

they'll ask me, "How did you have 9.7 million new jobs in America in the last 3 years?" You know how many—the largest 7 economies in the world have created a total of 10 million jobs in the last 3½ years, 9.7 in the United States. And that's something you can be proud of.

But if you want this country to grow together, if you want these children to have the kind of future when their children are this age, to see America leading the world for peace and freedom, then we have got to recognize that education for everybody, more of it and better, is the central most important thing we can do to make sure that we go into the 21st century able to meet our challenges and protect our values.

And all of you, because of this experience, all these Presidential scholars because they're now Presidential scholars, and all of you who helped them along the way because you're their family members or you're their teacher, you can have a unique amount of influence in your communities to make sure that we all rededicate our efforts not to leave any child behind, not to leave any stone unturned in opening all the opportunity we can. There is no stopping this country in the 21st century if we do that one thing, if we give everybody who will work for it the chance to live out their dreams. If that is our shared commitment, our best days are still ahead. And 20 years from now they will be celebrating a whole new generation of Presidential scholars in a nation that is stronger and better and closer to the ideal of America than we are today.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:05 p.m. at Constitution Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Rebekah P. Close, Presidential scholar who introduced the President; Stuart Moldaw, Chairman, Presidential Scholars Commission; Gov. David M. Beasley of South Carolina; and Bill Gates, founder, Microsoft, Inc.

### **Remarks at a Ceremony for the Departure of the Olympic Torch**

*June 21, 1996*

Good morning. I want to begin by thanking Lang Brown, not only for what he has

done this morning in bringing the torch up here, but for what he does every day. He gives his best to help troubled teenagers, to teach them how to live responsible lives and to know that they are not alone as they do their best.

Today, we honor that spirit, the spirit of the Olympics, as we send forth the Olympic torch to light the way to Atlanta. Thank you, Lang Brown.

This torch has seen more of America than most of us Americans will see in a lifetime, and much of America has seen the torch, cheered it, and the people bearing it. The torch, burning bright and strong, stands for the job of athletic competition and more, for the importance of international cooperation and more, for the pride we feel when our strong young Americans win the gold and more. For this Olympic flame also calls upon each of us to be our very best as individuals, to do our best to build strong families and strong communities and a strong country. It tells us that victory comes to the united, not to the divided. Every Olympian has reached within and worked hard to be the fastest, the strongest, the most graceful.

We all have hurdles to leap, to finish high school or college, to be a good parent, a good worker, a good neighbor. Every one of us must summon that spirit of responsibility and best effort in our own lives. Every Olympian stands at the starting block or at the beginning of a great game alone. But they do not win alone. They draw strength from a lifetime of support from family and friends, coaches and role models. And every one of us must summon that spirit of community to meet our challenges.

Every Olympian is proof that for all of our differences, we are one America. We cheer our athletes not because they are men or women, not because of the color of their skin, we cheer them because they are Americans. They represent us all, and they fill us with pride. And every one of us must summon that spirit of unity, to embrace those things that bind us together, and never to succumb to those things that would keep us apart.

My fellow Americans, in the last several months, we have had to deal with some different kinds of flames. But it is this flame

that represents the best of the United States of America.

The Olympic spirit is the spirit of personal responsibility and best effort, the spirit of community, the spirit of unity. The people who carried this torch all across America show us exactly how that spirit can lift all our lives every day. This torch has been carried by a 74-year-old woman in Nevada who has cared for more than 100 abandoned children, by a New York businessman who has put thousands of disadvantaged young people through college, by a North Carolina teacher who organized students in 48 States against violence. This torch has been carried by America's best. They are everyday Olympians.

Now, this torch will be carried by someone who is America's best, who is both an everyday Olympian and a member of our Olympic team. Eight years ago, Carla McGhee was in a car accident. She almost died. Her body was broken, but her spirit was whole. She fought her way back to a promising basketball career that most people thought had been lost forever. She went on to return to the University of Tennessee and to help her team win a national basketball championship. The Vice President is particularly proud of that achievement. [*Laughter*] And now we hope that she will help to work the same magic for our Olympic women's team, a miraculous road back for a wonderful young woman.

May the Olympic flame always carry the ideals that burn in athletes and citizens like Carla McGhee, that burn in people like our torchbearers, the community heroes, the veterans of war and the keepers of peace, and all of those who have run with it, walked with it, wheeled with it, and set eyes on it. And may these ideals cast light on every shadow and brighten every dream on America's road to tomorrow.

May God bless America. And to Carla and all our Olympians, Godspeed.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:50 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to torchbearer Lang Brown, clinical director for independent living, Sasha Bruce Youthwork.

### **Remarks at the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Convention in Chicago, Illinois**

*June 21, 1996*

**The President.** Thank you. Thank you. Let me say, first of all, when I was standing up here with Gerry McEntee on my right and Bill Lucey on my left, I thought the best I could do is to ask you to give Clinton/Gore the same majority you gave McEntee/Lucey in 1996. I will accept it.

I'm also proud to be joined today by two of your friends from Illinois, two Members of the House of Representatives, Congressman Bobby Rush from Chicago and Congressman and Senator-to-be Dick Durbin from Illinois.

I understand I missed a lot at this convention. I missed the formal transfer of the gavel to Speaker Gephardt. I'm sorry I missed that. I missed Senator Kennedy pleading guilty once more to wanting all Americans to have health care. And I'm sorry I missed that.

Before I go further, I want to also congratulate someone else who is very special to this union, who celebrates today her 25th anniversary with AFSCME, Gerry McEntee's tireless and indispensable right hand, Gloria Caoile. Please stand up and be recognized. [*Applause*] Thank you. If I had known she was going to do that, I'd have done it first thing. It was great. It was quite wonderful. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, I will never forget as long as I live—

**Audience member.** Down in front!

**The President.** You all calm down, relax. You want everybody to sit down—they're taking pictures. We're going to have a little fun. Just relax. Be loose. Be loose.

I want to tell you that I will never forget as long as I live the fact that AFSCME stood with me early in 1992, when it was lonely and cold, and never stood back, never backed out. And I will never forget that no organization in America stood with the First Lady and with our administration more strongly when we fought to give health care to all Americans and preserve the dignity of Americans in our health care system. And I thank you for that.