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(G) Public education relating to the designation of the river;

(H) Logistical support, operating procedures, and policies;

(I) Prior accomplishments, if relevant, and relationship to existing plans and projects in the area; and

(J) Measures of performance.

(4) The strength and diversity of support for the nomination and plan of action as evidenced by letters from local and State governments, Indian tribes, elected officials, any and all parties who participate in the life and health of the area to be nominated, or who have an interest in the economic life and cultural and environmental vigor of the involved community.

(c) The Committee also should seek to recommend the selection of rivers that as a group:

(1) Represent the natural, historic, cultural, social, economic, and agricultural diversity of American rivers;

(2) Showcase a variety of stream sizes and an assortment of urban, rural, and mixed settings from around the country, including both relatively pristine and degraded rivers;

(3) Highlight a variety of innovative programs in such areas as historic preservation, sustainable development through tourism, wildlife management, fisheries restoration, recreation, community revitalization, agricultural practices, and flood plain and watershed management;

(4) Include community efforts in early stages of development as well as those that are more well established; and

(5) Stand to benefit from targeted Federal assistance.

(d) The Committee shall report its recommendations for selection of rivers as American Heritage Rivers to the President through the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality.

Sec. 3. *Administration.* (a) The heads of executive departments and agencies shall provide the Committee, to the extent practicable and permitted by law, such information with respect to river revitalization as the Committee requires to fulfill its functions.

(b) The Committee shall be supported both administratively and financially by the Secretary of Defense, acting through the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works.

Sec. 4. *General.* The Committee shall terminate no later than 2 years from the date of this order. The Chair of the Committee, with the approval of the designated Federal officer, shall call meetings of the American Heritage Rivers Initiative Advisory Committee.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 7, 1998.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., April 9, 1998]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 8, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on April 10.

Remarks at Rachel Carson School in Chicago

April 8, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you for making me feel so welcome at what is at least my third trip to the Chicago schools since I've been President.

I want to begin by thanking Rita Nicky for that wonderful introduction and for her obvious devotion to the children of this city. I thank very, very much Kathleen Mayer, the principal, for making me feel welcome. I'd also like to thank Catherine Garza, whose science class I visited. And I'd like to thank the students in the science class who showed me how to make a weather vane, and the young students who sang to me today, and all the students, indeed, of Rachel Carson, along with the teachers and the administrators and the staff. Thank you so much.

I thank Aldermen Coleman, O'Connor, and Burke for being here. I thank Congressman Gutierrez, but also Congressmen Davis, Rush, and Blagojevich, who are out here in front, for being here, for their support. [*Applause*] Thank you. And Senator Art Berman and Senator Dick Durbin. And Senator Carol Moseley-Braun I'll have more to say about later.

I want to thank the mayor and all of those who have cooperated with him, the members and the leaders of the teachers union, the parents, the administrators, everybody, in this remarkable attempt to revolutionize, revitalize, and energize the schools of the city of Chicago. It has been awesome to watch. But in particular I would like to thank the CEO of the Chicago board of education and the superintendent of schools, Paul Vallas and Gery Chico. They have done a wonderful job, and I thank them so much. Thank you, gentlemen.

But Mayor, none of it would have happened without you. And you believed that the kids of Chicago could learn and deserved a chance to learn and could have a future and deserved the chance to have that future. And when you got up here and you said you got tired of making excuses for failure and you decided to start making reasons for success, the whole crowd clapped. I wish that every public official in America had that simple creed. We'd be a lot better off as a country, and I thank you.

I also want to thank the Carson Choir and the Recorder Band, the people that provided music earlier.

Very often when I get up to speak I feel like that old joke at the banquet—where the banquet starts at 6 and everybody in the whole room either gets introduced or gets to talk. And the last speaker gets up at 10, and he says, ''Everything that needs to be said has been said, but not everyone has said it.'' [*Laughter*] And somehow that's how I feel this morning, because so much that needs to be said has been said.

But I want to try to put this issue of modernizing our schools in a larger context for you, about what it means to prepare our country for the 21st century. It is just 632 days away. I'm gratified that most Americans think we're in good shape for that new century, because we have the strongest economy in a generation, 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate in a quarter-century, the lowest inflation in 30 years, the highest homeownership in history; first time crime has gone down this many years in a row since President Eisenhower was President. The welfare rolls are the lowest they've been in 27 years. That's all good.

But when things are changing as rapidly as they are now, we should use good times to think about the problems that remain today and the challenges that loom ahead tomorrow. It is a responsibility of good citizens in a democracy to bear down and do more in the good times, not to relax and pat ourselves on the back.

This meeting I had today, along with 23 community forums the Vice President and the Secretary of Education, Dick Riley, are having across the Nation, are all designed to discuss the importance, first, of modernizing the schools. Like Senator Durbin said, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Carol Moseley-Braun for sounding the alarm on this issue. She is the first person who ever talked to me about the possibility that the Federal Government should play a role. And so I said, ''Well, look, I was a Governor for 12 years, and I spent more money on education than any of my predecessors. I raised more funds. I put more money into the schools. But the building decisions were always made at the district level.''

And she gave the same speech to me years ago she gave to you today. She said, but that having good schools is a national priority. We spend money at the Federal level on roads that are the responsibility of the State and local government. We invest in that kind of infrastructure. But the most important infrastructure for tomorrow is the infrastructure of education. If we can be spending Federal money, as we are, to try to make sure we connect every classroom and library in the entire country to the Internet by the year 2000, don't we want the classroom to be fit to go to school in, and don't we want there to be enough to have small class sizes where we need it?

So she sold me, and ever since I've been trying to sell the country, which as usual is ahead of the politicians, and the Congress, which sometimes is a little behind the President. [*Laughter*] So we're working on this in Washington.

And I came back to Chicago because of all the exhilarating things that Chicago is doing, leading a revolution in public schools of high standards, accountability, rising expectations. Last year I came here to highlight the practice of ending the destructive policy

of social promotion but not letting the kids drift off and instead bringing them closer by giving them summer school opportunities.

Today the mayor told me there are now 240 schools plus in Chicago open after school every day for tutoring and academic work and to provide a decent dinner to poor students who need it, so the kids can actually get 3 meals a day in 240 schools. He said there had already been an evaluation of 40—of the first 40 schools where this 3-meals-a-day policy had been in effect, and the tutoring, and that 39 of them had shown dramatic gains in learning. This is not rocket science; this is taking care of our children. If Chicago can do it, everybody can do it.

So the mayor and I were talking yesterday about the ROTC program in the schools and what it does for young people, to be able to put on that uniform and feel the pride and find constructive things to do, and how they're being given a little extra consideration in being hired for other work that needs to be done in Chicago.

So Senator Carol Moseley-Braun, sitting here while we're talking, she said, ''You know, I'm not sure we put enough money in the defense budget to take care of all the kids in the country that would like to be in ROTC. And there are a lot of kids in this country that that may be the only opportunity they ever get to learn the lessons they'll learn and become the kind of people they can become to do the kinds of things they can do.'' So I now have a new assignment from Senator Carol Moseley-Braun—[*laughter*]—and I am about to fulfill it when I go back to Washington.

I say this to you because this is big stuff here. This is exciting. All over the country, people, all kinds of people, have just sort of given up on public schools and the kids that are in them and the children whose first language is not English. And I'm telling you, that's crazy. I just got back from the poorest continent on Earth, Africa. I saw over half a million people in one sitting in Ghana. I went to rural villages. I talked to all kinds of people. I can tell you I believe more strongly that I ever have in my life that there is an even distribution of intelligence, energy, and potential among all human beings everywhere. The question is, are we doing what's necessary to bring it out and to give kids the chance that they need?

So that's what this is about. I really like the fact that in her introduction Rita said, ''Well, even in the old building, teachers work hard to do a good job.'' A lot of those classrooms are still open and they're appealing—I was kidding her, I went to a high school that was built in 1914. It's been closed for years. We're trying to renovate it and open it up as an arts center. But if you really want to make the old buildings work, it requires a lot of money, too. And our proposal would permit not only the building of new buildings but also the rehabilitation of old buildings—I mean the rehabilitation—opening the window, solving the problems that she mentioned, recovering them for positive purposes.

What does all this mean? At this school you've got reading and math scores up, attendance at almost 100 percent, all parents turning out for report card pickup day. This is a school of choice, a school of champions. And congratulations, by the way, to the fifth and sixth grade soccer team for winning the city title. But you're winning an even more important title in my mind by proving that our city public schools can work.

Now, if I were listening to this and I were in the same state of mind I was in before I became a convert, I would say, ''Well, if the city of Chicago can put all this money into building new schools, why can't everybody?'' I'll tell you why. Ask the mayor. There's a limit, even in these good economic times with these very low interest rates, in how much money that the markets will let any city borrow to build school buildings. There is also a limit to how much the taxpayers can pay, as Senator Carol Moseley-Braun said.

This is a national priority. I went to a school in Florida in a fairly modest-size community, where the kids in the school building were also going to school in 17 house trailers out back. Since last year we've got the largest number of children in our schools in the history of America. This is a problem not just in big cities; it's a problem in a lot of smaller towns and communities across this country.

One-third of all of our schools need major repairs. More than half have major building

problems. Nearly half don't have the wiring systems necessary to support my goal of hooking up every classroom to the Internet. Think of that. How bizarre is that? You have all these high-tech companies wanting to give you computers, hook you up to the Internet—I'm sorry, the wiring in the schools won't let us take our kids into the 21st century. The American Society of Civil Engineers gave our schools an F in its infrastructure report card this year, worst than in roads, bridges, mass transit, and every other category of investment.

Last week Congress passed billions of dollars for new roads, new bridges, and other public works. I believe that we should have a good road program. I believe that unsafe bridges should be repaired. I believe that the city streets ought to be in good shape. I believe that mass transit should be adequately funded. But I believe none of that will matter very much if we let the education system come crumbling down around our children.

I want these kids to be able to get on the subway in New York or the Dan Ryan Expressway in Chicago and be able to afford the ticket or afford a car and be going to a job where they can earn a good living because they've got a good education. You can't just have one kind of investment.

Now, the proposal in our balanced budget plan to help the schools do construction provides tax incentives to help communities modernize and build more than 5,000 schools. Our children deserve schools they can be proud of.

I want to help promote programs like after-school programs. We have funds for that. I have a program to reduce class size in the early grades all over the country and help schools hire teachers to do that. But if we pass the funds to provide help for the schools to stay open late, to tutor the kids, to feed the kids, do whatever needs to be done, and if we provide funds for more teachers to help get the class size down, you still have to have good classes in good buildings that are safe and clean, where there are good learning environments, and they are at least adequately organized so they can be part of the information superhighway. This is an important thing.

The work that is being done by your school leaders here, we can't do. Eighty percent of the schools in Chicago now, according to the mayor, are following the school uniform policy, which you know I love. I thought those kids looked great in their uniforms today. And I know—and the children that can't afford it, you have to find help to give them that. If you're going to have uniform policy, it's got to embrace all children.

But that's a decision that a local district has to make. The President can tell you how to do it legally and help support it morally, but that's a decision you have to make. You know, which schools should be open how many hours a day, what kind of tutoring programs you have, what you do with the ROTC program—that's a decision you've got to make here. How these children learn to speak English, if English is not their first language—I want to thank one of the students, Rosalia Delgado, who took me around this morning—how she learned to speak English—that's a decision you have to make.

But it is in the national interest to know that we have decent infrastructure for our schools, just as much as our national future depends upon a decent network of highways and a decent investment in mass transit. That is the idea that we have to convince the Congress on.

And when I can show people that, look what they're doing in Chicago; all they want us to do is to help, to create a framework in which they can have more success and a framework in which every other school in America can have the kind of success I saw here at Rachel Carson, I think we will have gone a long way.

So I came here to send that message out, and I ask you to help me send that message out and give your Members of Congress and the United States Senate a pat on the back for leading the way.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:58 a.m. in the courtyard. In his remarks, he referred to Rita Nicky, first grade teacher, who introduced the President; Catherine Garza, third grade teacher; 16th Ward Alderman Shirley A. Coleman; 40th Ward Alderman Patrick J. O'Connor; 14th Ward Alderman Edward M. Burke; State Senator Arthur L. Berman; and Mayor Richard M. Daley.

A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on the United States-France Civil Aviation Agreement

April 8, 1998

I am pleased that the United States has reached an agreement with France significantly increasing air service between our countries. The U.S.-France aviation market is our third largest in Europe. Until today, it was also our largest aviation market not governed by a bilateral agreement. This agreement will eliminate all restrictions on airline operations between the United States and France in 5 years. It will allow many more flights between our two countries and give U.S. airlines extensive new rights that will enhance their capacity to serve this market. This increased competition means more choice for American business travelers and tourists alike.

This agreement continues my efforts to open the world's markets in areas where American companies are most competitive. We have already concluded important aviation agreements with Japan, Germany, Canada, and many other nations. These agreements are part of our strategy to replace restrictions with opportunities—and move international aviation into a 21st century where consumers, not governments, determine how passenger and cargo needs are served.

I want to thank Secretaries Albright and Slater and the negotiators at the Departments of State and Transportation for their sustained efforts in reaching this agreement.

Remarks at the Andrew W. Mellon Dinner

April 8, 1998

Thank you very much, Mr. Laughlin. Mr. Powell, Mr. Smith, members of the Board of Trustees, Members of Congress and our administration, members of the Mellon family, ladies and gentlemen. It's a great honor for Hillary and me to be here tonight to honor this great legacy of Andrew Mellon and to honor all of you who do so much to carry on that legacy.

I first came to the National Gallery over 30 years ago when I was a college student at Georgetown. Over the years I've come back as often as I could. When I came here from time to time as Governor of my home State, I confess that on occasion I sneaked out of the meetings of the Governors' Association and came to the National Gallery, where there was less noise and more light. [*Laughter*] Hillary and I have been privileged to visit here in the last few years to tour the Vermeer and Picasso exhibitions, among others.

It's hard to believe now that the National Gallery is 61 years old, founded when our country was in the grip of the Great Depression and the world was slipping inexorably toward World War II. But Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon knew that our Nation's work lay even then not simply in our monetary strength or our military power but in the value of our ideas, the creativity of our spirit, the power of our common culture. So he and a group of passionate men and women gave this great gift to the Nation and established a tradition of partnership that endures down to the very day.

There is no question that Paul Mellon carries on this tradition. His generosity has helped to invigorate and sustain our entire Nation's cultural and artistic institutions. Having already won the National Medal of Arts in 1985, last fall he was awarded the National Medal for the Humanities, which Robert Smith kindly accepted for him.

So tonight I want to thank him again and all the members of his family who have participated in giving other Americans, who could never have afforded these things on their own, access to this wonderful world.

When President Roosevelt dedicated the National Gallery, he said, ''The dedication of this gallery to a living past and to a greater and more richly living future is the measure of the earnestness of our intention that the freedom of the human spirit shall go on.''

Today, at the dawn of a new century and a new millennium, it falls to us to continue in that great tradition. Hillary and I have launched the White House Millennium Program to encourage all Americans to honor