

Now, that's what I'm asking you to do. Go out of here and engage these people and say, "Listen, we are moving this economy, we're moving on the problems of the country, we're changing the way the Government works, but we had better behave as citizens the way we try to teach our children to behave as human beings and the way we try to run the rest of our lives." You do that, and the Democrats are coming back.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. at the Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Don Fowler, chairman, Democratic National Committee; Bill Press, chairman, and Arlene Holt, first vice chair, California Democratic Party; Willie L. Brown, Jr., California State Assembly speaker; and Bill Lockyer, California State Senate president pro tem.

Remarks at the National Education Association School Safety Summit in Los Angeles, California

April 8, 1995

Thank you. Thank you for your welcome. Thank you for your work. Thank you for that very moving film. Thank you, Keith Geiger, for your introduction and for your outstanding leadership of this organization. You know, Keith Geiger is quite a gardener, and it's quite a beautiful day. It shows you how devoted he is that he's even inside, much less giving a speech. [Laughter] Thank you, Dick Riley, for such a wonderful job as Secretary of Education and for those fine remarks. Senator Carol Moseley-Braun, I'm delighted to see you. We're a little out of place here today. It's actually a pretty good time to be in Washington, DC. The cherry blossoms are out—and so is Congress. [Laughter] It's a pretty good time to be there. [Laughter] I know there are a lot of Los Angeles county supervisors and city council members here today, and I see your distinguished police chief. I know there are other—[applause]—and I thank you for being here, sir.

I also know that this is not just a gathering of teachers. There are a lot of school support folks here and parents and police officers and concerned citizens about a subject that I care

a great deal about as you could see from the film that was put together by the NEA.

Shortly before the New Hampshire primary in 1992, I was walking in a hotel one night in New York, and some of you may remember, since you helped me, that I was not doing very well then, and my political obituary was being written over and over again. [Laughter] "Will he fall into single digits in New Hampshire, or will he hang on at 11 percent?" And I was feeling pretty sorry for myself. And we were having this big fundraiser in New York, and for all I knew, there wouldn't be three people there. And they took me in the back way, you know, and I walked through the kitchen, totally preoccupied with my own problems.

And all of a sudden this gentleman who was working in the hotel came up to me and said, "Governor, my boy, who is 10, he studies politics in the school, and he says I should vote for you." "So," he says, "I'm going to vote for you." "But" he said, "I want you to do something for me." I said, "What is it?" He said, "I want you to make my boy free."

I said, "Well, what do you mean?" He said, "Well, I came here from another country, and we were very poor there, but at least we were free." He said, "Now we live in a place where we have a park across the street, but my boy can't go to the park unless I go with him to protect him. We have a neighborhood school that's just down the street, but my boy can't go to school unless I walk with him. If my boy is not safe, he is not free. So, if I vote for you as he asks, will you make my boy free?"

And the first thing I felt, frankly, was shame that I was preoccupied with my own problems. And the second thing I thought was, you know, how can we have learning in this country until our children are free?

Now, we're having this huge debate in Washington about what the role of Government ought to be. Yesterday at the American Newspaper Editors Association in Dallas, I had a chance to say where I stood on the issues remaining, both in the Republican contract and in the New Covenant that I ran on in 1992.

We know that we have a lot of economic challenges, that we have to grow the middle

class and shrink the under class and make America a good place for a new generation of entrepreneurs. We know that the Government is not well-organized for the information age and it needs to be less bureaucratic and more flexible.

But we also know, I take it, that there are two great obligations that we must, we must pursue as a people, and they are related and they come together here. The first is that we have to enhance the security of our people, not only beyond our borders, but here at home as well. And the second is that we have to empower them all through education to succeed in a world where education, more than ever before, is the key, not only to whether a society succeeds, but whether individuals can live up to their own dreams.

Today, you are coming to talk about both things. You can't succeed in school if you're not secure when you're there, and we can't expect our schools to be safe unless we do more to make our communities safe and our homes safe. So you are dealing with two of the great questions of this time. I applaud you for doing it. This is a very impressive program, and I wish you well.

Last year I fought hard to pass that crime bill because it was comprehensive, because it did have tougher punishment and more prisons, but it also put another 100,000 police on our street in community settings so we could lower crime and make people safer, because it had provisions for making our schools safer, because it had a domestic violence component for violence against women and children.

And the Secretary and I fought very hard for the Safe and Drug Free Schools Act which would provide funds to over 90 percent in our school districts to help to keep the schools safe, whether it would be in the form of security officers or security equipment or other things designed to make our schools safer and more free of drugs.

As we debate all these issues, it's important not to forget that the first mission of Government is to keep its citizens safe within rules of law, and our second mission is to meet the challenges of the time. The challenges of this time are the challenges of education. And we cannot do one without the other.

One of the most disturbing things in America today is the fact that there's so much social tension growing directly out the fact that most wages for most middle class people have been stagnant for more than 10 years. More than half the American people today are working a longer workweek for the same or lower wages they were making 15 years ago.

When you think about every political issue that's being faced in this country that is divisive, if you just imagine that fact, it explains a lot. It explains a lot about the anxiety, the resentment, the frustrations that people have in this country.

But whatever the debates are, we have to say, let's don't do stupid things. Let's invest more time, effort, resources, organization, and passion into making our people safer and educating our people better.

I want to cut spending. Senator Carol Moseley-Braun could tell you the story. We just had—I was just with Senator Boxer up at the California Democratic Convention, and she was talking about this. We had a big debate about how we could lower the spending in this year's budget more, in the so-called rescission bill to pay for the California earthquake costs and some other expenses we had and reduce the deficit a little more. And we got this bill originally from the House that was going to cut all kinds of education funding and cut funding for safe and drug-free schools, at a time when drug use is going back up among young people who have forgotten that is not only illegal, it is dangerous and stupid, and violence is a real problem.

So we worked and worked and worked. When the bill got over to the Senate, the Senate Republicans put some money back in, and then we insisted, if you're one of the Democrats to let it come to a vote, they'd have to put some more money—put the money back. So the money got put back.

But my point is, that in Washington, where we're so far away from these problems—you heard—I can't remember whether it was Keith or whoever, said it out here, that a lot of people who might pontificate about schools, never have been in a classroom. Well, I have been. I dare say I've probably spent more hours in more classrooms in more States than any person who ever had

the privilege of holding this office. And it is so easy to see where people in Washington—they get on a tear—that judgment goes out the window.

The Republicans used to attack the Democrats because they said they never met a program they didn't like. They were great at starting programs, but they couldn't stop them. Their solution to everything was to spend more money on it. Well, now the rage is, we never met a program we did like, and their solution to everything is spend less money on it. What we need is judgment. What we need is judgment. We need to reduce the deficit, but we need to invest more in education and we need to invest more in security. Because those two things, together, will determine our future.

I think you had somebody from the Centers of Disease Control in Atlanta earlier today. They are releasing today their preliminary report on school-related violent deaths. They have identified 105 violent school-related deaths in just the last 2 years. And they've shown that violence threatens schools and communities of all shapes and sizes. We know there are common elements to violent deaths among young people; the victim and the assailant usually know each other, they are usually the same race, and they're usually male. The incident starts as an argument, and there's usually a firearm involved.

Schoolyard fights have been around as long as schoolyards. But it used to be, when I got in them at least, that when kids got in fights, they found with their fists and adults broke them up.

Today, there are guns on the playground, guns in the classroom, guns on the bus. And as was pointed out in the film, 7 times more often, there are knives there. So as a result, serious injury and death and terror are far more likely to occur.

You know, the thing about being young is you think you're going to live forever, whatever is inside you working around is rushing at high tide, and the future is what happens 5 minutes from now. [*Laughter*] That's why our job is to calm people down and make them think about what happens 5 years and 10 years and 15 years from now. And we all have a fair chance to do it, unless they can do unlimited damage in the 5 seconds be-

tween when they start and when somebody else can get there. With a knife or a gun you can do unlimited damage.

I'll never forget when I was running for President, I gave a speech in New York City at a school. And I was talking about Martin Luther King, and everybody seemed so moved. And 2 weeks later, a kid got killed right in the same place I was standing.

I met a young man in northern California who had changed schools because his school was so violent, with his brother. And they were standing in line to register for class in the other school, and his brother got shot, this time by a stranger, just some nut walked in and got in a fight, his brother happened to be standing in the way.

The CDC found that in 1990, 1 in 24 students carried a gun to school in the 30 days before their study. In 1991, 1 in 18 carried a gun. Last week, the CDC reported that in 1993, 1 in 12 students carried a gun. That's more people than are packing a gun on the street. That's a higher percentage.

This is a national crisis. It requires a national response. It requires all kinds of people to be involved. Guns have no place in our schools and have no place in the hands of our children. If we don't stop this, we can't make the schools safe. We've always had bipartisan support for zero tolerance of guns in our schools. We ought to keep it that way. In 1990, a Democratic Congress passed a law creating gun-free zones around our schools, and President Bush signed it. At this moment, my administration is supporting that law all the way to the Supreme Court.

The crime bill we passed last year makes it a Federal crime for a young person to carry a handgun except when supervised by an adult. Last fall, we passed a law requiring States to adopt a simple but powerful rule: If somebody brings a gun to school, they'll be expelled for a year, no excuses. Senator Feinstein sponsored that law. Zero tolerance works. In 1993 in San Diego, the first year of the policy, the number of guns in schools was cut in half. This school year, authorities have found only five guns in the entire school system. It works.

That's why I directed Secretary Riley to enforce one rule for the whole country. If a State doesn't comply with zero tolerance,

it won't get certain important Federal educational funds, period. I have been very strong in giving more flexibility to schools, more flexibility to school districts, more flexibility to States, and more flexibility to State governments in a whole wide range of areas.

I've given 25 States permission to pursue welfare reform, 7 States permission to pursue big health care reform. And the education legislation we adopted last year, while enshrining then national education goals, gave local schools more flexibility in deciding how to educate their children than ever before. But this problem deserves and, indeed, requires a national response. Zero tolerance, there is no other rational option.

I also want to say something on behalf of the principals and the teachers who are here and even their security forces and their metal detectors. This is not just a school problem, this is a social problem. That's why we have to support the efforts of our police chiefs, our sheriffs, and our others to adopt policies that will lower the crime rate throughout our communities and throughout our country.

That's why it is important to support the work that was done in the crime bill last year. That's why it's important to support the work of people struggling to reduce domestic violence throughout our country. The schools will have violence and weapons and trouble as long as our society has them.

We can do better in the schools; to be sure we can do better. But we have to recognize it will never be a problem that is gone until we do better beyond the schoolhouse door. Parents have to teach their children right from wrong. Parents have to get involved, and community leaders have to get involved. We cannot expect the schools to do it all.

In the end, this country has got to get mobilized around this issue. I just studied about a year ago—I sat down one day and really looked at the differences between the 1980 and the 1990 census. And if you can bear to look at all of those numbers, you can see a lot about what's going on in your country. It is perfectly clear that the middle class in America is splitting apart. And that is what is giving rise to all of these social tensions.

From the year I was born until 1978 or so, we all rose together; in all income groups we rose together. We just about doubled our

income, no matter whether we were in the top 20 percent, the bottom 20 percent, or someplace in between. Except the bottom 20 percent increased almost time and a half what they had been earlier. So we were going up and going together.

Then, in 1978 or thereabouts, an amazing thing started to happen. Income stagnation among a lot of working people meant that for the first time since the end of the Second World War, the middle class started to split apart, so that this idea of the American dream began to be thwarted in family after family after family after family. Don't kid yourselves, that's really behind all this tension on affirmative action. That's really behind a lot of this tension and anxiety on immigration. It's behind a lot of this. There are too many families out here headed by people who think they have done everything they're supposed to do, who are living on the same or lower wages with a high level of job insecurity who don't believe they can do right by their children. Now, that's what's going on.

But the fault line dividing the middle class and the global economy is education. It's education. The only way we can offer hope to people of a successful life in the face of all these changes, the only way we can tell people you can seize all these wonderful things about the global economy is if we can educate everybody. And the only way we can do that is if we can make our schools safe and give childhood back to our children.

If there ever was an example of what I have been trying to preach for 3 or 4 years now, that we need a new covenant among our people of opportunity and responsibility, this is it. Education is an opportunity. Lawfulness is a responsibility. And you cannot have one without the other. I will do everything I can to support you. I ask that you do only this, whether you are a Republican or a Democrat or an Independent, ask our Congress to work with me to find ways to cut this deficit without undermining our investment in either education or security. We must go forward together.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:24 p.m. at the Century Plaza Hotel and Towers.

Remarks at the United Jewish Fund Luncheon in Los Angeles

April 9, 1995

Thank you very much, Peter, for your very fine introduction. To you and Gloria, to Irwin and Helgar Field, to our good friends Senator Boxer and Congressman Berman and his wife, Janice, Lew and Edie Wasserman and Barbra Streisand and all the others who have come here to be with us today and mostly to all of you for inviting Hillary and me to share this moment with you, I thank you.

The terrible incident of violence upon the people of Israel which reached today also to some Americans who were also affected, gives me a way of beginning what I came here to say to you. I offer my condolences and the condolences of the American people to the people of Israel and the Government of Israel as well as to the American citizens and their families who were affected by this attack.

Once more, the enemies of peace have sought to abuse the opportunity peace presents, to kill it, to kill hope, to kill all possibility of a normal life for the people of Israel, for the Palestinians who are struggling to do the right thing there, and for, indeed, people throughout the Middle East who can see a permanent and lasting peace within their grasp.

As we give our sympathies to those who have suffered and died and their families, let us stiffen our resolve to say to those who seek to abuse human life so that they can continue to kill and continue to keep peace from people who want it: You will not succeed. You must not succeed.

I ask you to think today for a few moments about the connection between what you hope will happen in the Middle East—what I have worked for as your President in terms of peace in the Middle East and Northern Ireland and South Africa and Haiti, worked for to reduce the nuclear threat in North Korea and to be able to say that this is the first time since the dawn of the nuclear age when no Russian missiles are pointed at the children of America—what is the connection between all of this and the work you have done here at home? The literally tens of millions of dollars that you have raised for any num-

ber of worthy public purposes and the partnerships that you have had with our Government, our National, State, and local governments, serving families, resettling refugees, helping the elderly and the sick, promoting education, and of course, as Mr. Gold said, dealing with the aftermath of the terrible earthquake; even the help you sent to the people of Rwanda and those who were affected by the Kobe earthquake—what is the connection between these two things?

You have a sense of mission and purpose. You know that it is for all of us to make the most of our God-given capacities, but that we can only do it if we work together with some common purpose. I believe that the role of our Government must be as a partner to people like you, people who are willing to give of your time and your money and your heart and soul to try to solve the problems of other people because you think your life will be richer and stronger as well, not—to use your phrase, sir—not because it's a matter of charity but because it's a matter of justice.

I have done what I could to be a good partner, and I thank you for what you said about the earthquake. We worked hard there. And we continue to work hard to make sure that all the consequences of the quake will be overcome and that the future will be bright.

What I want to say to you today is that if you look at the economic problems and the social problems tearing America apart, if you look at the level of violence and gangs and drugs among our children, the number of children who are born out of wedlock, if you look at the problems we have with stagnant incomes, and then you look on the other side of the ledger at the fact that we are creating new businesses at a record rate, we are creating new millionaires at a record rate, our country has the lowest combined rate of unemployment and inflation that we've had in 25 years, you might ask yourself, how can this global economy, how can the end of the cold war, how can the transfer from the industrial age to the information age bring us so much good and leave so many problems in its wake?

If you look at the Middle East, you see that the very act of making peace has made