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the President referred to Richard L. Huber, chairman and chief executive officer, Aetna, Inc.; Representative Bennie G. Thompson; and Mayor Richard M. Webster, Jr., of Clarksdale, MS. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

The President's Radio Address

July 10, 1999

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about our Nation's duty to ensure that all America's seniors can enjoy their golden years as healthy as modern medicine will allow. I want to talk about my plan to strengthen and modernize Medicare and the important steps we can take to encourage older Americans to undergo health screenings that can save their lives and improve the quality of their lives.

For 34 years now, Medicare has been the cornerstone of our efforts to protect the health of the disabled and our seniors. Last month at the White House, I unveiled a fiscally responsible plan to secure and modernize this vital program for the 21st century. The plan will strengthen Medicare by controlling cost, promoting competition, and dedicating a significant portion of the budget surplus to keeping the Trust Fund solvent until the year 2027. And my plan will modernize Medicare by matching its benefits to the latest advances of modern medicine.

Since Medicare's founding in 1965, a medical revolution has transformed health care in America. Once the cure for many illnesses was a scalpel; now, just as likely, it's a pharmaceutical. That's why I made helping seniors afford the prescription drugs essential to modern medical care a key part of the Medicare plan.

But even as we modernize Medicare with the prescription drug benefit, we also must modernize Medicare's preventive care benefits. Today, doctors have new tools to detect and prevent diseases earlier and more effectively than ever. And for millions, early detection can mean the difference between a full recovery and a bleak prognosis. For instance, if prostate cancer is caught early, the survival rate is 99 percent; but if it isn't, the rate can be a discouraging 31 percent.

In 1997 we worked across party lines to expand Medicare coverage for preventive services. But too few seniors still are using this benefit. Last year just one in seven older women received a mammogram covered by Medicare. For many seniors on fixed incomes, who every day must struggle to pay for food, rent, and other necessities, the cost of even a modest copayment can be prohibitive. And that can cost lives.

It makes no sense for Medicare to put up roadblocks to screenings and then turn around and pick up the hospital bills its screenings might have avoided. No one should have to undergo a dangerous surgical procedure that could have been prevented by a simple test. No senior should have to hesitate to get the preventive care they need. That's why my plan will eliminate the deductible in all copayments for all preventive services—for cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, and other diseases.

And because 70 percent of beneficiaries still do not even know about all of Medicare's preventive services, we'll launch a nationwide campaign to inform and encourage seniors to take these tests. We'll keep looking into ways to improve preventive care for seniors, including strategies to help them stop smoking.

In the meantime, I call on older Americans to take advantage of the preventive benefits that already are available to you. They could save your life.

We must seize America's moment of prosperity to strengthen and modernize Medicare for the 21st century. There are some who propose spending our new budget surpluses on tax cuts. Well, I support tax cuts for retirement savings, for child care, for education, but it would be wrong to spend our hard-earned surplus on tax cuts before we first have honored our obligations to our seniors and to all our families in the 21st century. First things first.

I've invited leaders of both parties to meet with me at the White House on Monday to discuss the urgency of acting on Medicare now. We have an unprecedented opportunity to prepare Medicare and Social Security for the retirement of the baby boomers and to pay down our debt—to make America debt-free over the next 15 years. We can't let this

opportunity slip away. Together, we can find a way to make this summer a true season of progress for all Americans.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 11:20 a.m. on July 9 in Room 210 at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center in Torrance, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on July 10. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 9 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

Remarks to the China and United States Women's Soccer Teams Following the World Cup Final in Pasadena, California

July 10, 1999

The President. I want to say to the whole team how much we admire your performance in the whole World Cup. You were magnificent today. And we were very honored to have you in our country. You will win many more games.

[*After greeting China's team, the President proceeded to the champion U.S. team's locker room.*]

The President. Let me say one thing. First of all, I think everybody in the whole stadium was weeping with joy. It was the most exciting sports event, I believe, I've ever seen. We were so very proud of you.

I also want you to know, I just went in to see the Chinese team. I told them what a magnificent game they played, how honored we were to have them in our country. And they could not have been more generous. They said how well you played and that you deserved to win. I mean, it was an amazing day.

We learned a lot today about soccer, about women athletes, about courage and endurance, and about genuine sportsmanship. I cannot thank you enough for the gift that you have given to the United States, which is even bigger than this great trophy. [*Applause*] Wait, wait, wait.

And you see I brought a lot of people here who are big fans of yours, but I'd like our host Governor, the Governor of California, to say——

[*At this point, Gov. Gray Davis of California made brief remarks.*]

NOTE: The President spoke to China's team at approximately 4:30 p.m. in a locker room at the Rose Bowl. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Governor Davis. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Statement on the Death of James L. Farmer

July 10, 1999

Hillary and I were greatly saddened to learn of the death of James Farmer, one of this century's pioneers for freedom. As the leader of the Congress of Racial Equality, he stood on the frontlines of the struggle for justice. At historic sit-ins, freedom rides, and countless picket lines, thousands of citizens risked their lives on behalf of basic rights, led by the inspiration of James Farmer. Their effort changed America. Through a long career as an activist, public servant, and educator, he never lost sight of the shining goal of integration and racial equality. He never stopped working to build one America. I was privileged to award him the Presidential Medal of Freedom last year. James Farmer helped to make America a better nation. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and many friends.

Interview With Bob Herbert of the New York Times in Anaheim, California

July 9, 1999

[*The interview is joined in progress.*]

New Markets Initiative

The President. ——the successful work that's been done in the empowerment zones by these community development financial institutions. If you look at the banks that have vigorously pursued the Community Reinvestment Act and what they've been able to achieve, there is a lot of evidence that this will work.

Secondly, this is not like either the Great Society of the sixties or the great neglect of