

the Angolan peace process. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force the broad authorities necessary to apply economic pressure to UNITA to reduce its ability to pursue its aggressive policies of territorial acquisition.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
September 23, 1998.

**Memorandum on the Presidential Design Awards Program**

*September 23, 1998*

*Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies*

*Subject:* Presidential Design Awards Program

The strength of our economy and quality of life in America owe much to the genius and creativity of designers. From using simple brick and mortar to developing sophisticated computers, designers have turned the dreams of the Nation into reality.

As the single largest purchaser of design services, the Federal Government has been a leader in fostering design excellence. Begun in 1983, the quadrennial Presidential Design Awards Program recognizes successful achievements in Federal design and promotes standards of excellence throughout the Federal Government. By this memorandum, I am pleased to announce the call for entries for the next round of awards. This round will include special Presidential Design Excellence Millennium Awards in recognition of Federal design projects that have made a significant contribution to the environment and quality of life of the Nation during this century.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the General Services Administration will implement the Presidential Design Awards Program. Please designate an individual with an appropriate background and position to serve as your liaison to ensure the success of this important program. Good design combines problem solving with cost-effectiveness and performance with beauty, and I urge all

agencies to integrate good design into their programs.

**William J. Clinton**

**Remarks to the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Dinner**

*September 23, 1998*

**Audience members.** Viva Clinton!

**The President.** Thank you.

**Audience member.** Twelve more years! [Laughter]

**The President.** That's for the guy that just left. [Laughter] Thank you.

Congressman Becerra, thank you so much for your remarks and for your truly outstanding leadership of the Hispanic Caucus. Thank you, Carmen Delgado Votaw, for your welcome. I thank all the Members of Congress and our administration and staff who are here for their service to our country. I thank you for that warm welcome, for being my friends, for standing with me on sunny days and in strong winds. But most of all, I thank you for being willing to fight for the America we want for our children in a new century.

Before we begin, as the Vice President indicated, I would like to say just a word about Hurricane Georges. In Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, in Haiti, in the Dominican Republic, businesses and homes have been swept away and lives have been lost. Tonight our thoughts and prayers are with the victims of this terrible storm. Our FEMA Director, James Lee Witt, has told me that we are already assisting in the cleanup effort, and we are providing humanitarian aid in Haiti and the Dominican Republic. We are also helping the people of Florida to prepare for the hurricane, and Secretary Cuomo is leading a delegation to Puerto Rico. I thank him for that. We will be there every step of the way to help these communities and these people to rebuild.

I also want to join the Vice President in paying tribute to Henry B. Gonzalez and Esteban Torres. They are both friends of mine. I first met Henry Gonzalez in 1972. I never will forget an evening I spent with him in the Menger Hotel in San Antonio, Texas, the weekend before the Presidential election. And about the only thing we had

to enjoy was the mango ice cream they had served there for over 100 years. [Laughter]

On the night before my election as President in 1992, we had a late-night rally in San Antonio; and thinking of that night so long ago—20 years ago then—I got \$400 worth of mango ice cream for our campaign plane so that we could eat it with two reasons to be happy. And let me say that Henry B. Gonzalez has been a pioneer and a conscience for the Congress and the country. He has the heart of a lion, and we'll always be grateful to him.

From his days as a UAW shop steward to his days as chair of this caucus, Esteban Torres has fought tirelessly to make certain that economic growth benefits all working people and not only the people of this country but of Mexico as well. He has been a lion in the fight for a decent and better America. I will miss him, very, very much. And I thank you, sir, for your service.

If I could just continue the appreciation for a minute, I want to thank the members of this caucus and their supporters for what has been done for America and what we have done together. Together we expanded the earned-income tax credit and cut taxes for 15 million hard-working families, including more than one million Hispanic families. And when the majority in Congress tried to slash it, together we said no.

Together we increased the minimum wage for 10 million Americans, including nearly 2 million Hispanics. And we are trying to increase it again for 12 million Americans. I'm very disappointed that yesterday over 95 percent of the Senate Republicans voted against it, but I haven't stopped fighting, and I don't think you have either. It is time to raise the minimum wage for people who need and deserve it.

Together we fought for and won the biggest increase in children's health care in more than 3 decades to insure up to 5 million uninsured children, almost all of them in low-income working families in America. We expanded the Head Start program and passed the family and medical leave law, to give millions of people a chance to take time off from work when a baby is born or a parent is sick. Together we have opened the doors of higher education with the HOPE scholarship, more

Pell grants, tax credits for all higher education, deductible student loans. Because of your efforts, everyone who is willing to work hard can now go to college without being afraid of being crushed by the burden of debt, and I thank you for that.

Together, under the leadership of the Vice President, we created more than 100 empowerment zones and enterprise communities, community development banks; we doubled small business loans to minorities, tripled them to women. Administrator Aida Alvarez is here, and she would want me to say that businesses owned and operated by Hispanic women are the fastest growing category of small business in America today.

Together we shaped and passed an historic crime bill to take guns off our streets, put police back on our streets, and provide more prevention to keep our children out of trouble in the first place. Together we have built an America that has the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years, the lowest Hispanic unemployment rate in a generation, the fastest real wage growth in 20 years, a record number of new small businesses every year, the lowest crime rate in 25 years, the highest homeownership in the history of our country, and you did it. None of this could have been done without the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

I thank the Vice President for mentioning those who serve and who have served in the Cabinet, in high administration positions, and in the White House. I thank you for all you have done as well.

Now, having said that, the real question before us this evening is, what shall we do with this moment of prosperity? What shall we do with this moment of opportunity? You know, a lot of people, when times get really good, tend to do one of two things, and I would argue both of them are wrong. One, just say, "Well, I've worked really hard. Times have been tough. I think I'll just relax for a few years." Or, two, is to say, "Well, things are so good, nobody can mess it up. So I think I will just indulge myself in some diversion." As a country we cannot do that.

I tell you tonight, my friends, that the challenge before us is, what do we do with this prosperity; what do we do with this confidence; what do we do with these good

times? I feel very strongly that we need to say loud and clear that we believe that the time has come to thank God for our blessings and then to say we intend to use these blessings to meet the big challenges facing America that will shape the future of our children, and to go back and pick up those folks who have not participated in the benefits of the last 6 years and give them a chance to do it as well.

There was an old Mexican proverb that says, "*El que no siembra, no levanta*;" "he who does not sow, doesn't get a crop." It is time to sow the seeds of the future, to build the America we want for our children. We cannot afford to rest; we have work to do.

And what is that work? First, we cannot rest until we save Social Security for the 21st century. Now, what do I mean by that? Every person in this audience thrills whenever anyone refers to *mi familia*. Our family, our national family, is getting older; I ought to know. I am. I'm the oldest 52-year-old man in America. [Laughter] I am the oldest of the baby boomers, all of you who are my age.

When all of us are retired, there will only be about two people working in America for every one person drawing Social Security. Now, we have three choices. We can do something now, modest but disciplined, to preserve this system into the future, with all of its benefits. Or we can do nothing until the crisis occurs, and we'll have two choices. Those of us who are older can expect our children to hike their taxes a lot and lower the standard of living of their children. Or we can just do without a lot of the benefits that have lifted half the seniors in America out of poverty today. I don't think either one of those is a very good choice.

In just a few days we will have the first balanced budget and surplus in 29 years. Now, I believe if we really care about our national family, we ought to stand up and say, "Look, we know it's just a few weeks before the election. We know there are those on the other side who say that we ought to have a tax cut right now based on projected surpluses into the future. And we know that's widely popular at election time." But we didn't get the lowest unemployment rate in 28 years and the first balanced budget and

surplus in 29 years by doing what was popular today. We did it by doing what was right for the long run, and we'd like to at least see the ink turn from red to black, then dry a little bit and save Social Security before we squander this surplus. That is what I believe we should do. [Applause] Thank you.

Second, we can't rest until all our kids in all our communities have a world-class education. Our budget—our balanced budget provides for hiring 100,000 more teachers to lower average class size to 18 in the early grades. All the research shows that does more to help children learn and have permanent learning gains than anything else we can do.

It provides funds to build or repair 5,000 schools with kids—the largest they've ever been in our classroom—the largest number of students. It provides funds to hook up all of our classrooms to the Internet, not just those of the wealthiest school districts.

It provides funds to reward school districts who undertake sweeping reforms like Chicago has. In Chicago today the summer school—the summer school—is the sixth biggest school district in America. Over 40,000 children every day during the school year get three square meals at school. Yes, have high standards; yes, end social promotion; but for goodness sakes, do something for those kids that deserve a better shot and need more help to succeed in life.

And our budget provides funds to hire 35,000 teachers to go into troubled inner-city and other isolated neighborhoods by saying to the brightest young people, we'll pay your way to college if you'll teach off the cost by going into those tough neighborhoods and giving those kids a world-class education.

No community in America has a bigger stake in this than the Hispanic community. That's why I established an advisory commission on educational excellence for Hispanics, and why I have proposed a special \$600 million Hispanic education action plan to transform schools with high dropout rates, to support Hispanic colleges, to help adults who want to learn English or get a high school diploma, to help all Latinos, young and old, to reach their dreams.

And you and I know, yes, our children must master English. That's why I fought for a 35 percent increase in bilingual education,

to help 1,000 school districts improve teacher training and add extra classes for students who haven't yet mastered English. You know, when people go around and tell me all about the failures of bilingual education, I say, "Well, look at the number of school districts who have so many more children whose first language is not English that don't have any teachers who have been certified to teach them English." Let's solve the problem instead of making it a political issue.

The Hispanic action education plan would help to train 20,000 teachers to help children with limited English. This is not just a Hispanic problem anymore. Just across the river here in Fairfax County, there are children from 150 different national and ethnic groups. Being able to speak more than one language is a gift that more of us need. But in America, unless one of those languages is English, our children can never reach their full potential. This is not the subject of a divisive political battle. Let's look at the facts, put our children before our politics, and do what's right for the country, and actually give people the chance to speak this language.

Let me also say we can't rest, with 160 million Americans in managed care plans, until we pass a strong, enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights that says doctors ought to make medical decisions, not accountants.

Think of this. Don't you believe whatever your health plan is that you ought to have the right to see a specialist if you need it? If you walk out of this banquet tonight and, God forbid, you get hit by a car, don't you think they ought to take you to the closest emergency room, not one halfway across town that happens to be covered by your plan?

Those of you who are older, remember what it was like when a child was first born into your family? How would you feel if, because the mother or the father is in a plan covered by a small business, if the small business changes health plans and you're 6 months pregnant, or your wife is 6 months pregnant? I think you ought to be able to keep the same doctor until the baby is born. But that's not what plans provide today. I think that ought to be a right.

If you've ever had anybody in your family in chemotherapy treatment, it's pretty tough.

I've been there; a lot of you have. You try to make jokes about whether your hair is going to fall out. You try to deal with people when they get sick to their stomach and they can't eat. Nobody ought to have to worry, in addition to that, about whether in the middle of the chemotherapy treatment somebody is going to send you a letter in the mail and say, "I'm sorry, you've got to change doctors. You've got to do it all over again. You've got to start all over again." That is wrong. That is wrong, and we ought to stop it.

That's—we ought not to rest until we do. We ought not to rest while any of our communities are still segregated by income or race. The Government should lead the way in word and deed. I've asked Secretary Cuomo to crack down on unfair housing practices, to double the number of housing discrimination cases, to work with you to undertake a major legislative overhaul so public housing will help to deconcentrate poverty, mix incomes, and thereby mix people of all races and ethnicities. We can't live together as one nation unless we're able to live together in our own communities. And I ask you to help me work together on this.

We can't rest until every neighborhood can reap the benefits of our economic growth. That's why we should fund the empowerment initiatives the Vice President and Secretary Cuomo have worked so hard for, to get more investment, more jobs, and more opportunity into the neighborhoods which still have unemployment rates that are too high and incomes that are too low. We can do it now. If we can't do it now, with unemployment rates so low, when will we ever be able to do it? We should not walk away from this session of Congress without that empowerment agenda.

We should be proud that we have the lowest welfare rolls in 29 years, that we made good on our promise to restore some benefits to legal immigrants.

But there is much more to be done. The pressures to move from welfare to work are intense, and the transition can be especially difficult for Hispanic women who lack language or job skills. I want to make sure every individual has the tools to succeed in this transition. That's why we fought for a welfare-to-work fund in the balanced budget, to

help people make it; for \$50 million more for transportation for people who don't have cars. And that's why I have proposed in my balanced budget a \$21 billion child care initiative to add to what we fought for in the welfare bill. Nobody should have to give up being a good parent to succeed in the work place.

And we cannot rest until we do have an accurate census count. I just want to make sure everybody in this room understands the importance of that. Some in Congress would have us ignore the best scientific methods for ensuring the most accurate count. That is, methods that Republican, as well as Democratic, experts say is the best way to make sure everybody gets counted. I don't know why some people are afraid of having all Americans counted—counted in the drawing of congressional districts, counted in the delivery of Federal aid funds. In 1990, 5 percent of our Hispanic citizens were not counted. Nearly 70—listen to this—nearly 70,000 Hispanic children in Los Angeles County alone were left out.

Now, we can do better than that. This is a fundamental issue. This is a civil rights issue. If you believe every American counts, don't you also believe we have to count every American?

And while we're at it, once again I call upon the Congress to give the 4 million people of Puerto Rico the right to choose their own status. It is important. Now, in December the Puerto Rican people go to the polls. The Republican leaders of the Senate say, and I quote, they will "consider" the results of the referendum. I say I will respect the results of the referendum.

Now, we cannot rest until we keep economic growth going throughout the world, until we contain all this trouble our friends in Russia and Asia are experiencing, until we do everything we can to keep it from spreading to Latin America, which has been threatened by global financial events that they had nothing to do with creating. This is in our interests. The Latin markets are our fastest growing ones. They are the people that are doing more every year to buy American products as we build closer ties.

I have spent a lot of time on Latin America. Hillary has gone to Latin America several

times and is about to go again. We always believed that in the future of America, not only would Hispanic-Americans become our largest minority, but Latin America would become our closest partners for democracy as well as for prosperity.

Now, when you see all this debate in the paper about the IMF, that's really what that's about. The International Monetary Fund is a way that we work with other people to help countries that are doing the right thing get back on their feet and to try to stem and limit this economic turmoil. I ask your help in that. We need to do it for the benefit of our own people, as well as for our obligation.

Finally, let me say we cannot rest until we continue to work to bring America together across racial and ethnic lines. Last week, for the final time, I met with my Advisory Board on Race and received their report. Again, I say to you this is not a black/white issue, this is not even a black/white/brown issue. America is becoming ever more diverse. And it is our great, great asset as we move toward a new century in what is not only a global economy but, increasingly, a global society, where we face the same opportunities and the same dangers. We have got to learn to stop using our racial and ethnic differences as wedge issues in political campaigns and start lifting them up as money in the bank for 21st century America.

I see General McCaffrey out there, our drug czar. You know, we had a meeting the other day with the new Colombian President, a man who has actually had his own life imperiled for standing up against narcotrafficking. No children anywhere have an interest in anything other than doing everything we can to keep them away from the dangers of drugs. No children, without regard to race or income, have an interest in anything other than an America which educates all our children. No people anywhere in this country have an interest in anything other than an America which guarantees quality health care to all of our kids and gives every working family the dignity of knowing that if they work hard and obey the law, at least they should not live in poverty. That is the kind of America we have to build.

And let me say that immigration has been and will be an important part of that process.

It is not only good for America, it is America. And I say to you, we must continue to welcome new immigrants, to encourage them to become a full part of American society, and to help them become citizens and voting citizens, not stand in their way when they seek to do it.

So I say to you, you have been very kind to me tonight. You were enthusiastic. You cheered. You were happy. I had a temptation to throw this speech away and give you an old whoop-de-do—[laughter]—even though I'm not running anymore for anything. But I decided it was the wrong thing to do because you need to know what is really at stake, what is really going on, what really should bring you here.

In a few weeks, all of you and all our fellow citizens will be given a chance to go to the polls in November and choose what to do with this moment. Will it be partisanship or progress? Will it be about people or politics? Will we squander the moment or seize it? That is the decision before us. And as happy as I am and grateful for the reception you gave me, that's not what this is about. It's about you and your children and all the people out there all over this country. That's what this is about.

Thirty years ago, Robert Kennedy traveled to California to see a prostrate Cesar Chavez, who was fasting in penance, bed-ridden, for the violence caused by the struggle for farm workers' rights. That night they broke bread together in a Thanksgiving mass, and someone read the words Chavez was too weak to speak, words I would like to share with you tonight as I leave. Here is what he said: "Our lives are all that really belong to us, so it is how we use our lives that determines what kind of people we are." He said later that that night was the night Robert Kennedy made up his mind to run for President and, ultimately, to give his life for many of the causes for which we struggle today.

My friends, you and I are bound by a commitment to fulfill the legacy of this country's history, to deepen the meaning of our freedom, to widen the circle of opportunity, to strengthen the bonds of our community, and to stand against all those and all the forces that would divide us, demean us, or hold us back. Most everybody here has a magnificent

American story. Most everybody here can look back on parents and grandparents and great-grandparents of whom you are immensely proud but who overcame unimaginable odds and braved great sacrifices so that one day their children or their children's children could put on the clothes we wear tonight and come to a banquet like this tonight and be grateful to them for what they did for us.

Once in a generation, a country is in the position we find ourselves in tonight. With this kind of success, this kind of prosperity, this kind of confidence, this kind of opportunity to lead in the world, we cannot rest; we cannot indulge ourselves. We have work to do. We have work to do so that when our children and our children's children reach their maturity, they will know that we did what was right in this time, and we listened to the words of Cesar Chavez.

God bless you, and thank you so much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:59 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Carmen Delgado Votaw, vice chair, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute; and President Andres Pastrana of Colombia.

### **Remarks on the Census Bureau Report on Income and Poverty and an Exchange With Reporters**

*September 24, 1998*

**The President.** Thank you very much. She was terrific, wasn't she? Let's give her another hand. I thought she was great. [Applause]

Congressman Cardin, welcome. I know you're proud of your constituent here. Jessica, welcome. We're glad to see you. I think Congressman Blagojevich is here. We welcome him, along with Senator Efrain Gonzalez, who is the president of National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators; and Councilman Robert Cantana of Buffalo.

Let me once again thank Monique for her remarkable statement and her even more remarkable life. I'm delighted to be joined here by our economic team—by Erskine Bowles and Secretary Rubin, Secretary Herman, Gene Sperling, Jack Lew, Janet Yellen, Larry