the schools and the streets safer, you can save a lot of victims, and you can save a lot of potential criminals, too, for a more constructive life.

But the hard work of passing the crime bill, as I said yesterday when I signed it, was only the beginning. It's up to those of us who are charged with executing the laws to roll up our sleeves and put the crime bill to work as quickly as we possibly can.

One of the most important provisions of this crime bill is one which has been largely overlooked, I think, in this debate. I want to discuss it with you today because I think it can make a huge difference. And that is the ban on juvenile possession of handguns. Except when hunting or target shooting with a parent or other responsible adult, young people simply shouldn't be carrying guns. Period. This provision is critical to our ability to make our schools and neighborhoods safer. It is so critical that I am directing you today, each of you, to prepare a plan in your districts for enforcing this law over the next 100 days. We need to work with local law enforcement officials and other local officials as you have been doing.

And I want to compliment all of you and compliment the Attorney General for bringing this group in on a repeated, disciplined basis and working closely with you on policy. And then I want to thank you for the work you've done with State and local officials.

But we have to make this work. If this law turns out to be just a law on the books that is widely ignored and never enforced, it will be a terrible shame, because this law can save our children's lives. This law can make a huge difference, but we obviously have to have a strategy to enforce it, and the means by which it is enforced may not be the same, as a practical matter, in every district in the country. So I want to urge you to do that. By January the 1st, we should have a strategy in every community to get guns out of the hands of violent teens and away from young