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Q. Was there any concern that the First Lady's remarks might have any impact on the U.S.-Chinese relations?

The President. No, I don't think so. You know, she said—what she said was what we have both said many, many times on the issues that affect China, and much of her speech pertained to conditions in other countries, not China, and some of it related to conditions in our country as well. So I thought it was a balanced speech. There was no attempt to single any country out. She stood up for the rights and the potential and against the abuse of women everywhere in the world.

I thought that's what made the speech powerful, that there was no attempt to have a particular political agenda or single any country out. It was a very strong speech.

Q. They know who they are.

The President. I was proud of her.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Welfare Reform

September 6, 1995

Dear Mr. Leader:

I am glad the Senate has finally come to this important debate on welfare reform. The American people have waited a long time for this. We owe it to the people who sent us here not to let this opportunity slip away by doing the wrong thing or by failing to act at all.

Over the last two and a half years, my Administration has aggressively pursued welfare reform at every turn. We proposed sweeping welfare reform legislation to impose time limits and work requirements and promote the values of work, responsibility, and family. We have put tough child support enforcement at the center of the national welfare reform debate: My Administration collected a record level of child support in 1993—$9 billion—and I signed a far-reaching Executive Order to crack down on federal employees who owe child support.

We have put the country on the road to ending welfare as we know it, by approving welfare reform experiments in a record 34 states. Through these experiments, 7 million recipients around the country are now being required to work, pay child support, live at home and stay in school, sign a personal responsibility contract, or earn a paycheck from a business that uses money that was spent on food stamp and welfare benefits to subsidize private sector jobs. Today, my Administration is granting two more waivers to expand successful state experiments in Ohio, which rewards teen mothers who stay in school and sanctions those who don't, and in Florida, which requires welfare recipients to go to work as a condition of their benefits and provides child care when they do.

I am confident that what we're doing to reform welfare around the country is helping to instill the values all Americans share. Now we need to pass a welfare reform bill that ends the current welfare system altogether and replaces it with one that puts work, responsibility, and family first.

That is why I strongly support and urge you to pass the welfare reform bill sponsored by Senators Daschle, Breaux, and Mikulski that is before the Senate today. Instead of maintaining the current broken system which undermines our basic values, the Daschle-Breaux-Mikulski plan demands responsibility and requires people to work. The Work First bill will cut the budget by moving people to work, not by asking states to handle more problems with less money and shipping state and local taxpayers the bill.

I support the Work First plan because welfare reform is first and foremost about work. We should impose time limits and tough work requirements, and make sure that people get the child care they need to go to work. We should reward states for putting people to work, not for cutting people off. We will only end welfare as we know it if we succeed in moving people from welfare to work.

Welfare reform is also about family. That means the toughest possible child support enforcement, because people who bring children into this world should take responsibility for them, not just walk away. It also means requiring teen mothers to live at home, stay in school, and turn their lives around—not

punishing children for the mistakes of their parents.

Finally, welfare reform must be about responsibility. States have a responsibility to maintain their own efforts to move people from welfare to work, so that we can have a race to independence, not a race to the bottom. Individuals have a responsibility to work in return for the help they receive. The days of something for nothing are over. It is time to make welfare a second chance, and responsibility a way of life.

We have a ways to go in this welfare reform debate, but we have made progress. I have always sought to make welfare reform a bipartisan issue. The dignity of work, the bond of family, and the virtue of responsibility are not Republican values or Democratic values. They are American values—and no child in America should ever have to grow up without them. We can work toward a welfare reform agreement together, as long as we remember the values this debate is really about.

The attached Statement of Administration Policy spells out my views on the pending legislation in further detail.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Bob Dole, Senate majority leader, and Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader.

Message to the Congress Reporting on Federal Advisory Committees

September 6, 1995

To the Congress of the United States:

As provided by the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (Public Law 92–463; 5 U.S.C. App. 2, 6(c)), I am submitting my second Annual Report on Federal Advisory Committees covering fiscal year 1994.

This report highlights continuing efforts by my Administration to reduce and manage Federal advisory committees. Since the issuance of Executive Order No. 12838, as one of my first acts as President, we have reduced the overall number of discretionary advisory committees by 335 to achieve a net total of 466 chartered groups by the end of fiscal year 1994. This reflects a net reduction of 42 percent over the 801 discretionary committees in existence at the beginning of my Administration—substantially exceeding the one-third target required by the Executive order.

In addition, agencies have taken steps to enhance their management and oversight of advisory committees to ensure these committees get down to the public's business, complete it, and then go out of business. I am also pleased to report that the total aggregate cost of supporting advisory committees, including the 429 specifically mandated by the Congress, has been reduced by $10.5 million or by over 7 percent.

On October 5, 1994, my Administration instituted a permanent process for conducting an annual comprehensive review of all advisory committees through Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A–135, ''Management of Federal Advisory Committees.'' Under this planning process, agencies are required to review all advisory committees, terminate those no longer necessary, and plan for any future committee needs.

On July 21, 1994, my Administration forwarded for your consideration a proposal to eliminate 31 statutory advisory committees that were no longer necessary. The proposal, introduced by then Chairman Glenn of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs as S. 2463, outlined an additional $2.4 million in annual savings possible through the termination of these statutory committees. I urge the Congress to pursue this legislation—adding to it if possible—and to also follow our example by instituting a review process for statutory advisory committees to ensure they are performing a necessary mission and have not outlived their usefulness.

My Administration also supports changes to the Federal Advisory Committee Act to facilitate communications between Federal, State, local, and tribal governments. These changes are needed to support this Administration's efforts to expand the role of these stakeholders in governmental policy deliberations. We believe these actions will help promote better communications and consensus building in a less adversarial environment.

I am also directing the Administrator of General Services to undertake a review of possible actions to more thoroughly involve