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NOTE: The President spoke at approximately 10:10 a.m. in the Fawcett Center Dining Room at Ohio State University. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Gregory Lashutka of Columbus and E. Gordon Gee, president, Ohio State University.

Remarks to the Community at Ohio State University in Columbus

October 20, 1995

Thank you, Holly. Thank you, Dr. Gee. Thank you, Richard. And thank you, Mr. Vice President. Ladies and gentlemen, when we came here in 1992, I knew that if I could be elected President that Al Gore would be the most influential and positive Vice President in American history, and he has been exactly that. And I am very proud of him.

I am delighted to be back at Ohio State, delighted to be here when you're on the verge of such an incredible successful football season, when Cleveland is on the verge of starting the World Series, and I know you're proud of that.

I have so many people in our administration from Ohio; the United States Treasurer, Mary Ellen Withrow; the Federal Railroad Administrator, Jolene Molitoris; most important, my personal photographer, Sharon Farmer, over here, was the vice president of the OSU student body when she was a student. I'm glad to be here with her.

I will be very brief. You've waited a long time, and it's cold, but I want to make a few points to you. I believe that my first responsibility is to guarantee you the best possible future. I want the 21st century to be a time when every American has the chance to live up to the fullest of his or her God-given abilities. I want America to be the strongest force for freedom and peace and decency and prosperity in the entire world. I want your life to be exciting and wonderful and hopeful. And in order to do that, we have to have a strong economy; we have to have a Government that works, that is smaller and less bureaucratic but still fulfills our basic values, giving people the chance to make to most of their own lives, strengthening families, building up communities, helping people, the elderly, the poor children, those who, through no fault of their own, need some help to get along in life. This is part of having a good society.

This country is in much better shape than it was 2½ years ago. We are coming back. We have 7½ million more jobs, millions of more small businesses, the so-called misery index, the combination of unemployment and inflation, is at its lowest point in 25 years. We are moving in the right direction. And we see the American people coming back together and reasserting a sense of responsibility for themselves and their families and their communities, responsibility in a personal way. The welfare rolls are down; the food stamp rolls are down; the poverty rate is down; the crime rate is down; the teen pregnancy rate is down. And community service through things like AmeriCorps, the national service program, is up. This country is moving in the right direction.

We are facing a challenge today in Washington that is a very important one. We do need to balance the budget. When I became President, I was worried that the debt of this country was going to hang over your future like a dark cloud and make your future less than it ought to be. And in 3 years, we took the deficit from $290 billion a year down to $160 billion, the biggest drop in American history.

I want to balance the Federal budget. That is not the question. The question is, how shall we do it? What is the honorable way? What do we need to do? If you want the kind of future that I believe you do, we have to invest, as well as cut. We have to guarantee that we have enough to educate all of our people to the fullest of their abilities. We have to guarantee that we have enough to protect our environment. We have to guarantee that we have enough to protect the Medicare and Medicaid of our seniors and our poorest children and the disabled. We have to guarantee that.

And we have to guarantee that we can maintain America's leadership in the world. In just a few days, Ohio will become the center of the world's attention for quite another reason, when the heads of Bosnia and Croatia and Serbia come to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base to try to make peace in Bosnia.

And I have to tell you that—I have to say one sad thing today. A very distinguished

graduate of Ohio State University, Joe Kruzel, was one of the three Americans who was killed in Bosnia recently, working for that elusive peace. But he served his country well. You can be proud of him. And when they come here to Ohio and the world looks at Ohio, it will be happening because America has been able to lead the world toward peace, from the Middle East to Northern Ireland, to Haiti, to Bosnia. This is important. It matters. It's a big part of your future.

What I want to say to you is this: So many of these things that I am trying to do should not have much to do with partisan politics. It is a part of our basic value structure that we believe people should be able to strengthen their families and make the most of their own lives and protect their parents and their children and protect our environment and make sure it's going to be around for our grandchildren and our grandchildren's grandchildren. That ought to be what America is all about. It shouldn't be a partisan issue.

I have tried very much to work with this Congress, and I will continue to try to do that. But I will not tolerate raising the costs of student loans and student scholarships and cutting out opportunities.

I do not believe America would be stronger if we denied tens of thousands of young children the chance to be in the Head Start program. I do not believe America will be stronger if we deny poor school districts the chance to have small classes and computers in their schools. I do not believe America will be stronger if we wreck the ability of the National Government to provide for clean air and clean water and safe drinking water and pure food. I do not believe that.

I do not believe America will be stronger if we say to the elderly in this country who have worked their entire lives, "We don't really care anymore what happens to you in your health care. It's all right with us if some State tells you that if you or your husband or your wife have to go into a nursing home, before they can get any help from the Government, you've got to clean out your bank account; you've got to sell your car; you've got to sell your home." That's not the kind of America I want to live in, and I do not believe we will be stronger if we do that.

And I know we won't be stronger if we are not given the ability to stand up for basic decency and peace and freedom and prosperity around the world, if we are not given the ability to help to lead the way toward peace in Bosnia and Northern Ireland and the Middle East and Haiti and these other places.

This is what America is all about. And what I want to tell you is, if you look at the future, there is no nation in the world as well-positioned as the United States for the 21st century. All we have to do is to remember our basic values. And all I ask you to do today is to do the following: Number one, ask yourself, what do I have at stake in this debate for a balanced budget? I need the budget balanced, because I don't want a big debt on my future and my children's future. But it has to be done in the right way so that we can protect education and health care and the environment and the leadership of the United States in the world, because that's a big part of what I want.

And I want to leave you with this last thought as you look at your future. On Monday, nearly a million people gathered in Washington, DC, in a remarkable, remarkable march. And they had a simple message: We want to take responsibility for ourselves, for our families, and for our communities. But we want the rest of America to join hands with us in making this great country what it ought to be.

So I ask you to do one last thing. Look around this crowd today. We are a multiracial, multiethnic country. In a global village where people relate to each other across national lines, nothing—nothing—could give us a greater asset for the 21st century than our racial and ethnic diversity. It is a godsend. It is a godsend.

But all the surveys show, of public opinion, when people are called personally and asked in the privacy of their home, that there are still great differences in the way we view the world based on our racial or ethnic background. And even on our college campuses today, there are too many people whose lives are too segregated.

And so I want to repeat to you what I said at the University of Texas to the students there earlier this week. Make sure—make

sure that you have taken the time to really know and care about and understand somebody who is of a different race. Make sure you have told them the truth about how you feel. Make sure you have listened carefully to how they feel, and make sure you have done what you could in your way personally to bring your community together.

I am telling you, there are a lot of days when I wish I were your age, looking to the future that I think you'll have. It can be a great and beautiful thing. But we have got to go there together. And we have got to go there consistent with the values that made this country great. We can harness all this technology. We can harness all these changes to your benefit, to make your life the most exciting life any generation of Americans ever had. But you have to help us. You've got to stand up for what you believe. You've got to insist that we do it right. I will veto, if I have to, any attempt to mortgage your future. I will not let it happen. But you have to help me claim your future. That's something only you can do. I want you to do it.

I'm honored to be here with you today. I wish you well tomorrow and for the rest of your lives.

God bless you, and thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:07 p.m. at the Oval Mall. In his remarks, he referred to Holly Smith, student trustee, Ohio State University Board of Trustees, and actor and comedian Richard Lewis, OSU alumnus.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

October 15

In the morning, the President traveled to Hartford, CT. Following his arrival at Bradley International Airport, he greeted a group of young people helping to combat teenage smoking.

In the evening, the President traveled to Austin, TX.

October 16

In the morning, the President traveled to Dallas, TX, and in the evening, he traveled to Los Angeles, CA.

The President announced his intention to appoint Natalie Cohen to be a member of the Advisory Committee on the Arts of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

The White House announced that the President will meet at the White House with President Soeharto of Indonesia on October 27.

The White House announced that the President congratulated Armstrong World Industries' Building Products Operation and Corning Telecommunications Products Division as recipients of the 1995 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

October 17

In the morning, the President traveled to San Antonio, TX, and in the evening, he traveled to Houston, TX. Later in the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

October 18

In the evening, the President traveled to Baltimore, MD, where he attended a fundraising dinner at a private residence. He then returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to appoint A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

The White House announced that the President and President Jacques Chirac of France have agreed to reschedule President Chirac's November 3d state visit at the White House for February 1, 1996.

October 19

In the morning, the President had a working visit with President Thomas Klestil of Austria.

In the evening, the President attended the Africare reception at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

The President announced his intention to renominate Lottie L. Shackelford to be the small business designate on the Overseas Private Investment Corporation Board of Directors.