

Jan. 9 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 1998

You have to make sure that you have raised your sights as high as you can.

And let me just say, I don't want to embarrass him, but I'd like to compliment the principal here at Mission High School, Mr. Ahmadian. He came here in the late seventies from Iran, without being able to speak a word of English. Now, as the leader of this remarkable school, he's helped thousands of people go on to careers in education, in medicine, in law enforcement. He's helping them to do what he did with high standards for higher education. Whether you're the son or daughter of a migrant laborer, or a doctor, the same formula applies: high standards and higher education; taking responsibility; sitting down with family, teachers, guidance counselors; committing to work hard to learn, to do the homework, to think about the future.

We're going to do our part in Washington to make sure that those of you who are prepared

for the future can go on to college. We've removed the obstacles. There's an open field ahead, but you have to reach the goal line. Take the ball and run with it. Your future is bright; the future of the valley is bright; and the future of the Nation is in your hands.

God bless you. *Gracias. Viva el valle.* Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:05 a.m. in Tom Landry Stadium. In his remarks, he referred to Mission High School student body president Elizabeth Gonzales, who introduced the President, principal Masoud Ahmadian, and alumnus Koy Detmer, NFL Philadelphia Eagles player; Lucille de la Garza, wife of former Representative Kika de la Garza; and William H. White, chair, Texas State Democratic Party.

Remarks at a Reception for Representative Ruben Hinojosa in McAllen, Texas

January 9, 1998

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, Ruben. Thank you very much to the Cantus, to Alonzo and Yoli, for having us in their modest little home here. [Laughter] Is this a beautiful place, or what? It's really wonderful. I'm so glad to be here.

I want to thank the Congressman and Marty and their entire family for making me feel so welcome down here. I thank Congressman Solomon Ortiz and Congressman Ciro Rodriguez who are also here and have been good friends of our administration and good for this country. I'm glad to be joined here today by the Secretary of Education in my administration, Dick Riley; our land commissioner, Garry Mauro; our State Democratic chair, Bill White; the county Democratic chair, Ramon Garcia; McAllen's mayor, Leo Montalvo, and all the other local elected officials.

I'd also like to thank Alfonso Hinojosa who created those beautiful wooden chairs inside. I don't know if you've seen them, but they commemorate my visit. And I said when I sat down in one that it actually made me feel like a real President. I felt—actually, I almost felt like a

monarch sitting in that chair. It's a little too highfalutin for me on a daily basis. [Laughter]

Hector Reyna, Sr., I thank you for creating the stained-glass Arkansas State bird and flower. And I'd also like to welcome State Representative Richard Raymond, who is a candidate for land commissioner. Thank you all for being here, and I'm very glad to see you.

Let me say that I'm honored to be here to help this Congressman mobilize his district, to sit down this morning, early, with a lot of community leaders and talk about the economic challenges still facing the valley: what should be done to generate more jobs, more investment, to rebuild the transportation system and improve the quality and supply of water—all the issues we discussed this morning.

I loved going over to the school and seeing the children and telling them that starting this January we could honestly say we had opened the doors of college to all Americans. We've made community college virtually free to nearly everybody in this country now with tax credits called the HOPE scholarship. We've given a \$1,000 tax credit for the junior and senior year