

Lucila Pena, are here. Thank you for a fine son and a fine Cabinet member.

I'd like to thank your land commissioner, Garry Mauro, for joining me today; and also thank the White House aides who helped to do so much work on this trip, Mickey Ibarra, Janet Murguia, Cynthia Jasso-Rotunno. I am very proud of the fact that I have appointed far more Hispanic-Americans than any previous President to important positions in my administration. I'm even prouder of the fact that they're doing a very good job for all Americans.

I'd like to welcome all the students and teachers and Head Start teachers and others here today. Thank you for coming. And I'd like to thank the bands that provided our music today; thank you very much.

I'd also like to say a special word of thanks for that plane back there. I don't know if you've looked at it—you've probably, those of you who live here, doubtless been here to see this plane before—but the Confederate Air Force preserved this BT-13 so thousands of people can come and learn about an aircraft that helped our country to fight and win World War II.

It reminds me of one of the wisest decisions that President Roosevelt made after World War II, and that was to give every returning soldier the chance to go on to college through the GI bill. The GI bill revolutionized educational opportunity in America. It made millions and millions and millions of middle class families and better futures for their children.

I am exceedingly proud that last year when we passed the balanced budget agreement last year, we passed an education program that opened the doors to college wider than ever before, the biggest increase in college aid since the GI bill 50 years ago. We learned the lesson from President Roosevelt. It's the right thing to do.

You know—all of you know, you live with this every day—that we are living in an age characterized by increasing communication across national borders and revolutions in technology and information. It's changing the way we work and live and relate to each other, and it will dramatically change the lives of these children who are here.

What I have tried to do, as I have said repeatedly, is to build a bridge to this new world and the 21st century, so that there is opportunity for every American child responsible enough to work for it; so that we all work to-

gether as one America, united across all the racial and ethnic and religious lines of diversity in this country; and so that America is still the world's best hope for peace and freedom.

Now, there are a lot of things that we can do to help to grow the economy. We have to do some more here in south Texas. And I met this morning with community leaders from the whole region to talk about that. But let me tell you, nothing we can do will equip our young people for the modern world unless all of our young people have a very good education and are able to keep on learning for a lifetime.

This week I announced that I will soon submit to Congress the first balanced budget the United States has had in 30 years. Here's what it will do for going on to college, within the context of balancing the budget.

There will be a HOPE scholarship, a \$1,500 credit for the first 2 years of college, enough to make community college free for virtually every person in the United States. There will be lifetime learning credits, another \$1,000-a-year tax credit for the 3d and 4th years of college, for graduate school, and for older people who have to go back to upgrade their skills. There will be education IRA's so that if parents save for their children's college education, when they want to withdraw the money plus the interest it's earned, they can do it without any tax penalty, because we don't want to tax savings for education.

We have expanded the Pell grant program to cover millions of eligible Americans so that the scholarship is larger and the number of people who are eligible are more. We now have had 100,000 young people, including quite a number from Texas, serve in our national service program, AmeriCorps, serving their community and earning money to go to college. And today a little earlier, I announced that our budget will also include for the first time a request for 1 million work-study positions for young people who want to work their way through college. What that means is that people literally will not be able to say anymore, "I can't go to college because I can't afford it."

We also reformed the student loan program so that you can pay the money back as a percentage of your income. You don't ever have to worry about being bankrupted if you have to borrow the money. There is no financial excuse.