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Week Ending Friday, October 17, 1997

The President's Radio Address

October 11, 1997

Good morning. We have worked hard to help parents pass on their values to their children and to protect them from bad influences. Today I want to talk about a powerful new tool in our arsenal to help parents and to protect our children from the dangers of drugs.

Of all the investments we can make in our children's future, none is more important than our fight against the greatest threat to their safety: illegal drugs. Under the leadership of our national drug czar, General Barry McCaffrey, we've fought to keep drugs away from our borders, off our streets, and out of our schools with a tough and smart antidrug strategy. Working together with State and local law enforcement, we've made real progress. But unless we teach our children about the dangers of drugs, our efforts will be in vain.

Make no mistake; without our guidance, children are more likely to use drugs. Although overall drug use has declined dramatically, drug use by our young people has doubled. Among eighth graders, typically 13 and 14 years old, drug use has nearly tripled. We do not understand all the reasons for these unsettling statistics, but we do know this: While illegal drug use by young people has risen, the number of antidrug public service ads has fallen by more than a third.

In the meantime, movies, music videos, and magazines have filled the gap—and our children's minds—too often with warped images of a dream world where drugs are cool. We know that the media can powerfully affect our children, for good or ill. That is why we acted to protect our children from tobacco advertisements, and why we've urged the liquor industry to refrain from running hard liquor ads on television. Now we must take the next step and give our children the straight facts: Drugs are wrong, drugs are illegal, and drugs can kill you.

Young people who have not used illegal drugs by the age of 21 probably never will use them. That's why we must reach our children with the right message before it's too late. I just signed into law legislation that includes $195 million to launch an unprecedented high-profile, prime-time media campaign to reach every child in America between the ages of 9 and 17 at least four times a week. For the very first time, we'll be able to use the full power of the media—from television to the Internet to sports marketing—to protect our children from drugs. Teaching our children about the dangers of drugs today can mean saving their lives and our shared future tomorrow.

I am pleased that the Partnership for a Drug-Free American and the Ad Council will serve as advisers for this vitally important project. I'd like to say a special word of thanks to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America and its chairman, Jim Burke, for the outstanding example they have already set in showing us what good ads can do. And I urge business leaders all over our country to help us reach our goal by matching the funds that the Congress has appropriated. Finally, I ask all Americans to join in this crusade.

Above all, I ask the entertainment industry to do its part as well. Never glorify drugs; but more important, tell our children the truth. Show them that drug use is really a death sentence. Use the power of your voice to teach our children and to help shape our Nation's future.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:47 p.m. on October 10 in the Oval Office at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on October 11.

Statement on the 20th Anniversary of the Community Reinvestment Act

October 12, 1997

On the 20th anniversary of the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), we should all be proud of what that law has meant for low and moderate income Americans of all races. Although we still have a long way to go in bringing all Americans into the economic mainstream, under CRA the private sector has pumped billions of dollars of credit to build housing, create, jobs, and restore hope in communities left behind.

NOTE: This statement was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on October 11 but was embargoed for release until 12:01 a.m., October 12.

Remarks on Arrival in Caracas, Venezuela

October 12, 1997

President and Mrs. Caldera, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the entire American delegation and all the American people, let me first say, *Saludos, amigos*. It is good to be in Venezuela.

When the first explorers came to the Americas centuries ago, there was no distinction in their minds between North and South America; it was simply the New World. Now we have an opportunity to bring the Americas together again; a land united by shared values from Alaska to Patagonia; a place the rest of the world can look to and say, this is where the future lives.

Indeed, we are present at the future. Every country but one in our hemisphere is now a democracy. Command economies have given way to free markets and the more widespread prosperity they bring. We tear down trade barriers and create good jobs for all our people in the Americas, North and South.

Even as our governments are devoted to free markets and enterprise, we assume the necessary responsibility for meeting their challenges: to educate our children, to protect their health and the environment, to defend their liberty and human rights. If we stay this course, in the 21st century the Americas can be a stronghold for security and prosperity; a model to the world that democracy, open markets, and cooperation can deliver blessings to all our people.

Venezuela has been a driving force in this quiet revolution. Your democracy is strong after weathering difficult challenges. Your economy is growing in the wake of real sacrifice. The strength you find in Venezuela's diversity is indeed an inspiration to every nation in our hemisphere.

The United States is proud of its partnership with Venezuela, proud that we share a fundamental optimism about the future and a common resolve to work toward securing the benefits of peace and prosperity. From an abiding faith in democracy to a willingness to fight crime and corruption, from energy development to environmental protection, from music to baseball, we are united by our concerns and by our passions.

Thirty-six years ago, John Kennedy became the first American President to visit Venezuela. In speaking to the people here, he cited his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and his earlier efforts to promote friendship between the nations of this hemisphere—and I quote—"united by nature and united in their common aspirations." Today, I proudly follow in the footsteps of both men, committed to sustain their impulse to reach across borders and learn from our friends and neighbors, for our mutual benefit.

As we stand on the edge of a new century in a new millennium, we are very much like the first explorers who came here centuries ago; we can see a new world in the making. That is our chance and our responsibility. Let us seize it together.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:10 p.m. at La Carlotta Air Base. In his remarks, he referred to President Rafael Caldera of Venezuela and his wife, Alicia.

Remarks at the Signing Ceremony for the United States-Venezuela Agreements in Caracas

October 13, 1997

President Caldera, Foreign Minister Rivas, Energy Minister Arrieta, Dr. Tablante, Sec-