

people, themselves, what I called a New Covenant, a commitment to extend more opportunity in return for people assuming responsibility for their own lives, their own families, their own communities, for changing the things that have to be changed. That's the only way we're ever going to straighten this country out is if we have more opportunity and more responsibility, if people really believe that we can make a difference.

You know why I like being here? Because these people have proved that they can change their lives. And if they can do it, we can change America.

I work with Maxine Waters and with Mayor Riordan on a lot of things, and you are fortunate to be represented as you are. I tell you, the mayor just showed up, and he's had an earthquake, a fire, and a flood. [Laughter] I asked him if he thought God had hidden a volcano somewhere in Los Angeles County, and then you could become a new tourist mecca as a full-service disaster area. [Laughter] You know why we can laugh about that? Because you keep coming back. You've got good leadership and good grassroots folks and a spirit that won't quit.

And I was looking at Congresswoman Waters up here giving her talk tonight, and I was thinking, I wonder if those people have any idea how she worries the President to death in Washington until he does what she wants him to do? [Laughter] The first time she looked at me like that—the way she can look at you if she thinks you're not going to do the right thing—after I became President, I said, “Maxine, I'm the President; you don't have to look at me like that anymore.” She said, “Oh no, I have to look at you more like that now.” [Laughter]

I'm proud of the fact that the Labor Department put \$7 million in this project, because I think that Community Build and the Youth Fair Chance Plus programs represent all three of the things that I set out to do:

We're helping people become part of the economy, and that's important. Work gives dignity to life. People need an education. They need a job. They need a future, to give dignity to life.

And we're changing the way the Government works. We're reducing the size of Government, and we've taken \$11,000 in debt off of every family in America by reducing that deficit, and that gives our kids a better future. But we also have to prove that we can change the present,

and that's what this program does. And the Federal Government should be involved in programs like this, nonbureaucratic people programs that build people up instead of tearing them down.

And I like it because it does build that New Covenant. It says, “Okay, here's your opportunity.” But you know, we can be spending \$700 million here, and if people like these guys behind me hadn't decided they were going to change on the inside and do differently, the money would not make any difference. So we've got it all going in the right direction.

I say to you tonight, my friends, that if Dr. King could be here—and I think he is here, in a way—he'd be pretty pleased with what we're doing here. I know that much remains to be done. I know that in the atmosphere of the present where people have been told that everything the Government does is bad, it will be hard to continue.

But let me tell you something: Los Angeles and the cities around here and California and America are better off because of programs like this and better off because we're giving communities more funds to help deal with the crime problem, not only to hire more police officers but also to give young people some activities they can be engaged in that are positive so they have something to say yes to as well as something to say no to. These things matter. And we can make a difference. I know we must do more, but we should do more in ways that make sense.

I'm proud of the fact that this week it was announced that we not only have seen over 5½ million new jobs come into this economy since I became President but the unemployment rate among African-Americans is at a 20-year low. I'm proud of that. Now, that's the good news. The bad news is that the unemployment rate among young people is still very high, over one in three, and that among people who do not have much education, the unemployment rate is very high and the wages of those that work tend to be low and to stay there. So in the coming year, with this new Congress, I'm going to say to them, “You say you want the free enterprise system to work. You say you want more business people in minority communities. Well, so do I. Let's begin with passing my middle class bill of rights.”

If we're going to cut people's taxes, let's cut them for education and for raising children, to do things that will strengthen all the American