

## The President's Radio Address *January 1, 1994*

Good morning, and happy New Year. I hope you're enjoying this day with your family and your friends. I hope you feel that you have a lot to be thankful for on New Year's Day. I know that I certainly do.

I am grateful that our economy is coming back to life, that optimism and direction are back. The deficit is down. Interest rates and inflation are down. Investments and consumer confidence are up. We have more trade opportunities with NAFTA and with the GATT world trade agreement. Millions of you have refinanced your homes and businesses. The private sector has created about a million and a half new jobs in just 10 months, more than were created in the previous 4 years.

But our Nation is about more than economics. It's also about our sense of community, the obligations we have to each other. For too long we've been coming apart instead of coming together. In 1993, we began to reverse that, and I'm grateful.

We established the national service program to allow our young people to serve their communities and earn money for their college educations. We reorganized the student loan program so that all students can now afford to borrow money from this program because they can repay on lower interest rates and based on the incomes they earn, not just the money they borrow. We made democracy more of a reality for millions of people with the motor voter bill, which makes it easier to register to vote. We wrote our best family values into law with the family leave law, which says to parents, if you have a newborn child or an ill parent, you can be with them, you can take a little time off from work without losing your jobs. We also strengthened our families when we gave tax relief to 15 million working families on modest wages with children so that they can stay off welfare, stay at work, and still succeed as parents. And after 7 years of gridlock, Washington finally woke to the growing fear of violence on

our streets when Congress passed and I signed the Brady bill.

All over America, beyond Washington, people are beginning to take more responsibility for themselves, for their children, for their communities, working to save jobs, improve schools, and make our streets safer. In 1994, we must resolve to do even more, to help the middle class with more jobs and with income growth, to help the poor who are trapped in whole neighborhoods where there's no work, few stable families, and where violence is the norm. There is still a great deal to do.

So in 1994, let us resolve to improve the health security, the personal security, and the job security of the American people who work hard and play by the rules. With all the changes sweeping our Nation and the world, let us resolve to make these changes our friends and not our enemies.

In 1994, we must work to keep the economic recovery going. We must pass comprehensive health care reform that provides benefits that can never be taken away. We must put more police on the street and take more assault weapons off the street. We must adopt world-class standards for our schools and provide lifetime training for our workers.

Millions of Americans, even those with good health insurance, must live in fear of losing their health coverage. Another 2 million Americans lost their insurance in 1993. Our health care reform plan is a guaranteed system of private insurance that will cover every American. We'll maintain the health care system in private hands, improve the quality of health care, increase the choices you have as a consumer, and protect the doctor-patient relationship. And all the while, if we do it in the way we've recommended, we will reduce mountains of paperwork and billions of dollars of unnecessary costs in the present system. Health reform is a good deal for our families and our future, and it should pass in 1994.