

But in all of our newness—this is the last point I will leave you with—everything new should really open up to all of us the basic fundamentals in life that don't change, both about our individual lives and about our country. I've spent a lot of time since I've been President—late at night, normally—reading about periods in American history about which not much is known. And also trying to really master the critical turning points in our history.

And I have come to the following conclusion. You can go all the way back to the framers of the Declaration of Independence and all the way forward to the present day and you will find that every—every age has presented challenges which have required us to make the same three decisions in new and different terms, to throw off the dead hand of history and change so that we can make the same three decisions in new and different times. We have had to repeatedly reaffirm our allegiance to liberty and to deepen the meaning of it. I mean, liberty when we became a country was something for white male property owners—a minority in America today, white male property owners. We have deepened the meaning of liberty.

The second thing we've done is to repeatedly have to widen the circle of opportunity. This economy works today on ideas and on the thinking skills of people. And that factory I visited today was being driven to higher and higher levels of achievement because everybody's mind was valued.

And the third thing we have to do is to reaffirm our devotion to the unity of our nation and our communities. You know, I get so tired of the harsh political rhetoric that too often dominates the national landscape because it is unrelated to a specific issue designed to unify the American people so we can all go forward together. If it is true that the best companies in this community do well because people work together, if it is true that we only win wars and overcome depressions and deal with other challenges that are negative because we can work together, it is clearly true that we can only absorb all the changes going on in the world today if we form a more perfect Union.

This is a better country and a different country and a deeper country than it was at

the beginning and it will be well into the 21st century if people like you still care enough to do those same three things in each new time.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:20 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to dinner host, Walter Shorenstein; Richard Blum, husband of Senator Dianne Feinstein; Mayor Susan Hammer of San Jose, CA; Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; California State Senator John Burton; saxophone player Clarence Clemmons; and baseball legend Willie Mays. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

May 2, 1998

Good morning. Today I want to talk about our efforts to improve service and end abuses at the Internal Revenue Service. American citizens have every right to expect that they'll be treated with respect by a Government that works for them. A big part of our values as a people include courtesy, efficiency, and fairness from Government.

For far too long in the minds of too many Americans, the IRS has symbolized an immense bureaucracy, a place where unfair treatment and unresponsive service were far too common. We've worked hard to give the American people an IRS that is fairer, more efficient, more responsive to their needs, and to support the many dedicated IRS employees who do want to serve them well. And we've made progress.

Two years ago I was proud to sign into law the second Taxpayer Bill of Rights. It's made it easier for taxpayers to appeal IRS decisions and to recover attorney's fees when the IRS makes mistakes. And last May Vice President Gore and Treasury Secretary Bob Rubin began an unflinching top to bottom review of customer service at the IRS. They reported back to me with their recommendations, and we're already beginning to see a new IRS that is more committed to the needs of taxpayers.

We're keeping IRS offices open longer during filing season, launching independent citizen advocacy panels to help taxpayers get

relief. Now you can call the IRS and get telephone service 6 days a week, 18 hours a day; soon it'll be 24 hours a day. And this year 24 million Americans saved an awful lot of time and hassle by filing their returns on the phone or electronically. I've also appointed a new IRS Commissioner and a new kind of IRS Commissioner. Charles Rossotti is an experienced businessman who spent his entire career on the taxpayer side of the table.

But we've got more to do. Like most Americans, I was outraged by testimony at last week's congressional hearings on the IRS, by the stories of our citizens harassed and humiliated by what seemed to be an unaccountable, downright tone-deaf agency. These problems developed over years, of course, and we can't solve them all overnight. But Commissioner Rossotti has moved swiftly to route out abuses and to further reform operations of the IRS.

Also, he's asked Judge William Webster, the former Director of the FBI and the CIA, to conduct an independent review of the criminal investigation division. As further steps are needed, they will be taken.

But above all, our new Commissioner needs new tools to build a better IRS, and he needs them now. Last year our administration worked with the House of Representatives to pass sweeping, strong, bipartisan reform of the IRS, to give citizens more protection, improve service, reduce abuse. Now the Senate is poised to enact very similar legislation. I call on Congress to make this year the year we set aside political differences to enact real reforms of the IRS. When it comes to quality service at the IRS, Congress can't afford to file for an extension.

As we continue to improve our work, we may uncover more problems at the IRS. Now, if we do, I pledge to the American people that once again we'll act swiftly, guarding against abuse, punishing those who cross the line. And as we do, we will build a fairer and more effective Government for a stronger America in the 21st century.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 4:30 p.m. on May 1 at a private residence in Palo Alto, CA, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on May 2.

Statement on the European Economic and Monetary Union

May 3, 1998

We welcome this weekend's historic announcement that 11 European countries have qualified for, and decided to establish, an Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). The United States has long supported European integration. We admire the determination that Europe has shown in moving forward toward the economic convergence that makes EMU possible. A strong and stable Europe with open markets and healthy growth is good for America and for the world. A successful EMU that contributes to a dynamic Europe is clearly in our best interest.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Loretta Sanchez in Westwood, California

May 3, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. First of all, I'd like to thank Loretta and Stephen and all their families for being here and making this a family affair. I think there are enough relatives in this room—[*Laughter*]—to avoid another recount in disputed election. [*Laughter*] And I am here in part because I do not want to go through that again after this next election—and I know you don't either—and I'm sure we will not have to, thanks to you.

You know, when I came here in October—I came to Orange County, to Loretta's district—and we had this huge rally, I was so excited. And I got all my folks together and I said, I honestly believe that woman is going to win. [*Laughter*] And I think if she does win, then she'll win more handily the next time because I think she can do the job. And I'm here to tell you, she is doing the job. I know; I'm there.

Loretta Sanchez has come a long way. She was a Head Start child, and now she's working to give all of you a headstart on the 21st century. I have had so many reasons to be profoundly grateful to the people of California. This State has been so good to me and to my wife and to Vice President Gore and our administration. You have enabled us to