

2000—if we deserve it. And what we have to do is to sort of cut through all the continuous fog and incoming fire and all this partisan stuff that happens and say, “We didn’t just have the right people; we did the right things.” Our ideas are good—point one. Point two: “We’re not tired; we’re just getting warmed up. We still have big challenges out there, and we want you to join us in facing those challenges.”

We’ve got to make your investment good. You saved the Democratic Party, and our adversaries thought they were going to destroy it. They thought they had a moment in which they could absolutely try to reverse the results of the last election, and in the process, destroy the Democratic Party, and you said, “I don’t think so.”

It is a very great thing you have done, and you should be very proud of that. But you did not do it for the purpose—as much fun as we’re having—of being here with me. [Laughter] You did it so we could continue to move this country forward.

So go out there and tell them that: We did the right things. We’ve got good ideas. You now have the evidence; come with us. Secondly, we have an agenda for the future: put people over politics, put progress over partisanship, put the unity of country over division, think about your grandchildren in the 21st century. That is the message of the Democratic Party. You’ve made it possible for us to take it out there. Now let’s go out and do it.

Thank you. God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:45 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to Alan D. Solomont, former national finance chair, Steve Grossman, national chair, Carol Pensky, treasurer, and Leonard Barrack, national finance chair, Democratic National Committee; and Cynthia Friedman, national cochair, Women’s Leadership Forum.

Remarks to the American Legion Girls Nation and an Exchange With Reporters

July 17, 1998

The President. Thank you very much. I think I should take Janet Murguia with me

wherever I go to always introduce me. [Laughter] I think she’s a great advertisement for Girls Nation. And someday before long, a number of you will have these opportunities as well.

I’d like to welcome your president, Alana Aldag, and your vice president, Jennifer Hall, and thank Diane Duscheck and Barbara Kranig and the other members of the American Legion Auxiliary for what they do for Girls Nation. I hope you’ve had a very good week in Washington. Some of you may know that, this week, these 2 days here, the 35th reunion class of my Boys Nation group is also meeting here. I happened to turn on the television last night to see that Ted Koppel on Nightline was doing a two-day review of it. And I thought to myself, it wasn’t all that long ago, but all of us are aging rather gracefully. [Laughter]

Let me say to all of you, the people I met then, many of whom have been my friends over all these 35 years, made me believe that anything was possible. President Kennedy spoke to us and made me believe that, together, we could change the world. I think that is certainly no less true for you and your generation because you will live in the time of greatest possibility in all human history.

If you think of the revolutionary changes that have taken place just in the course of your still relatively short lifetimes: The cold war cast a shadow over my childhood; it has ended. Technology has advanced at a breathtaking pace, fundamentally altering the way all of us live and work and learn. A typical laptop computer today has more computer power in it than the world’s largest supercomputer did in the year you were born.

Many of the barriers that kept women from making the most of their potential and contributing their talents to our society have fallen away. Yesterday, the First Lady was up in New York commemorating the 150th anniversary of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and 68 other women and 32 brave men gathering in New York with their statement of sentiments, with their 18 objections against men in America, which included the fact that they did not have the right to own property—even the clothes married women had on their backs belonged to their husbands 150 years ago—they couldn’t inherit; they didn’t vote.

And what a long way we have come in the last 150 years and in your lifetime.

I met my wife in law school when it was still a relatively unusual thing to find a law school with any significant number of women in it. Today, a lawyer in America is 12 times more likely to be a woman than a lawyer was in 1963, when I came to Boys Nation.

Women are earning more college degrees than men; they outnumber men in graduate school. Women-owned businesses are growing faster than the national economy. Forty-one percent of our administration's appointees, including the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Attorney General, the Director of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Secretary of Labor, our Trade Ambassador, and many others, are women—by far the highest percentage of women in high positions in any administration in the history of the United States.

I look forward to the day when I read in the newspaper that America's new President has invited her own Girls Nation reunion class back to the White House to gather.

In the meantime, we need to be working together to strengthen our country for this new century, because it is a time of dramatic change. Five and half years ago, I came here to move America in a new direction based on our old values of opportunity for all, responsibility from all, in an American community of all citizens. We took a new direction in economic policy and education policy and environmental policy, in welfare policy, in health care policy, in crime policy, and foreign policy. We also articulated a new role for Government. We tried to break through the debate that had then dominated Washington for nearly 20 years, some people saying Government could solve all our problems and others saying Government was the source of all of our problems. I had been a Governor for a dozen years, and I thought the argument was frankly ridiculous. I thought that neither extreme was true.

And we have sought to create a Government whose primary role is to create the conditions and give people the tools to solve their own problems and make the most of their own lives and build good lives, good families, good communities, and a strong

country. The results have been, I think, quite good. America has the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the smallest percentage of people on welfare in 29 years.

We're about to have our first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years, the lowest inflation rate in 32 years, and the highest homeownership in the history of the country. We have also opened the doors of college to virtually every American through our HOPE scholarships and other tax credits for college education, through a better student loan program, through more work-study positions and more Pell grant scholarships.

We have added 5 million people who are children to the ranks of people with health insurance; we are in the process of doing that. We have the highest rates of childhood immunization in history. We have worked hard on the environment, and the water is cleaner; the air is cleaner; the food is safer. There are fewer toxic waste dumps, and we have put more land aside to preserve forever than any administration in the history except those of the two Roosevelts.

We started the AmeriCorps program and now have had almost 100,000 young people, like you, just a little older than you, serving in their communities, earning money for college, making America a better place. With our America Reads program alone, which is designed to get young college students to go in and help make sure all of our third graders can read independently by the end of the third grade, we now have 1,000 colleges participating.

While all this has happened, we've actually reduced the size of Government. The Federal Government is now the smallest it has been since I came here to meet President Kennedy 35 years ago. So I believe that this country is moving in the right direction.

Now, I think one of the great decisions facing the American people now is what to do about this. I like the fact that there is a good sense of well-being in America. I like the fact that, after over 20 years of downhill movement, public confidence in Government and the role of Government in our lives is going back up again. I like that very much. But I feel very strongly, and I predict that if you just read the paper, I think you can

see, I think, support from my point of view that is a grave mistake to say, "Okay, things are going well in America, and we don't need to do much. We should relax now." Why? For two reasons. One is, you will see, the older you get, no condition lasts forever. The good times don't last forever but neither do the bad ones—and that's the good news. [Laughter]

Secondly, we are living in a very dynamic time. We are enjoying the success that we are enjoying today partly because the American people have been very aggressive, because, you know, we live in a country where citizens deserve most of the credit. What we have done to get these impressive numbers again is to create the right conditions, the right environment, the right incentives for the American people then to take advantage of it and go forward. But we have to—this is a very dynamic time. And there are all kinds of difficulties and challenges out there.

So, for America to sit back now would be a great mistake. When times are good but dynamic, that's the time to bear down, to take on the big challenges, the long-term challenges, the things that will affect your lifetime when you begin to have children and you begin to do your work and you begin to take full responsibility for the welfare of the country. What are those things? Let me just mention a few of them.

Number one, I am the oldest of the baby boomers, the largest generation of young people ever in—to grow up, except the generation of which you are the oldest. That is, we—for the last year, for the first time since I was in high school, we had a bigger group of children in kindergarten through 12th grade than the baby boom generation. Now, what does that mean? It means, among other things, that if we continue to retire at present trends and the birth rates continue as they are and the immigration rates continue as they are, by the time all of our baby boomers retire we'll only have about two people working for every one person eligible for Social Security. And that is unsustainable. Medicare would be unsustainable.

So what's the answer? The answer is to find a way to preserve these fundamental programs that have lifted the elderly out of poverty and given dignity and strength to our

professed family values in a way that does not bankrupt our children and grandchildren. Everybody I know my age is obsessed with the idea that we must not have the cost of our retirement be lowering your standard of living, be undermining your ability to raise your own children.

Now, if we're going to have a surplus, we ought to make sure we've got a long-term plan to save Social Security before we squander that surplus on tax cuts, which may be very popular in the short run but which may leave us with a terrible problem that will cost us a lot more than you could ever get in a small tax cut by the time you have to be taking responsibility for your parents' retirements and your children's education. And we should do it now when times are good and we're projecting a surplus.

Number two, we should recognize that while we have the best system of higher education in the world, no one believes our schools are yet the best in the world. And we should take advantage of this moment to make sure all American young people have access to world-class education with higher standards, with technology that hooks up every American classroom to the Internet and all the riches that it holds by the year 2000, with smaller classes and with more access to more constructive choices through things like the charter school movement, which is very prominent in many of your States.

Number three, we should recognize that the environmental challenges we have are real and global. If there is anybody here from Florida—and I'm sure there is—if you—all the rest of us have been watching those fires. I went down and saw and flew over those areas that have been burned up. Florida had the wettest fall and winter than they had ever had. They had the driest spring they had ever had, and then the month of June in Florida was the hottest month in the history of the State, hotter than any July or August; and in Florida, that's saying something.

There is ample evidence now that what my wonderful Vice President has been saying for years and years and years is true, that the climate of the globe is warming at a rate which is unsustainable, which will lead us to more extreme weather conditions. We now

have records going back over 500 years which we can use to measure what the temperature was on this planet. The 5 hottest years ever recorded have been in the 1990's. Nineteen ninety-seven was the hottest year on record; 1998 is going to be hotter if it continues.

A big part of the problem is the way countries get rich with their use of energy. We have to prove—and by the way, we can prove—that we can grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time. The young people of this country, without regard to their other differences of region and political party and philosophy, by and large are much more committed to this proposition than older people are. Young people—I find even young people in grade school are just instinctive environmentalists. We are depending on you to provide the phalanx of brainpower and voting power to move America to the proposition that we can preserve our environment and grow the economy.

Next, we have to prove that we can bring the benefits of this new economy to people who don't have it yet. Believe it or not, there are still some urban neighborhoods that have unemployment rates above 10 percent, some above 15 percent, while the national unemployment rate is below 5 percent. If you talk to the delegates here from North Dakota where they're having a collapse of farm prices in the aftermath of a terrible, terrible set of natural disasters all through the high plains, it's hard—you could walk down the street in a lot of towns in North Dakota, and they'd have a hard time believing we've got the strongest economy in a generation.

If any of you have ever been on a Native American reservation that doesn't have a lot of money from gaming enterprises, you know that there are still an awful lot of the first Americans who have received no tangible benefit from this economic growth. Now that the economy is strong, we should be working to implement strategies that will bring this growth to them to make sure that all Americans feel that they're a part of our future.

Just two more things, quickly. Over the long run, we have got to prove that we can be one America. I like it. I look around this room; I see all of you come from different racial and ethnic and religious backgrounds.

That's a great, great advantage to America in a global society, a global economy. Look around the world at all of the problems we have that are based on racial, ethnic, and religious differences. Why did those three little children have to die in that firebomb in Ireland a few days ago? Because somebody just cannot give up the idea that they ought to fight until the end of time over their religious differences.

Why can we not achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East? What is at the root of the problem in Bosnia, in Kosovo? Why did hundreds of thousands of people die in Rwanda in a matter of days in 1994? All over the world you see this. If America wants to do good in a world like that, we must be good at home. We must be able to live in all of our communities like you're working and living together here. And you can lead the way on that.

It is very important that we continue, finally, to be engaged in the world. That's why I went to China, even though some people said I shouldn't—not because we agree with everything the Chinese do, but because we respect the progress they have made in the last several years and because they are going to be the biggest country in the world. And it is much better if we work with them to try to build the kind of world we want than if we're forced into a situation of continuous conflict and estrangement. And I feel a moral obligation to you and your future and your children to try to create that kind of world. But first, the power of the American example is important, and you must never forget that.

Now, against that background, you need to evaluate everything we're doing here. How are we doing to keep America working today; are we dealing with the long-term challenges of the country? Every issue should be evaluated in that context.

One of the things that's most troubling to me is that we have the best health care in the world but we don't have the best health care system in the world, and we don't have the healthiest people in the world, partly because of institutional problems. One we've been talking about is the necessity to pass the Patients' Bill of Rights so we get the benefit of managed care without the burden of

having accountants make decisions doctors should make in the medical area.

Another big problem we have—it's probably the most prominent health problem your generation faces—is the problem of, epidemic of teen smoking, with 3,000 young people starting to smoke every day; 1,000 will have their lives shortened as a result of it. More people die from smoking than accidents and murders and AIDS and other unrelated maladies put together in this country. So it is a very, very serious problem.

I have been working very hard now for a long time to pass legislation that will raise the price of cigarettes, give the FDA the authority to regulate tobacco as a drug, stop the marketing of cigarettes to teenagers, launch new antismoking research and education drives, protect the tobacco farmers and their communities, and use the money to pay for health care and medical research, education, and child care, and any tax cuts that the Congress wanted to pass, so it didn't affect our surplus and our commitment to save Social Security.

Now, right now, our legislative drive has been stalled in the face of a \$40-million advertising campaign by the tobacco companies that has been unanswered by the public health advocates because they don't have that kind of money. But the facts are clear, and if we keep working, I think we will prevail on the issue. Why? Well, the main reason is the evidence that the tobacco companies themselves have given us about the dangers of smoking and their strategy. We now have, as a result of all these lawsuits, internal tobacco company documents that show that even as they publicly denied that nicotine was addictive, they conducted secret research in their labs, devised secret marketing strategies in their boardrooms to addict children to smoking for life, and they knew exactly what they were doing.

How do we know it? Again, look at the documents that they, themselves, have produced in the court cases. These documents tell us in the tobacco companies' own words how children and minorities became the primary targets they saw as new customers. There are memos admitting in plain English, for example, quote, "The base of our business is the high school student." Memos say-

ing, quote, "Creating a fad in the 14- to 20-year-old market can be a great bonanza." And even as they insisted that young people are off limits for advertising, one company document from 1984 recommended targeting younger adult smokers as the only source of replacement smokers in the future. Well, children are the future of America, not the future of the tobacco companies. And that future should not go up in smoke.

These documents contain a treasure trove of information that can be used to save lives. Public health experts can design more effective antismoking strategies by studying the marketing plans of the cigarette companies. Scientists can look to documents for findings that can aid their research into nicotine addiction and tobacco-related illnesses. And all Americans can understand the role the industry has played in hooking our children to the habit of smoking.

There are tens of millions of pages of these documents. While some of them are already on the Internet, most are stored in depositories all across our Nation and as far away as England. They aren't easy to find. So I've decided to use this moment with you to show you one thing that the President can do with executive authority that has nothing to do with legislative action in Congress. I am directing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to report back to me in 90 days with a plan to make these documents more accessible to all Americans, so anybody that can get on the Internet can get them all and can understand them all.

The plan should include a strategy for indexing them and for making that index widely available through both the Internet and other methods. It should also have a strategy for broad and rigorous analysis of the information contained in all these documents. I'm also pleased that the Attorney General will file a brief in support of the State of Minnesota's efforts to make the tobacco industry's own currently existing index to all of these millions of documents available to the general public.

We must lift the veil of secrecy on the tobacco industry so that all Americans understand that there is an epidemic of teen smoking and how it came about. Let us use the darkest secrets of the industry to save a new

generation of children from this habit and to help us fight and win.

This administration and many of our Nation's leaders are working to make sure that this challenge, along with these larger, longer-term challenges that I've mentioned—education, climate change, Social Security—do not become intractable problems of your future. I don't want your generation of Americans to have to face a problem like the magnitude of the deficit that I faced here when we took office,

I can tell you that the tougher problems are, the harder the resolution is, and the more controversial the resolution is, and the more painful the price to pay is. We had to make a lot of tough decisions in 1993 to get that deficit under control, and a lot of brave Members of Congress lost their seats in Congress because they voted for an economic program in 1993, the benefits of which were not apparent in 1994 when they were up. But when we got ready to pass the Balanced Budget Act in 1997 on a bipartisan basis, guess what? Over 92 percent of the deficit had already disappeared because of what had been done in 1993.

The best thing for a smart country to do is to take these challenges when they come up and deal with them quickly, looking to the long run, not waiting for those things to fester and become infected and become a wound in the Nation's psyche. That is what we're trying to do here.

That's why I think programs like Girls Nation are so important, because they enlist people in the work of citizenship as a disciplined habit, not as something that you think about when an emergency comes along. I hope you will be able to do that to your friends and your neighbors and your family members when you go home. I hope you will always continue now to help raise awareness of the issues you care about and propose solutions to them. I hope you will always continue to lobby your elected leaders and to participate until you become one.

Our democracy is only as strong as its citizens. Think about this when you go home: Our Founders did a revolutionary thing. They created a whole country based on the idea, at the time totally unheard of, that God gave every person in equal portion—every

person in equal portion—the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They say, we've got to create this Government because there's no way we can individually protect and enhance these rights. That's why we're doing this.

And then they gave us—all of us, every American until time immemorial—a mission: They said, "We must work together to form a more perfect Union." They were really smart, those guys. *[Laughter]* They were really smart. They understood that every generation would have its own challenges. They understood the work of liberty would never be over. They understood all that. They understood it all. And they gave us a permanent mission. And keep in mind, they created a limited Government which means that in this country, the most important players will always be the citizens. As great as the leaders are, and all the monuments you've seen to our great leaders around this city since you've been here this week, none of them could have accomplished anything if the people hadn't said, "Okay, we agree; we'll do our part."

So again, I say, you've had a remarkable opportunity this week to learn more about how your country works. You have, yourselves, been good citizen servants by doing it. You've had a chance to manifest your love in America and your belief in America. For the rest of your life, I hope you'll do what you can to make our Union more perfect.

Good luck, and God bless you. *[Applause]* Thank you.

Now, I'm just going to go sign this order, and I'm going to ask your president and vice president to stand with me and then I'm going to turn the microphone over to them. Come on.

[At this point, the President signed the memorandum.]

Q. Mr. President, do you think that the court ruling can—

The President. I'll answer questions, but let's do—let us finish the program, and then I'll answer a few questions. That'll be fun for them; they'll see a little press conference here. *[Laughter]*

Okay, you've got the floor.

[At this point, Jennifer Hall, vice president, 1998 Girls Nation Session, made brief remarks and presented the President with a Girls Nation sweatshirt.]

The President. That's wonderful. Thank you.

[At this point, Alana Aldag, president, 1998 Girls Nation Session, made brief remarks and presented to the President legislation passed by the 1998 Girls Nation Senate.]

The President. This is the largest legislative package that's passed in Washington so far this week. [Laughter] And I thank you very much.

Thank you. I will have our people review this for good ideas. [Laughter]

Now, go ahead. Helen [Helen Thomas, United Press International], first—we'll take two or three questions. Go head.

Court Rulings on Secret Service Agent Testimony

Q. Well, do you think that the court rulings are jeopardizing the duties of the Secret Service?

The President. Well, they believe—that is, the Treasury Department and the Secret Service, based on their experience not just with me but with all the Presidents, in the institutional memory of the Secret Service—they believe that. And so, they are determined to pursue it, and the Attorney General has agreed to represent them in that. But that is their professional judgment. I have decided that it would be inappropriate for me to express an opinion, and I have not done so. And I believe that I should stay out of it. But they have a very strong professional opinion about it, and they are pursuing it.

Q. But you have an opinion, surely.

The President. I do have an opinion. I have an opinion. I have a legal opinion, and I have a personal opinion, but I think that's not—I think it's important, and I think it would be completely inappropriate for me to be involved in this. I want the American people to understand that, notwithstanding what some have said, and others have implied, this was a decision that came out of the Secret Service about which they feel very strongly. And these people risk their lives to protect me and other Presidents in a profes-

sional way, not a political way. They have strong convictions. They have manifested those convictions. The Attorney General has determined that there is sufficient legal merit in their position that they ought to be represented, and they are pursuing their case, which they have a right to do. I believe that they should speak for themselves, and I should not interject myself into it.

Q. Mr. President, I wonder if you could respond to the ruling yesterday by the Appeals Court, and specifically the opinion of one judge when he said that the White House had effectively declared war on the Independent Counsel—

The President. I think you have to consider the source of that comment. And that is simply not true. The judge should—can have a right to his legal opinion about what the Treasury Department and Justice Department said, but I have told you that this case is about their professional judgment about what's necessary to do their job. And I have not—neither I nor the White House has been involved in it in any way, shape, or form—nor will we, nor will I complicate it by commenting further on what he said.

Q. But in a larger sense, you don't believe that the White House is—

The President. Well, in a larger sense, I am spoken for on that by Mr. Kendall. I think the facts speak for themselves. I think—again, I say you've got to consider the source of that comment.

Press Secretary Mike McCurry. Last question.

U.S. Trade Deficit and Asian Economies

Q. Mr. President, the trade deficit in May was up around \$15 billion. Are you willing to overlook that while the Asian financial crisis plays itself out?

The President. Well, I don't think—no, I don't think we should overlook it, I think it ought to prompt us to action. But let's understand why the trade deficit is so large. The trade deficit is large because we live in an integrated global economy, and our economy has been strong while the Asian economy has been in trouble. What does that mean? When their economy is in trouble, the value of their currency goes down. What does that mean? That means that compared to yesterday, if

their currency goes down, their money is worth less than ours in the same amounts. That means it becomes their goods that they sell to us become cheaper, and it means our goods that we would sell to them become more expensive.

Almost the entire increase in the trade deficit is due to the Asian economic trouble, which is why, since January, I have been saying we should make our proper contribution to the International Monetary Fund to promote economic reform and economic recovery in Asia. And the fact that we have not done so is endangering the livelihood of American farmers and American factory workers because we are not making the exports—especially to Asia—that we otherwise could be making if those economies were coming back. And a critical part of that is our contribution to the International Monetary Fund.

So, we should not ignore it, because, as I said in the State of the Union Address way back in January, our welfare is tied to the welfare of Asia. We've got 16 million new jobs in the last 5½ years, 30 percent of our economic growth is due to exports. A significant area of export growth has been Asia.

That's why I worked hard to—the other big area of real growth has been in Latin America. And what I've tried to do is to head these things off. You may remember a couple of years ago when we moved in aggressively to help Mexico when their economy was in trouble and a lot of people criticized that. But Mexico paid back their loan ahead of schedule and at profit to the United States. And they are now a functioning economic partner with us again. That's what we need in Asia.

So, the American people should be concerned about this, but we should know that there is a disciplined answer. We need to restore growth in Japan, restore growth in Asia, and our major goal here for our own action should be to pay our fair share to the International Monetary Fund so we can support economic recovery, so they can afford to buy our products, and so there's some greater parity in the prices of our products. Meanwhile, what you see is a product of the strength, not the weakness, of the American economy.

Tax Cuts

Q. What do you think of the Speaker's proposal to use this budget surplus for big tax cuts?

The President. I think, first of all, let's remember how we got where we are. We got the strength of our economy to the point where it is now by being determined to bring down the deficit until we balanced the budget, by expanding trade to sell more American products around the world, and by investing in education, in training, in technology, in scientific research. Those are the engines of our economic recovery.

Now, we have not had a balanced budget for 29 years. And now, before we've had the first year, the first year of a surplus, to be talking about spending hundreds of billions of dollars on a tax cut based on projected surpluses that may or may not materialize before we have spent the first dollar to save Social Security so that you aren't going to have to support your parents in a way that diminishes your standard of living. I think is a mistake. So I'll go back to my position: I think we should save Social Security first. Let's show the American people this balanced budget. Let's show the American people this surplus. Let's try to keep this economy going and get our growth going, and when we have passed a plan to save Social Security, let's see what it costs and then make a decision on the tax issue.

We don't want to count our chickens before they hatch. Now, the end of the fiscal year here is September 30th. And it's now projected that we'll have a \$63-billion surplus, and I earnestly hope we do. But it wouldn't do any harm to rack one up before we start spending it. We had 29 years of deficits. Between 1981 and 1983—in 12 years alone, we increased by 4 times the total debt of the United States. We quadrupled the debt of the United States in 12 years that we had amassed in the previous 200. It won't do us any harm to take one year and enjoy the fact that we've balanced our books, ran up a surplus, and planned to save Social Security. That will not do us any harm. It will keep our economy stronger, and it's better for America's future.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:30 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Diane Duscheck, director, 1998 Girls Nation Session; Barbara Kranig, national president, American Legion Auxiliary; ABC News anchor Ted Koppel; brothers Richard, Mark, and Jason Quinn, who died in a firebombing attack on their home in Ballymoney, Northern Ireland, on July 12; Judge Laurence H. Silberman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia; and attorney David E. Kendall.

Memorandum on Public Availability of Tobacco Documents

July 17, 1998

Memorandum for the Secretary of Health and Human Services

Subject: Public Availability of Tobacco Documents

For decades, the tobacco industry sought to hide from the American people critically important information about the health hazards of tobacco and the industry's efforts to induce children to smoke. Recently, court cases and congressional subpoenas have forced the tobacco companies to make many of their documents public.

These documents confirm that for decades the tobacco companies did intensive research on the smoking habits of children, knew tobacco products were addictive and deadly, understood that a price increase would drive down the number of young people who smoke, and deliberately marketed their products to young people and minorities.

Because they provide new information about which types of advertising appeal to children, these documents can help public health experts design counter-advertising campaigns and other strategies to protect children. These documents also can assist scientists in understanding more about the addictive nature of nicotine, the health consequences of tobacco use, and the effects of certain tobacco product designs and ingredients. It is therefore critical to the fight against youth smoking that the Nation's scientists and public health experts carefully examine and analyze these documents.

Although many tobacco industry documents are now public, most are not readily accessible. While many public health leaders have found and highlighted important docu-

ments, there is no comprehensive public index to help researchers locate information contained in the documents. Only a small percentage of the documents are posted on the Internet and it is difficult to search through them in their current format.

The State of Minnesota is currently involved in litigation to obtain the public release of a computerized index (the so-called 4-A Index), created by the tobacco industry for use during litigation. The tobacco industry has fought to prevent the release of this index. It is the industry's road map to its own documents and could improve significantly the ability of public health experts, scientists, State and Federal officials, and the public to search through industry documents. The bipartisan comprehensive tobacco legislation recently considered in the Senate contained strong provisions for public disclosure of tobacco industry documents. While I will continue to fight to enact comprehensive tobacco legislation, I am determined to move forward to protect America's children from tobacco.

Therefore, I hereby direct you, working with the Attorney General, the States, public health professionals, librarians, and other concerned Americans, to report back to me in 90 days with a plan to make the tobacco industry documents more readily accessible to the public health community, the scientific community, the States, and the public at large. This plan should:

(1) Propose a method for coordinating review of the documents and making available an easily searchable index and/or digest of the reviewed documents.

(2) Propose a plan to disseminate widely the index and/or digest as well as the documents themselves, including expanded use of the Internet.

(3) Provide a strategy for coordinating a broad public and private review and analysis of the documents to gain critical public health information. Issues to be considered as part of this analysis include: nicotine addiction and pharmacology; biomedical research, including ingredient safety; product design; and youth marketing strategies.

To help ensure greater access to these documents, the Department of Justice plans to file an amicus brief in the trial court in support of the State of Minnesota's motion to unseal the industry-created 4-A index.