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and educational disadvantages, too often denied opportunities because of racial and ethnic prejudice, many minority men and women have had to struggle for equal access to the capital, tools, training, and services they need to build and maintain successful businesses.

My Administration remains committed to providing opportunities for all entrepreneurs, and we are determined to ensure the full inclusion of minority business enterprises in the economic mainstream of our Nation. The Minority Business Development Agency at the Department of Commerce continues to promote minority business growth and to create new initiatives to ensure that minority business men and women have access to the capital, information, and training they need to compete in today's domestic and global markets. Last year, the Small Business Administration (SBA) made a record $2.6 billion in loans to more than 10,000 minority-owned businesses; over the last 4 years, loans to minority borrowers have nearly tripled. And earlier this year, the SBA entered into partnership agreements with three leading minority business organizations as part of a 3-year outreach initiative. This initiative is designed to increase dramatically the SBA's financial, technical, and procurement assistance for minority entrepreneurs. These efforts will help to ensure that America's growing number of minority entrepreneurs are equipped to succeed.

Strong and successful minority enterprises benefit us all. The goods and services produced by minority-owned firms create jobs, spark community reinvestment and neighborhood pride, and increase America's productivity. With their imagination, innovative spirit, and willingness to take risks, minority entrepreneurs have made important contributions to the remarkable growth of our economy during the past 5 years. Since the beginning of my Administration, we have created more than 16 million new jobs and unemployment has reached its lowest level in 30 years. But to sustain and build on this success, we must utilize the energy and creativity of every American.

As we observe Minority Enterprise Development Week, we recognize and honor the extraordinary contributions that minority entrepreneurs make to our Nation's strength and prosperity, and we reaffirm our determination to help them make the most of today's dynamic economy.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim September 20 through September 26, 1998, as Minority Enterprise Development Week, and I call upon all Americans to join together with minority business entrepreneurs across the country in appropriate observances.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this Tenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 14, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on September 15.

Remarks on Departure for a Democratic Business Council Reception

September 10, 1998

Northwest Airlines Pilots' Strike

Good evening. I wanted to take this opportunity to say how delighted I am that Northwest Airlines and its pilots have reached the terms that form the basis of an agreement. The parties are now working on the specific time of getting back to work. The agreement, of course, will have to be approved, but I think this strike is over.

Earlier today, I spoke over the phone to the leaders of both parties: Randy Babbitt of the Air Line Pilots Association; and John Dasburg, the CEO of Northwest Airlines. I told them how important this negotiated agreement is to our country and to our economy, particularly at this time.

I'm pleased that they have worked so hard to make this happen. Getting Northwest planes and pilots back into the air is a victory for the company and for the employees and

a victory for all Americans who rely on the airline.

I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to those here in the administration who were involved in this effort: to Secretary Slater; to my Deputy White House Counsel, Bruce Lindsey, who has developed quite an expertise in this whole area. They both went to Minnesota this week at my request to help to resolve the matter. I'd also like to say a special word of thanks to my labor adviser here in the White House, Karen Tramontano, for her work.

All of them helped to spur these talks along. They deserve credit for their determination. Again, let me say that this is good news for the American people. This is an indication that the collective bargaining process, if entered into in good faith, can actually work in a way that benefits everyone. I know there are a lot of people that depend upon Northwest who are relieved tonight, and again, I just want to thank all the parties, including you, Mr. Secretary.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:53 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Randall J. Babbitt, president, Air Line Pilots Association International, and John H. Dasburg, president and chief executive officer, Northwest Airlines.

Remarks at a Democratic Business Council Reception

September 10, 1998

Thank you. It's rare for me to feel that I am at a loss for words. [*Laughter*] I can only hope you know what I'm feeling, for you and for my wife and for my country. I think you do, and I thank you more than you can possibly know.

Hillary has mentioned all the people who are responsible for this evening. I would just echo my strong note of gratitude to all of you. Congressman Markey was here—there he is. Thank you very much for being here and for your support.

There are many distinguished citizens here, but I would like to acknowledge one because he embodies to me everything that is best about America. I think he is one of the bravest human beings I've ever known, and without him, Americans with disabilities would not be where they are today: a man I had the great honor to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Mr. Justin Dart. Thank you for being here, and God bless you, sir.

In addition to Roy and Len and Carol and all the DNC officers who are here, and Tom and Mike and John and Chris, who did this weekend—you know, Steve Grossman is not here tonight, but I just want to acknowledge how hard he has worked for all of us to make our party strong.

There is one other person I want to mention. I'm glad Steve Grossman is not here tonight, because he went home to Massachusetts to Kirk O'Donnell's funeral. And a lot of you in this room knew Kirk O'Donnell. He was a magnificent human being, a great Democrat, a proud Irish-American, a passionate citizen and patriot. And this town is much the poorer for his passing.

When I called his wife the other night, I said "I'm not really a Washington insider." I think we've established that beyond any doubt. [*Laughter*] I said, "But Washington has a lot of great qualities, and maybe some that aren't so great. More than anybody I ever knew around here, I think Kirk O'Donnell had all the good and none of the bad." I'm proud he was a member of my party, and I just want to say to his wife and his two wonderful children, on behalf of a grateful nation, I thank them for his life, and I thank God for his life, and I thank Steve Grossman for representing all of us at his funeral today in Massachusetts. Thank you.

Yesterday I was in Florida, and I went to this school in Orlando. And I wish all of you had been with me. It was an elementary school that was basically a multilingual international school, where all the kids that were there had to take at least two languages, English and something else. And there were a lot of Hispanic kids there; there were a lot of Asian kids there; there were kids from South Asia; there were African-American kids there; there was every conceivable ethnic group in this little grade school in Florida. And there was a wonderful Hispanic principal—American—whose mother, the principal's mother, spoke to me in Spanish and