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upon the roll of the dice about whether every person who reviews every one of these cases in every one of these plans all across America is willing to risk his or her job in the first instance, every time, to try to resolve doubt. And some of them don't even have enough knowledge to know what to do, trying to second-guess the doctors. This is a big deal, practically.

I've heard all these arguments about how, well, you don't want too many lawsuits, and all that. Now, I'm sympathetic to that; everybody is. But look, under the law today, one of our wits said on our side the other day, the only people in Washington who can't get sued anymore are foreign diplomats and HMO's. [*Laughter*] Now, nobody wants an unnecessary lawsuit. But people have to be held accountable in these cases so that we can change the incentives.

So I ask you all to think about this. And I ask the American people to think about it. Again, it should not be a partisan issue. It has been made a partisan issue not by us but by those who would not join us. There was a bipartisan makeup on this commission that came up with this recommendation. And I promise you, in every hospital in America today there is a bipartisan makeup in the hospital beds as you walk up and down the halls and in every nursing station.

This should be an American issue. Look folks, we've got to fix this. And this election, in no small measure, will be a referendum on whether we will put people over politics, the public interest over special interest, the health of our people over a very short-sighted definition of the bottom line.

Again I say, I hope the American people will go to the polls tomorrow in large numbers, and I hope they will vote in a way that sends a signal loud and clear that America needs a real Patients' Bill of Rights. I hope the Americans who see this will remember Frances Jennings, will remember Dr. Weinmann, will remember Beverly Malone, will remember the people who give care and the people who need it, and remember what this is all about.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Frances Jennings, who introduced the President and whose husband died as a result of a delayed health care decision; Dr. Robert Weinmann, Mr. Jennings' physician; Dr. Beverly Malone, president, American Nurses Association; Gerald W. McEntee, president, and William Lucy, international secretary-treasurer, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFL–CIO); and President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

Statement on the Death of General James L. Day

November 2, 1998

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of General James L. Day, USMC (Ret). Last January, I awarded General Day our Nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor, for extraordinary heroism during the battle of Okinawa in 1945.

General Day's service did not end at Okinawa. He distinguished himself for courage and leadership in a career of service that spanned more than four decades. From World War II to Korea and Vietnam, he served his country with patriotism, dedication, and unsurpassed bravery. General Day's lifetime of achievements embodied the words, *Semper Fidelis.*

We will miss this true hero, whose selfless conduct as a Marine and citizen set a shining example for all Americans. We are grateful for all he did to preserve the freedom that is our most sacred gift. Our thoughts and prayers go to his wife, Sally, his son, Jim, and the entire Day family.

Telephone Interview With Samuel Orozco of Radio Bilingue

November 2, 1998

1998 Elections

Mr. Orozco. Is there any message you would like to send to our listeners in Radio Bilingue, Mr. President?

The President. Yes, Samuel, thank you very much. The first and most important message is to implore every person within the sound of my voice to vote on Tuesday, November 3d. November 3d is no ordinary election day, for on November 3d we will decide whether, as a nation, we focus on

progress or partisanship for the next 2 years. We will decide the direction our country will take in the new century. And it will be determined, this election, not only by who votes but by who does not vote.

I have worked very, very hard to focus on matters of importance not only to Hispanics but to all Americans. When I came into office, we had a troubled economy, a big budget deficit, high crime, and deep partisanship. And over the last 6 years, the economy has improved; the crime rate is at a 25-year low; we had the first surplus in 29 years, the lowest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years, the lowest unemployment in 28 years. But we're still fighting these partisan battles.

I want very much to have the opportunity to do what America needs. I have a plan for 100,000 teachers and smaller classes and modern schools, a plan for a Patients' Bill of Rights that guarantees the right of people in HMO's to see a specialist when they need one and to have the other medical protections they need, a plan to raise the minimum wage, a plan to save Social Security for the next century. We have to do these things and so much more.

And I think everyone within the sound of my voice understands that I and the Democrats have been fighting for this, that the Republicans have opposed us on these matters. So what I want to do is to make everyone understand that all the good things that we have done in the last couple of years, we have done in the face of intense opposition.

We got a big Hispanic education action plan passed at the end of this last Congress, because I wouldn't agree to a budget unless we put it in there—over $500 million to reduce the dropout rate and increase the college-going rate among Hispanics. We got a big initiative to reduce the naturalization backlog to make more citizens more quickly. We're moving forward in a whole range of areas.

But there is so much we will be able to do with a few more Democrats in Congress. And the kind of intense support that can come tomorrow from the Hispanic community can make a difference in California, in Illinois in the Senate race, in House races all across the United States, in New York in the very important race for the Senate there, many other places. So I believe that this election may well be riding on whether Hispanic-Americans vote.

Bilingual Education

Mr. Orozco. One issue very dear to Latino communities in our country, Mr. President, is bilingual education. Proposition 227, approved here in California, seeks to eliminate bilingual education. You have said that being able to speak more than one language is a gift that we all need. What role do you envision for the Spanish language in the U.S. in the next century, and how determined are you to stand by bilingual education?

The President. Well, as you know, I opposed Proposition 227 because I thought it was artificial. I do think all children, schoolchildren, whose native language is Spanish should become fluent in English and should be able to read, speak, and learn in English. But I believe that during that process, it's important to have effective bilingual programs.

I also believe that more and more children whose first language is not Spanish should learn to speak Spanish. I believe that more and more of our school districts, and perhaps even our States, should adopt a requirement that students, in order to get out of high school, should have 4 years of language and should demonstrate some proficiency in it. In a global economy, that would help us a lot. So I would like to see the bilingual education matter taken out of politics and put back into education.

The truth is that a lot of our children would not have to spend so long in bilingual programs if we had more well-trained bilingual education teachers who could teach the children the subjects they're learning and help them to learn English more quickly. And I think we ought to focus on the problem instead of turning it into a political football.

Immigration

Mr. Orozco. A final question, Mr. President. You have said that immigration is not only good for America, it is America. You have also enthusiastically supported the North American Free Trade Agreement, an agreement which is supposed to erase borders and bring friends together. However,

the Mexico-U.S. border is becoming a costly, dangerous, and fortified wall. What are you doing to create a friendlier border with Mexico?

The President. Well, we're trying to work with the Mexican Government more on economic and environmental projects and on building up the economy on both sides of the border so there will be less danger of drug trafficking and more possibilities for commerce that benefit both sides. The Mexican Government has begun to work with us more closely to deal with narcotrafficking, because it's a big problem in Mexico as well as the U.S.

But we can't just have a negative approach. We also have to finance more economic projects and more environmental projects along the border and make sure the border operates more smoothly. And that's what I have worked hard to do.

I think that if we can keep this global financial crisis from reaching Mexico and the rest of Latin America, that we will see over the next 5 years a marked improvement in our relationships with Mexico, a marked improvement in the Mexican economy, a smaller problem with illegal immigration, and more joint action on drug trafficking. And that is my goal.

1998 Elections

Mr. Orozco. Mr. President, tomorrow is election day. Many Latinos will vote for the first time, and they make good voters. But many hesitate because they don't believe in *políticos*. They don't believe in the promises of the politicians. What message would you have as a final message for Latino voters?

The President. Well, first of all, I think you can look at the promises I have made to the American people, including Latinos, over the last 6 years, and you can look at how many jobs have been created, how much welfare has gone down, how much unemployment has gone down, how much crime has gone down. You can look at my record on immigration. You can look at my record on appointing Hispanics to key positions in my administration. You can look at my record in fighting AIDS in the Hispanic community and my record in trying to fight for this education initiative to improve the educational prospects of young Latinos. And you can look at my record in fighting for a fair census that counts all Americans. So I'm not just a politician making promises. I have a record. I have done what I said I would do, and it has been good for the Latino community in America.

And if you look ahead, basically if you want smaller classes, more teachers, and modern schools, and you want the National Government to help, then you only have one choice, because the Democrats and I are for it; the Republicans are opposed to our initiative.

If you want a raise in the minimum wage, we're for it, and they're opposed to it. If you want to protect patients that are in managed care plans and give them the right they need to see specialists and to keep treatment going, we're for it, and they're opposed to it. If you want to see the surplus we have protected to save Social Security for the elderly, long term, and to protect the integrity of Medicare, then you should support us. If you want more done on child care to support working families with young children, we have an initiative; they're opposed to it.

So I would say, based on our record and the clear differences between parties, it is very much worth going out to vote. And if you don't vote, the consequences of not voting are that in the next 2 years the Congress will spend their time and money the same they have in the last year, which is basically fighting inside-Washington political games, trying to gain political advantage through investigations and other things, instead of doing the people's business.

So I would say there's a clear case for voting and a clear case for voting for the Democrats for Congress and Senate tomorrow. And I hope that everyone within the sound of my voice will do so.

Willie Velazquez spent his life at the Southwest Voter Education Project saying "*Su voto es su voz.*" And it's really true, and more true now than ever before.

Mr. Orozco. Mr. President, on behalf of Radio Bilingue, thank you very much.

The President. Thank you very much, Samuel. Goodbye.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 7 p.m. The President spoke by telephone from the Residence at the White House. A tape was not

available for verification of the content of this interview.

Executive Order 13105—Open Enrollment Season for Participants in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System

November 2, 1998

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including section 827 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4067) and section 292 of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964 (50 U.S.C. 2141), and in order to conform further the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability System, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. In conjunction with section 860 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4071i), the Secretary of State shall issue regulations providing for an open enrollment period from November 1, 1998, to April 30, 1999, during which employee participants in the Foreign Service Retirement and Disability System may elect to become subject to the Foreign Service Pension System.

Sec. 2 In conjunction with section 307(a) of the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement Act of 1964 (50 U.S.C. 2157(a)), the Director shall provide for an open enrollment period from November 1, 1998, to April 30, 1999, during which employee participants in the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System may elect to become subject to the Federal Employees' Retirement System, comparable to the election for civil service employees provided for by the Federal Employees' Retirement System Open Enrollment Act of 1997, Public Law 105–61.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 2, 1998.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 5, 1998]

NOTE: This Executive order was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 3, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on November 6.

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With the Economic Team and an Exchange With Reporters

November 3, 1998

Hurricane Mitch

The President. I'd like to begin by making a few comments about the tragedy that has been unfolding in Central America. Hurricane Mitch has already claimed thousands of lives in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala. Many thousands more are in urgent need of food and shelter. Across the region, communities have been devastated, bridges washed out, agriculture disrupted, schools and hospitals destroyed.

These nations are our neighbors. They all have people who are a part of our country now. They are both close to our shores and close to our hearts. We must do whatever we can to help, and we will.

Already, we have provided almost $3.5 million to airlift food, plastic sheeting, water containers, and blankets into the region. We've provided military aircraft and helicopters to get supplies to isolated areas, and deployed a disaster assistance response team to each affected country. We will be consulting with our friends in Central America and our people on the ground to see what more we can do in the days ahead.

International Economy

Now I am about to begin a meeting with my economic team to discuss a range of global economic issues. Over the long run, if our economy is to continue to grow, the economies of our trading partners must also continue to grow. Yet a full quarter of the world's population now lives in countries with declining or negative economic growth. This presents to us the biggest financial challenge in half a century.