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recovery in our history: What are we going to do with it? Now is the time to think about the big challenges. What are the big challenges our kids face? How are we going to deal with the retirement of the baby boom generation? How are we going to grow the economy and continue to improve the environment? Big, big challenges.

And you are so lucky to be backing someone who not only has a distinguished career in public service, a proven ability to make progress, but a life story which guarantees that even in these good times, she won't forget what our shared mission is. That is a great privilege. You ought to make sure the people of Delaware take full advantage of it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:09 p.m. in the ballroom at the Washington Court Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Thomas R. Carper of Delaware; and Lieutenant Governor Minner's sons Wayne and Gary Ingram. Ruth Ann Minner was a candidate for Governor.

Remarks at a Reception Honoring Representative Maxine Waters

February 22, 2000

Thank you. When Maxine said, you know, she looked at me like that, and I said what I said—[*laughter*]—I looked at Sidney, and I said, ''Does she ever look at you that way?'' [*Laughter*] He said, ''After 30 years, what do you think?'' [*Laughter*]

Let me say, first of all, on the way over here with Minyon Moore, my political director, and Lynn Cutler, from the White House, I told Minyon—she said, ''You know, you're not running for anything, and you're still out doing these things.'' I said, ''Let me tell you something. Maxine gets mad at me, but she was with me from the get-go in 1991, and she was with me on June 2, 1992, in California, after the California primary, when I was nominated and all the press wrote that I was actually the third choice of the country, Ross Perot was going to be the next President.'' And that was just between June and November. Caution: don't predict too much about this year—remember that. [*Laughter*]

So we've had this wonderful relationship. It has been full, rich, and honest. [*Laughter*] And I have loved it. I told Maxine, one time she was mad at me, I said, ''You know, Sidney is an Ambassador, and he doesn't talk to me that way.'' [*Laughter*] And she said, ''Well, he's a diplomat. I'm a politician.'' [*Laughter*] I've got 11 months. If I keep plugging, I'm finally going to win one of these arguments. [*Laughter*] I'm really working on it.

I want to thank my great friends Eleanor Holmes Norton and Elijah Cummings for being here. And Ron Dellums, we're glad to see you, and thank you for the copy of your book. It's at your local bookstores—[*laughter*]—I recommend you buying this book. I figure I might as well turn this into a two-fer tonight. [*Laughter*]

And let me say to all of you who are here who have been my friends over these years, I thank you very much. I'm honored to be here. I thank you for supporting Maxine, and I thank her for supporting others. I think we're all here because she's so feisty and full of conviction, and because as the years go by she seems to get healthier and more beautiful—[*laughter*]—and more full of energy. She and Sidney, both of them look better than they did the first time I saw them, and that's saying something. [*Laughter*] And I thought they looked pretty good then.

But we need to remember, in times where all of us have been fortunate enough to come to a place like this, an event like this, that we got here by working hard and by working together on good ideas based on our shared values. And now is not the time to stop doing that. Now is not the time to relax or to become diverted.

The other day I said—some of you were at the White House, I think, the other day when we celebrated Black History Month, and I read my radio address. But I want to say that when we celebrated, this month, the longest economic expansion in our history, I went back—and I was curious, so I said, I wondered when the longest expansion in our history was before we got to this month and ours took over. And it was, interestingly enough, between 1961 and 1969. And those of you who were of age then will remember that.

I graduated from high school in 1964. Our country had gone through the terrible trauma of President Kennedy's assassination. We had

rallied behind President Johnson. I thought then, and I believe now, he did a magnificent job of unifying the country and saying we had to take up the unfinished agenda of America. And he began to push that civil rights legislation through Congress.

And we really believed—my group of young people did, when I went out into the world as a high school senior graduate in '64—we had low unemployment, high growth, low inflation, the Congress dealing in a legal way with the civil rights challenge, and the country was militarily strong, and we thought we could prevail in the cold war. And we thought everything was going to be just fine.

A couple of years later, in southern California, we had riots in the streets. A couple years later, I graduated from college—2 days after Bobby Kennedy was murdered, 2 months after Martin Luther King was murdered, 9 weeks after Lyndon Johnson said he wouldn't run for President anymore, just a few months before Richard Nixon was elected President on the first sort of divide-and-conquer theme of modern politics called the silent majority. You remember that? If there's a silent majority, there's got to be a loud minority, and it's us versus them. And just shortly after that we lost that economic expansion.

What's all that got to do with this? Eleven months from now I'll be a citizen again. I'm talking to you as a citizen now. I have waited over 30 years for my country to be in a position to build the future of our dreams for our children. We had a chance in the early sixties, but we couldn't manage. The cold war turned hot in Vietnam; the political system breaking down over civil rights at home; and we lost our economic prosperity and our social progress and our political cohesion. And I have waited—as a citizen, not a politician—for 30 years for America to have that chance again.

And it's easier for us now because of the struggles many of you have undertaken over the last 30 years, because the cold war is over. And we will never forgive ourselves if we don't take this chance to build the future of our dreams; say, what are those big issues out there?

Okay, we've got the largest number of kids we ever had in our schools, and they're the most racially, ethnically, religiously diverse. How are we going to give them all a world-class education?

Okay, we've got the crime rate going down, got people like Maxine turning these kids away from gangs toward better lives. How can we now make all our streets safe and America the safest big country in the world?

Okay, we're going to double the number of people over 65 in 30 years. I hope to be one of them. [*Laughter*] How are we going to take care of them without bankrupting their children and their children's ability to raise their grandchildren?

Okay, we've got the best economy we've ever had, but what about all the people and places—the urban neighborhoods, the Indian reservations, the poor rural areas—that haven't been caught up in this?

Okay, we've got former welfare recipients making a living on eBay. What about the people that haven't bridged the digital divide? A lot of you talked to me about that last night—tonight, I mean.

And you can add your own list. We proved we could grow the economy and clean up the environment, but we're still burning up the atmosphere. How are we going to turn this climate change thing around and still keep giving people a chance to make a living?

There are big questions out there. But unlike the 1960's, we are not as torn by internal crisis or external threat—not that there are no crises, not that there is no threat, but they're not of the same dimension. And we all—all of us who lived through that ought to be humble enough to know that we have a chance—and for us, a second chance—to do something that comes along maybe once in a lifetime for a great country.

I feel that in these 7 years, you know, I've worked and worked and worked to kind of turn the country around economically, to move things in the right direction socially, to try to pull us back together politically, to try to be a force for peace around the world, and integrate us with the rest of the world. Maxine mentioned Africa, and I appreciate that.

But I think now, like, America is ready, you know, to do these big things. And so tonight I speak to you not—mostly not just as President but as someone who remembers what it was like to be 18 years old in 1964; to weep over a lost President, believing things could be made right and then to watch everything come apart.

We've waited a long time. Maxine, Elijah, Eleanor—they're going to carry this banner. It matters what happens in this Presidential race. It matters what happens in these congressional races. It matters whether we count everybody in the census. It matters who gets elected in the Governors' races. And it matters whether we say, ''Hey, we do remember. We've not taking this for granted. We're not being arrogant; we're not being self-satisfied. We know we've got a second chance. And we're going to make the most of it.''

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:19 p.m. in the Salon B Room at the Four Seasons Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Waters' husband, Ambassador to the Bahamas Sidney Williams, and former Representative Ronald V. Dellums. Representative Waters was a candiate for reelection in California's 35th Congressional District.

Remarks at a Welcoming Ceremony for King Juan Carlos I of Spain

February 23, 2000

Your Majesties, members of the Spanish delegation, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the people of the United States, I am delighted to welcome the King and Queen of Spain back to America.

A quarter century ago the very first trip King Juan Carlos made overseas after his proclamation as King was to the United States. Your Majesty, we are honored that you have decided to celebrate the anniversary of that journey and the friendship between our nations by making America your first stop overseas in the new century.

In the life of every democracy there are defining moments that stand above the rest—Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg; Lech Walesa raising a fist in a Polish shipyard; students standing with sledgehammers atop the Berlin Wall; Nelson Mandela taking the oath of office as President of South Africa. Nineteen years ago, on this very day, Spain had one of those moments. In the early evening hours of February 23, 1981, 200 armed militia in Madrid stormed the Parliament in a coup. They fired automatic weapons. They took every major elected figure in Spain hostage. Many feared Spain's 2-year-old experiment with democracy was over.

But when angry generals urged King Juan Carlos to join their rebellion, he replied defiantly, ''Your coup will succeed over my dead body.'' He rallied the people of Spain. He appealed to the military sense of honor. He stood strong, and less than 24 hours after it began, the coup was over.

Freedom was secure in Spain. And less than a decade later, when freedom was reborn in Eastern Europe, the newest democracies could look to Spain as their example. When the task of building an undivided, democratic, peaceful Europe is completed, all friends of freedom will owe a very great debt to King Juan Carlos.

Your Majesty, for more than five centuries now, our two nations have been united by a common history. Today, we also are united by common values and common responsibilities. In Kosovo, Spanish pilots, soldiers, and police have performed with great bravery, and in April, a Spanish commander will assume the command of KFOR. In Latin America, we have stood together, supporting hurricane victims in Honduras and Guatemala and flood victims in Venezuela, promoting a better life for the people of Colombia, advancing the cause of human rights in Cuba.

Your Majesty, on this lawn almost a quarter century ago, you said that your greatest wish then was that your visit—and I quote—''would contribute to reinforcing the bonds of friendship between us, for the good of our two countries and all those who aspire to attain the same ideals of faith, freedom, and justice.'' Your Majesty, your visit then, and all your work since, have strengthened our bonds of friendship. As you continue to lead your nation and to stand against the forces of terror and the enemies of peace and freedom, may your words be our hope and our