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borders. When it enters into force, it will be an effective tool to facilitate the return of U.S. vehicles that have been stolen and taken to Belize. The Treaty establishes procedures for the recovery and return of vehicles that are registered, titled, or otherwise documented in the territory of one Party, stolen in the territory of that Party or from one of its nationals, and found in the territory of the other Party.

I recommend that the Senate give early and favorable consideration to the Treaty, with Annexes and Protocol, and give its advice and consent to ratification.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
June 23, 1998.

Remarks at a Dinner for Texas Gubernatorial Candidate Garry Mauro

June 23, 1998

Thank you. Thank you, Garry, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the warm welcome, and even more, thank you for being here for Garry Mauro.

I don't know what to make of that eulogy you gave me at the end of those remarks. [*Laughter*] It reminds me, the other day I was in Cleveland—this is a true story—I was in Cleveland the other day, and I went with Congressman Lou Stokes who is retiring after a long and distinguished, wonderful career in Congress on a motorcade through his Congressional District in inner city Cleveland, and we went by all these little schools, and then finally we stopped at a grade school.

And I was there because a wonderful community program called City Year which may have a chapter in Texas, I think they do, and it has a couple thousand kids around the country, they're all part of our AmeriCorp program, our national service program; they were having their national convention in Cleveland.

But I went to this elementary school where some of our young volunteers are working with the kids in the inner city. So I gave them a little talk, you know, and then I went down the line, and I was shaking hands with all the teachers and the parents and as many children as I could possibly shake hands with. And I got to the very end of the line, and there was a little kid standing there that barely came above my knees. He was probably 6, I guess he could have been 7, but I don't think so. He looked up at me, and normally when I see kids like that they say, ''I've seen you on television,'' and I say ''Thank goodness.'' [*Laughter*] This kid said, ''Are you the real President?'' I said, ''Yes, I am.'' He said, ''And you're not dead yet?'' [*Laughter*]

Then I realized that he thought Presidents were—you know, he had studied George Washington and Abraham Lincoln—he thought a part of the job description was you couldn't be living anymore. [*Laughter*] And some days I wonder whether he's right or not. [*Laughter*] But at least I died with honors from Garry's introduction.

Let me say to all of you I think you're doing a good thing here. And I think it's even more important that you're doing it because you know you have a long way to go. But I would like to tell you a story or two. In 1991 when I started running for President, only my wife and my mother thought I could win. My daughter thought I had a chance. [*Laughter*]

When I entered the New Hampshire primary I was fifth among the Democrats starting out, and the incumbent President was at a 75 percent approval rating. When I won the nomination of my party on June 2, 1992, with the victories in California, New Jersey, and Ohio, I was running third in the public opinion polls; 6 weeks later I was first in the public opinion polls—6 weeks later.

Go back a few years; I met Garry Mauro over 25 years ago when we worked in 1972 together. Two years later I ran for Congress. I ran against a Member of Congress who had 99 percent name recognition and an 85 percent approval rating in 1974. And I was zero, zero. On Labor Day I was behind 59 to 23, on Labor Day, not June the 28th, on September the whatever it was that year. And I got 48½ percent of the vote. If I had had another week to campaign, I could have won. I say that to make this point: When people are satisfied with good conditions, and they like their incumbent office holders personally, they tend always to say they are for them

and so would you if you didn't know him or you didn't happen to be in the other party.

In order to make an election in this kind of an environment it is necessary that people believe there is a reason to think about the election and that there is a choice to be made and that the choice, if it is made, would be good for them. And I think you've got what you need here. You've got a good candidate who is a wonderful human being and an exemplary public servant with a record that anyone could be proud of. You've got the right issues—and I want to say a little more about that. And you've got, if you all do your part, an adequate support base so that people in your vast, huge State will be aware that you have a good candidate, and the right issues, and there is a reason to make a choice.

You also have, in my view, the best of all possible worlds because Garry Mauro can just get out there and run as himself and run a completely positive campaign and only talk about those areas where there is an honest disagreement.

Now, then it determines—it really turns on the same thing that really will shape the elections in November here for Congress or that will shape the attitudes. How do people respond to good times? I'm very grateful—I'll just amplify what Garry said—I am very, very grateful that today in our country we have the lowest crime rate in 25 years, and the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, 16.1 million new jobs, the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, the first balanced budget and the surplus we believe this year in 29 years, the lowest inflation in 32 years, the smallest Federal Government in 35 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the country. I'm grateful for that. And I think that—[*applause*]——

I also know that the American people deserve primary credit for that. But the decisions made by our administration, more than half of which were made under withering partisan criticism from the leadership of the other party, had a lot to do with creating the framework in which it became possible for the American people to do these great things. Now, having said that, the question is: When times get good, what do you do? A lot of people say, "Well, I've been working hard for years, and I'm tired of thinking about insecurity and difficult things, and you know, I would like to take it easy, and I don't want too much to change."

Well, there are two problems with that. One is nothing ever stays the same anyway, ever, not in an individual life, not in the family's life, not in a business, not in a State's life, not in a nation's life. The second is all you have to do is pick up the paper every day to know that things are changing quite a lot around the world, and there are a lot of outcomes that aren't clear.

I'm going to China tomorrow, as all of you know, against a backdrop of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan which occurred after years and years and years in which—just since I've been President we had gotten an indefinite extension of the nonproliferation treaty, we had gotten all these countries to agree to control their missile technology, we passed the Chemical Weapons Convention, we passed the comprehensive test ban treaty. We had 140 something countries around the world sign it. We and the Russians began to lower our nuclear arsenals dramatically and destroy nuclear weapons, and it seemed that we were on a constant and stable path. Now we have a new challenge.

I'm going to China at a time when we are appreciative of the discipline with which the Chinese have managed their economy and the fact that they haven't yet felt the need to devalue their currency. Why? Because of the economic difficulties in Indonesia, the challenges that Japan faces and any number of other Asian countries. It's a big deal because a huge percentage of our economic growth has come from foreign trade, about a third of it, no small measure, from Asia.

So I tell you this because it's well to be reminded that whether you're the President of the United States, the Governor of Texas, or the mayor of Seattle, Washington, you know when times like this come along, if you relax in an atmosphere of change, you'll spend the rest of your life, if you've got a conscience and a brain, kicking yourself in the behind because you didn't take advantage of them to do every single thing you could to meet the challenges of the day and prepare for tomorrow. That is the case that has to be made not just in Texas but in every community in this country.

And if you look at what Garry talked about—let's just take—what are these big challenges? Some of them have to be dealt with by us here in Washington. For example, we've got to reform Social Security and Medicare so that when the baby boomers retire, we've still got a social safety net, but it doesn't bankrupt our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. We owe that to the next generation. That has to be done in Washington.

There are things that we need to do in other areas in improving the quality and access to healthcare, in improving public education and access to college—and we've done a great deal there—in proving we can preserve the environment while we grow the economy—if you just take those three things—in extending economic opportunity to people who still don't have it even though we've got a low unemployment rate.

Now I will mention those four things. In all those areas we have a role to play. But in none of those areas can any of those endeavors be successful unless the States are doing the right thing. Yes, we want to move more people from welfare to work. The States are basically in control of that program now.

So it matters more who the Governor is now in terms of whether initiatives are taken or not than ever before, at least in my lifetime. And because I used to be a Governor and I believe in the system, I've off-loaded a lot of responsibilities to the States. But in doing that, you know, you run the risk—you get the benefit of having people closer to the grassroots issues make the decisions—you run the risk that if you've got somebody who is relaxing when they ought to be moving that the consequences won't be so good.

Now you just take the issues Garry reeled off here. I'm trying to get the Congress to approve a budget that will help to build or repair 5,000 schools, that will help 100,000 more teachers to be hired to lower class sizes in the early grades, that will connect the classrooms and the libraries of this country to the Internet, that will help to improve teacher training and accountability and train more teachers to be master teachers, nationally certified master teachers to help all the others in their schools. But none of this will amount to much unless there is a complementary commitment at the State level where the primary constitutional responsibility for public education is lodged to do those things.

And I don't think there is a person in this room that believes—I don't care how big Texas gets; I don't care how may billionaires you have—I don't think any of you believe that your State will ever reach its full potential until you can say, ''We're proud of our university system, and now everybody who deserves it can afford to go'' number one, and number two, ''Now we're proud of our kindergarten through twelfth grade too, we've got the best system of elementary and secondary education that the world can offer.'' And no one believes that any State in the United States can make that claim today, no one.

So, I say to you I'm glad you've got these good times. I am grateful to have been given the chance to serve at a moment in history where my experience as a Governor enabled me to see what I thought our country needed to do. I am grateful that the consequences have been as they have been. I'm very grateful the American people have done all the things they have done. But I'm telling you we're living in a dynamic world where things are changing more rapidly than ever before, where we've got to learn to live together across the lines that divide us both at home and with others in the world, and where it all begins with whether we are treating individuals with the dignity that I think is embodied in this Patients' Bill of Rights that I've advocated at the national level, that you've advocated at the State level, and most importantly with the commitment to develop the capacity of every young person. There is nothing more important, nothing.

The last point I want to make in this regard is that there are a lot of things we can do at the national level to deal with what I predict to you will be one of the three biggest issues of the next 40 years, which is how to do better at preserving the environment as we grow the economy.

Now, you know that's going to be a big issue. There are a lot of things we can do at the national level but an enormous amount of environmental protection, an enormous

amount of resource conservation, an enormous amount of figuring out what kind of flexible, sensible ways you have to adopt to grow the economy while you preserve the environment, that's done at the State level. I know, I was a Governor for a dozen years. And I dealt with all kinds of national administrations that had different philosophies on the environment.

There is not a person in the State of Texas, nowhere—this is no disrespect to the current Governor—there is nobody in the State of Texas that has a better background than Garry Mauro for making the right decisions about how to protect the environment and grow the economy.

I want you to think about that. I want you to go home to Texas and talk about it. And I want you to forget about the public opinion polls. The only poll that matters right now is the one inside your heart, inside your mind. If you believe that your candidate is as good as I believe he is, if you believe that the issues are as important as I believe they are, if you believe he's on the right side of the issues, and most important of all, if you buy what I just said about the nature of this time, yes times are good, yes we are grateful—but it just imposes on those of us who have done well enough to show up at this fundraiser tonight a bigger responsibility to see that we use these good times to prepare for our children's future. You're going to have a fine election, and you're going to be proud of what you're doing.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:47 p.m. in the Mount Vernon Room at the Sheraton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks on Signing the Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act of 1998 and an Exchange With Reporters

June 24, 1998

The President. Thank you very much, Sonia. And Jonathan and Jesse, welcome to the White House. Thank you, General Reno. Thank you, Senators Kohl and DeWine, for coming. And Congressman Hoyer, thank you for your hard work on this. I'd also like to thank Congressman Henry Hyde, who is not here, for his leadership on this legislation. Welcome Judge David Ross, the Commissioner of the Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement; United States Attorney Helen Fahey; child support advocates; and Leslie Sorkhe and Gerri Jensen, two other mothers who are here. I thank you all for being here.

I am very pleased to sign a vital new law that shows what we can achieve when we act in the national interest. For 5½ years now we have renewed our economy with a strategy that balances the budget while it invests and instills the future of our people and in the strength of our families. The key to expanding opportunity in this new century I want to say, though, is education.

I want to say a little more about child support in a minute, but these two young men behind me and all the children of our country deserve a world-class education. I have asked the Congress to help me in that, to help us to reduce class size by hiring 100,000 teachers and building or repairing 5,000 schools. I have asked them to help me institute high standards to connect all classrooms to the Internet, and I've asked them to make child care for working parents more affordable.

Yesterday the Republicans in the House of Representatives took a huge step in the opposite direction. Last night they began to dramatically cut education investments from Head Start to after-school to antidrug programs. This is out of step with our values and with America's shared vision of our future. In the coming months I'll have more to say about this, but you can be sure that I am going to keep fighting to advance education, to invest more in education, to lift education standards, to expand education opportunities. And if they continue to fight against all these things it will, I expect, be the major conflict of the coming months.

I still hope that I will not have to sign an education bill or veto one that short changes the future of our children. I don't intend to sign it. I hope a veto won't be necessary, but there is no excuse for this. We have a balanced budget. We're going to have a surplus. We have the money. We ought to give it to the children and their future.

This bill today is a gift to our children and the future. The quiet crisis of unpaid child