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ond, when we do differ, we ought to offer an alternative. When the vast majority of Americans and Members of Congress agree on an issue like welfare reform, a small minority shouldn't be able to get away with "just say no" politics. Third, we ought to look at our problems with a view toward the long-term. Moving people from welfare to work will save a lot more money in the long run than throwing children off the rolls. They'll be in trouble, and they'll cost us a lot of money in the long run and a lot of our national life as well. We are never going to end welfare unless people have the training and child care to be good workers and good parents. And finally, we shouldn't just berate the worst in America, we ought to spend more time concentrating on the best. That's what I have done, by giving 29 States the freedom from burdensome Federal Government regulations so they can lead the way in helping to find new ways to end welfare.

The only way our country can meet the profound challenges of the 21st century and the global economy is if we all pull together and we all look forward. We don't have a person to waste. That's why welfare reform is so critical. We can't afford to filibuster away our future.

So I say to those in Congress who have joined me in demanding responsibility from people on welfare, you have a responsibility, too. Don't place pride of partisanship ahead of our national pride. Don't pander to the partisan extremes. Let's not let politics stand in the way of making work and responsibility a way of life for the next generation.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the Opening of Session I of the Family and Media Conference in Nashville, Tennessee

July 10, 1995

Thank you very much. I thought it might be nice to stop by here after having done my primary duty, which was delivering the soup to Mrs. Gore. [*Laughter*] I'm delighted to be here, Governor, Mayor, Senator, Members of Congress. To Representative Purcell and the other distinguished members of the Tennessee Legislature who are here, Dr. Erickson, and to all of you, let me say that I came here primarily to listen. And I find that I always learn a lot more when I'm listening than when I'm talking, so I will be quite brief.

I want to say a few things, however. First, I want to thank Al and Tipper Gore for their lifetime of devotion not only to their family but to the families of this State and this Nation, as manifested by this Family Reunion, the fourth such one, something they have done in a careful and sustained way. It's already been mentioned twice that Tipper has worked on the whole issue that we're here to discuss today for many, many years, never in the context of politics but always in the context of what's good for families and what we can do to move the ball forward for our children and for our future. And I think this country owes them a great debt of gratitude. And I'm glad to be here.

Secondly, I'd just like to frame this issue as it appears to me as President and as a parent. I gave a speech at Georgetown a few days ago in which I pointed out that the world in which I grew up, the world after World War II, was basically shaped by two great ideas: the middle class dream, that if you work hard you'll get ahead and your kids can do better than you did; and middle class values, that of family and community and responsibility and trustworthiness, and that both of those things were at some considerable risk today as we move out of the cold war into the global economy and the whole way we live and work is subject to sweeping challenge.

The family is the focus of both middle class dreams and middle class values, for it is the center around which we organize child rearing—our country's most important responsibility—and work. And how we work determines how we live and what will become of us over the long run.

We have seen enormous changes in both work and child rearing in the last several years. We know now that a much higher percentage of our children live in poverty, particularly in the last 10 years, even as we have a percentage of elderly people in poverty going below that of the general population

for the first time in history in the last 10 years, a considerable achievement of which we ought to be proud as a country. But still, our children are becoming more and more poor.

We know that a higher percentage of our children are being born out of wedlock. What you may not know, but is worth noting, is that the number of children being born out of wedlock is more or less constant for the last few years. So we not only have too many children being born out of wedlock, we have more and more young couples where both of them are working and having careers who are deferring child bearing and, in many cases, not having children at all. I would argue that is also a very troubling thing in our country—the people in the best position to build strong families and bring up kids in a good way deciding not to do so.

We know that most children live in families where, whether they have one parent or two parents in the home, whoever their parents are in the home are also working. We know that we do less for child care and for supervised care for children as a society than any other advanced country in the world.

We know, too, that most of our parents for the last 20 years have been working a longer work week for the same or lower wages, so that while Representative Purcell here complimented the Governor on his budget because it maintained a commitment to children in terms of public investment, you could make a compelling argument that the private investment in children has been going down because most families have both less time and less money to spend on their children.

And we know that as parents spend less time with their children, by definition the children are spending more time with someone or something else, so that the media has not only exploded in its ramifications in our lives but also has more access to more of our children's time than would have been the case 20 years ago if all these technological developments had occurred when the family and our economy were in a different place. And I think we have to look at all these issues in that context.

Now, it's commonplace to say that most of us believe that there's too much indiscriminate violence, too much indiscriminate sex, and too much sort of callous degradation of women and sometimes of other people in various parts of our media today. I believe that the question is, so what? What we ought to be talking about today is, so what are we all going to do about that? Because our ability to change things, I think, consists most importantly in our ability to affirmative steps.

At this talk at Georgetown, I made a commitment that I would try to set an example for what I thought our political leaders ought to be doing. We ought to have more conversation and less combat. When we criticize, we ought to offer an alternative. We ought to be thinking about the long run; these trends that we're dealing with have been developing over quite a long while now. And we ought to celebrate what is good as well as condemn what we don't like. And I think if we do those four things, then we will be able to make good decisions.

So let me just make two specific suggestions, and then I'd like to get on with listening to other people. First of all, in the spirit of alternatives and celebrating what is good, I'm for balancing the budget, but I'm against getting rid of public television or dramatically cutting it. In our family this is known as the ''Leave Big Bird alone'' campaign. [*Laughter*] I say that because we are going to have to cut a bunch of stuff, folks, and we are going to have to cut a lot of things. The budget would be in balance today but for the interest we're paying on the debt run up between 1981 and 1993. Next year, interest on the debt will exceed the defense budget. This is a big problem for our families, their incomes, their living standards, their future.

But consider this. Public TV gives, on average, 6 hours of educational programming a day. Sometimes the networks have as little as a half an hour a week. Public television goes to 98 percent of our homes. Forty percent of our people don't have access to cable channels like the Learning Channel or A&E. Fourteen percent, only 14 percent of overall public television channel funding comes from Federal money, but often times in rural places, like Senator Conrad's North Dakota, over half of the money comes from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Sixty percent of the viewers have family incomes

below $40,000. It costs you a $1.09 a year, per citizen, to fund it. And for every dollar public television and radio get from the Government, they raise $5 or $6 from the private sector. So I think that's my first suggestion.

My second suggestion relates to the presence of Senator Conrad here. If we don't believe in censorship, and we do want to tell parents that they have a responsibility, that television, to use Reverend Jackson's phrase that the Vice President mentioned, may be the third parent, but it can't be the first or the second, and that's up to the parents—if we want to say that, but we know we live in a country where most kids live in families where there's one or two parents there working and where we have less comprehensive child care than any other advanced country in the world, the question is how can we get beyond telling parents to do something that they physically cannot do for several hours a day unless they literally do want to be a home without television or monitor their kids in some other way?

There is one technological fix now being debated in the Congress which I think is very important. It's a little simple thing; I think it's a very big deal. In the telecommunications bill, Senator Conrad offered an amendment which ultimately passed with almost three-quarters of the Senate voting for it. So it's a bipartisan proposal that would permit a so-called V-chip to be put in televisions with cables which would allow parents to decide which—not only which channels their children could not watch but within channels, to block certain programming.

This is not censorship; this is parental responsibility. This is giving parents the same access to technology that is coming into your home to all the people who live there, who turn it on. So I would say when that telecommunications bill is ultimately sent to the President's desk, put the V-chip in it and empower the parents who have to work to do their part to be responsible with media. Those are two specific suggestions that I hope will move this debate forward.

Having said what I meant to say, I would like to now go on, Mr. Vice President, to hear the people who really know something about this. I want to thank you all for your care and concern. And let me echo something the Governor said: There is a huge consensus in this country today that we need to do something that is responsible, that is constructive, that strengthens our families and gives our kids a better future, and that celebrates the fact that this is the media center of the world. And we want it to be that way 10, 20, 50 years from now. But we also want to be that way in a country that is less violent, that has a more wholesome environment for our children to grow up in, where our children are strong and taking advantage of the dominant position the United States enjoys in the world media.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 9:15 a.m. in Polk Theater at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center to participants in Family Re-Union IV: The Family and the Media. In his remarks, he referred to the Vice President's mother, Pauline Gore; Gov. Don Sundquist of Tennessee; Mayor Philip Bredesen of Nashville, TN; and Bill Purcell and Marty Erickson, cohosts of the conference.

Remarks at the Closing of Session I of the Family and Media Conference in Nashville

July 10, 1995

I don't want to end on a downer, but I just want to ask you all to think about the implications of what we are discussing here. And I wish we had time for all the audience to ask their questions and make their comments, but let me just point this out.

Almost every major city in America has had a decline in the crime rate in the last 3 or 4 years, but the rate of random violence among very young people is still going up, notwithstanding the decline in the crime rate. That is just one example. After years of making progress on reducing drug use, the rate of apparently random drug use across racial and income lines among quite young people is now going back up again. The rate of perceived risk or the pointlessness of not doing it seems to be going down.

The ultimate answer may be in programs like the "I Have A Future" program and all these one-on-one programs for all these children. But I would ask you just to remember