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out when it starts to burn, before the house has burned down, you're way ahead.

But these are big questions. And what I want you to do for the next year is not just to come to these parties where we're all preaching to the saved, but every one of you has a span of influence, a circle of friends, people that you meet in nonpolitical context. And you ought to tell them, first of all, that 7 years ago—people actually don't remember; it's been so good so long people don't remember—you've got to remind them that in 1992 we were facing economic distress, social decline, political division, and government was discredited. And now we've got the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years and the lowest welfare rolls in 32 years, the lowest poverty rates in 20 years and the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest minority unemployment rate ever recorded, the lowest female unemployment rate in 40 years, the lowest single-parent household poverty rate in 46 years. And the air is cleaner; the water is cleaner; the food is safer, and we've put aside more land than any administrations in the history of America, except those of Franklin and Theodore Roosevelt. We've got 150,000 young people who have served our country in AmeriCorps, and 90 percent of our kids are immunized for the first time against serious illness, and over 2 million children now have gotten health insurance under our Children's Health Insurance Program. And that's just half the story—and that we are asking the right questions, and we're the people to answer them for the future. They need to remember what it was like, what we've done, but, more important, what we think this election is about and why we're all running.

I'll tell you, I knew Dick Gephardt before I became President. He was my neighbor. He'd been to the Governor's Mansion to see me in 1988, when he was running for President. We were both less health conscious then—remember, we sat and ate french fries from McDonald's. [*Laughter*] Dick spoke at this Democratic event where he was competing with an in-State basketball rivalry on television that night and he still did a good job. And he didn't eat, and so we sat in my big kitchen at the Governor's Mansion, and we stayed up half the night talking. He is a profoundly good human being.

The thing that I am so impressed about is that he continues to grow every year as a leader. You know, once you reach a certain age and you realize that physically you're not going to get any stronger and you've got to keep working just to keep up, it's easy to stop growing personally. It's easy to stop growing in your interpersonal skills, in your leadership skills, in what you know and what you think about. This guy just keeps on going and keeps on growing. He has been indefatigable. And I trust him with the future of this country.

So I want you all to think about this. And I want you to be able to go out, every one of you, and say, "Remember what it was like? Here is what they've done. Here is what they're going to do." Elections are determined by three things: the quality of the candidates; whether you've got enough money to be heard—it's okay if the other guys have more, you just have to have enough; and, third, and most important, once those two baseline things are satisfied is what do the voters think the election is about, what is the subject of the election?

If the subject of the election is whether America is going to use this once-in-a-lifetime chance to meet the big challenges of the future, we will win because you've given us the resources to be heard and he's found the candidates to run. And believe me, you owe it to these little kids in this room and people like them all across this country.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:35 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner hosts Terence and Dorothy McAuliffe and their daughter Mary; and former Representative Jane Harman. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Excerpts of an Interview With Peter Jennings of ABC News

December 16, 1999

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Mr. Jennings. This room, sir, this fireplace and others in the White House obviously remind me of President Roosevelt. His relationship with the public was of such a

magnitude that people, in many cases, thought he was a god, placed absolute faith in him. Do you think there will ever be a time when another American President gets that kind of commitment?

The President. If the country is under that kind of threat. It was in this room that President Roosevelt gave his fireside chats. And keep in mind, he took our Nation through two huge threats: first, the Depression, where 25 percent of our people were out of work, for the only time in our history; and second, in the Second World War, with Hitler and the Axis powers.

I think the people in this country are—they nearly always get it right if they have enough information and enough time. They're very hard to stampede. And I think they would follow a good leader in a tough time like that.

Cynicism

The President. When I leave the White House, I will be more idealistic about the American people and the American system of government than I was when I showed up here. And I think cynicism is a cop-out and a refuge now. I think skepticism is good. I think demythologizing is good. I think cynicism, because it's fundamentally a negative and self-defeating emotion and it gives you an excuse not to think, is stupid.

Mr. Jennings. I don't mean to belabor the point, nor will I, but I think many Americans believe that you contributed to cynicism about politics. And I assume if there's anything you could take back over the last several years it would be the Lewinski affair.

The President. Why should you be cynical? If someone makes a mistake, and they say they make a mistake, and they do their best to atone for it, then you can say, "Well, people aren't perfect, and I'm disappointed." But that shouldn't make you cynical about the American political system, the American system of government.

Berlin Wall

Mr. Jennings. I'd just like to pick a couple things that the century will always be remembered for and get your take on them. What did the Berlin Wall mean to you?

The President. It was the symbol of what was wrong with communism. It was about control and keeping people back and keeping people in. You know, John Kennedy had that wonderful line in his speech, "Freedom has many difficulties, and our democracy is far from perfect. But we never had to put up a wall to keep our people in."

Atomic Bomb

Mr. Jennings. What difference did the atomic bomb make?

The President. It reminded us that we had the capacity to destroy ourselves completely, and it humbled people. And I think that's very important, because people with power—and I include myself—you give anybody a lot of power, and if they're not careful, they will make arrogant decisions, unheedful of the most fundamental desire of people—to have life and liberty and to enjoy the blessings of normal life.

The President. We will look back at the development of the atomic bomb in some ways as one of the most humbling events in all of human history, because we finally had to come face to face with the fact that we could take it all away. You know? Beyond the gas chambers, beyond the pogroms, beyond the killing fields of the Somme and the Marne in World War I, we could actually make it all go away. And I think it sobered the world up in a way that was oddly reassuring.

NOTE: The interview began at approximately 10 a.m. on December 16 in the Diplomatic Reception Room at the White House. The transcript of these excerpts was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 18. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Memorandum on Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act

December 17, 1999

Presidential Determination No. 00–08

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 7(a) of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–45) (the "Act"), I hereby determine that it is necessary to protect the national security interests of the United States to suspend for a period of 6 months the limitations set forth in section 3(b) and 7(b) of the Act.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress, accompanied by a report in accordance with section 7(a) of the Act, and to publish the determination in the *Federal Register*.

This suspension shall take effect after transmission of this determination and report to the Congress.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 18.

The President's Radio Address

December 18, 1999

Good morning. The holiday season is a time when America's remarkable religious diversity shines brightest in so many homes and different places of worship and schools. Today I want to talk to you about the role of faith in our lives, in all of our religious diversity, and, particularly, in the education of our children.

America's founders were men and women of faith, many of whom fled oppression overseas to find freedom on our shores. They believed the best way to protect religious liberty was to guarantee, first of all, the right to practice religion by the dictates of their own conscience; and second, to forbid our Government from imposing or establishing any religious belief. In their wisdom, they enshrined these two principles in our Constitution.

But, of course, reconciling these principles has not always been easy, especially when it comes to our education system. Finding the proper place for faith in our schools is a complex and emotional matter for many Americans. But I have never believed the Constitution required our schools to be religion-free zones or that our children must check their faiths at the schoolhouse door.

Americans expect our schools to teach our children the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life. We also trust our schools to strengthen the moral foundation of our society, to reinforce the values taught at home and in our communities.

Studies show that children involved in religious activities are less likely to use drugs. Experience tells us they're more likely to stay out of trouble. Common sense says that faith and faith-based organizations from all religious backgrounds can play an important role in helping children to reach their fullest potential. That's why I've always supported individual students' rights to voluntarily practice religious beliefs, including prayer in school or to engage in religious activities on school grounds, but not to have any kind of enforced such activities.

Now, in 1995 our administration released a set of principles for protecting religious freedom in our public schools. We did so in response to parents and educators who asked for help in knowing what kinds of religious activities are permissible in public schools and what is not permissible. They asked for help in respecting the rights and beliefs of all students, from the most observant from all religious backgrounds to those who choose freely, as is their right, to completely abstain from any religious activity.

Those guidelines we issued make it clear that students do have the right to pray privately and individually in school, the right to say grace at lunch, the right to meet in religious groups on school grounds and to use school facilities just like any other groups do. They have the right to read the Bible or other religious books during study hall or free class time and the right to be free from coercion to participate in religious activity of any kind.