

it working? Does it reflect our values and our interests? That is the question. There are many areas in which we can find agreement, and we must be big enough to seek those areas. Even though in so many places they turned away from the same opportunity in the previous 2 years, we have to let that go. Our job is to think about the people out there in America, those who are left behind in this global economy who need help to work their way from the under class to the middle class. We need to think about people out there who are working harder and falling further behind who deserve to have the American dream in a swelling opportunity middle class.

We need to be true to many of you in this room who are successful people, who are winning in the global economy but who know that your ultimate success and that of your children and your grandchildren depends upon our ability to go forward together. And you haven't left the Democratic Party, because you believe that America is one country and one community and we're going forward together. We have to be true to those people.

And so we have to work together. I hope that we will get bipartisan support for the administration's middle class bill of rights, which could just as well be called the bill of rights and responsibilities. It reflects all three things that I sought to do from the day I came here: to create a new economic policy, a new way of governing, and a New Covenant of rights and responsibilities.

If we give a tax deduction for education after high school, if we let people withdraw tax-free from an IRA for educational purposes, we are helping to rebuild our economy, we're having a nonbureaucratic governmental effort to help people grow, and we are establishing rights and responsibilities because you cannot be given an education, all you can be given is an opportunity to get an education. You have to do that for yourself.

Anybody can offer a tax cut. We saw that for the 12 years before we showed up. You know, you can quadruple the debt of the country, increase inequality, and claim you gave everybody a tax cut, even if it wasn't a fair one.

What we ought to do is to give hardworking, middle class Americans the benefit of this economic recovery by having a tightly disciplined tax relief focused largely on middle class Americans in ways that are paid for so that we do

not explode the deficit. That should be our goal, and that will be my goal.

We're gunning with another round of reinventing Government proposals. We want there to be bipartisan support for that. We also think there ought to be some more political reform. I applaud the Republicans for supporting the law applying to Congress the same laws that are applied to the private sector. I think that's a good idea. And we should be for that; everybody should be for that. But we ought not stop there. We ought to also pass lobby reform and require disclosure and ban the gifts and the trips and let the American people know that there is no special political class in this country forgetting about them.

The Democrats ought to keep pushing until we get lobby reform and responsible campaign finance reform and the things that will move us forward as a people in increasing the trust of the voters in their Government. We ought to be doing that and say, "Join hands with us and do that, too. We like what you did, let's go further." That's the attitude that we ought to have.

And we ought to also be for more welfare reform. But I want to say something about this. I may be the only President who ever actually spent a lot of time talking to people on welfare. I may be the only President who ever, when he was a Governor, actually went into a welfare office, not just one but many, and watched how they work. We need to change this system. And our goal should be to move from welfare to work, from dependence to independence, from just proving you can biologically have children to responsible parenting. That ought to be our goal.

But our goal ought to be to liberate the energies and capacities of people to be good parents and to be good workers, not to punish people because they happen to be poor. And there will be some strong differences that need to be debated here, because I believe the American people desperately want a change in the welfare system. I believe they do not like the direction of our culture in terms of the breakup of families and the rising number of our children born out of wedlock. But I do not believe they want to punish parents and children just because they're poor or because they've made some mistakes in their lives.

I think we ought to require a system that promotes parenting, that promotes education,