

But mostly, if you have kids, tonight when you go home, look at them, and remember what I told you: I've waited 35 years for this chance. I don't know when it will come again. And we can't pay any attention to the polls or anything else. We've just got to get up and saddle up and fight for their future. And if we do, we win.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:55 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to singer Kenneth Edmonds, popularly known as Babyface, and his wife, Tracy, dinner hosts; Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Terence McAuliffe, chair, Democratic National Convention Committee 2000; Donna L. Brazile, campaign manager, Gore 2000; and Yolanda Caraway, president, Caraway Group. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Internet Webcast

June 24, 2000

Good morning. Here in America, a revolution in technology is underway. It is more than a time of innovation; it's a time of fundamental transformation, the kind that happens, at most, every hundred years. Today, in my first Saturday webcast, I'd like to speak to you about how we can seize the potential of this information revolution to widen the circle of our democracy and make our Government much more responsive to the needs of our citizens.

Early in our history, people often had only one option when they needed the help of the National Government. They had to visit a Government office and stand in line. Indeed, as Vice President Gore has pointed out, after the Civil War the only way our veterans could collect their pensions was by traveling all the way to Washington, DC, and waiting for a clerk to dig out their war records. Those war records were actually bound in red tape. That gave rise to the universal symbol of bureaucratic delay that has existed down to the present day.

Thankfully, things have gotten a lot easier for citizens over the years. In recent years, advances in computing and information technology have led to remarkable gains. Under the leadership of Vice President Gore, we have greatly expanded the spread of informa-

tion technology throughout the Government, cutting reams of redtape, putting vast resources at the fingertips of all of our citizens. Citizens now are using Government websites to file their taxes, compare their Medicare options, apply for student loans, and find good jobs. They're tapping into the latest health research and browsing vast collections in the Library of Congress and following along with NASA's missions in outer space. This is just the beginning.

Today I'm pleased to announce several major steps in our efforts to go forward in creating a high-speed, high-tech, user-friendly Government. First, we're going to give our citizens a single, customer-focused website where they can find every on-line resource offered by the Federal Government.

This new website, FirstGov.gov, will be created at no cost to the Government by a team led by Eric Brewer, who developed one of the most successful Internet search technologies with the help of Government grants. In the spirit of cutting through redtape, this new website will be created in 90 days or less. It will uphold the highest standards for protecting the privacy of its users.

When it's complete, FirstGov will serve as a single point of entry to one of the largest, perhaps the most useful collection of webpages in the entire world. Whether you want crucial information in starting a small business or you want to track your Social Security benefits, you can do it all in one place, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Second, now that we're poised to create one-stop shopping for Government services, we'll also greatly expand the scope of those services. Increasingly, we'll give our citizens not only the ability to send and receive information but also to conduct sophisticated transactions on-line.

For example, this year the Federal Government will award about \$300 billion in grants and buy \$200 billion in goods and services. Over the coming year, we will make it possible for people to go on-line and compete for these grants and contracts through a simplified electronic process. Moving this enormous volume of business on-line will save a great deal of money and time for our taxpayers. It will also expand opportunities for community groups, small businesses, and

citizens who never before have had a chance to show what they can do.

Third, in conjunction with the nonprofit Council for Excellence in Government, we're launching a major competition to spur new innovative ideas for how Government can serve and connect with our citizens electronically. The Council will award up to \$50,000 to those students, researchers, private sector workers, or Government employees who present the most creative ideas.

In the early years of our Republic, Thomas Jefferson said, "America's institutions must move forward hand in hand with the progress of the human mind." Well, today, the progress of the human mind is certainly racing forward at breakneck speed. If we work together, we can ensure that our democratic institutions keep pace. With your help, we can build a more perfect, more responsive democracy for the information age.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President's webcast was recorded at 3:15 p.m. on June 23 at a private residence in Los Angeles, CA, for broadcast at 10 a.m. on June 24. In his remarks, he referred to Eric Brewer, cofounder, Inktomi. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 23 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

The President's Radio Address

June 24, 2000

Good morning. This week we mark the beginning of summer, another summer of national prosperity, continuing the longest economic expansion in our history. The big question now is what we intend to do with this economic prosperity. One of our most pressing needs, clearly, is providing voluntary prescription drug coverage under Medicare for older Americans. We should do it this year.

The American people have made their feelings clear. They know our seniors are paying too much for prescription drugs that help them live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives. Three in five older Americans don't have dependable insurance coverage for prescriptions, and too many seniors simply aren't getting the drugs they need.

Again and again I've said it should be a high priority to add a prescription drug benefit to Medicare this year. But we must do it the right way, by making the benefit affordable and available for everyone who needs it.

I'm deeply concerned that the proposal House Republicans put forward this week will take us down the wrong road. What they have proposed is not a Medicare benefit; it's a private insurance program which many seniors and people with disabilities simply won't be able to afford. It will not offer dependable coverage to every American in every part of the country. Rural Americans will be at particular risk because private insurance is often unavailable to them or very, very expensive.

The plan doesn't ensure that seniors will be able to use the local pharmacist they trust. Insurance companies have already said this model won't work. It benefits the companies who make the drugs, not the older Americans who need to take the drugs.

There is a better way. I propose giving all our seniors the option of a prescription drug benefit through Medicare, wherever they live, however sick they may be. My plan would be affordable and dependable and give every senior equal coverage.

Because our economy is so strong and because we worked hard to put the Medicare Trust Fund back on sound footing, we have the money to do this now and do it right. We should use a part of our hard-earned budget surplus to meet America's most pressing priorities, like paying down the national debt, strengthening Medicare, and providing a prescription drug benefit.

That's why next week I will propose using the surplus to improve my plan. I will unveil specific protections for catastrophic drug expenses to ensure that no senior pays more than \$4,000 in prescription drugs and keeping premiums at \$25 a month. And I'll propose making that benefit in the full prescription drug initiative available in 2002, instead of 2003. To do that, I'll ask Congress to add about \$58 billion to our funding for Medicare over the next 10 years.

Providing a voluntary prescription drug benefit is only one of the challenges we must