

bind us together as America, that make us one country, stronger than ever in a new world.

That's why I was profoundly honored when your former mayor, your present mayor, the Congresswoman, Phil Carroll, and so many others banded together to defeat Proposition A, and I was glad to actually come out and do my little part in that, not because I held all the answers to all the problems regarding all of our racial differences but because I know one thing: As your President, I have spent an enormous amount of time, the time you gave me to be President, trying to do what I could to save lives and stop people from killing each other over their racial, their ethnic, and their religious differences.

I see people in nations in Africa engaging in tribal warfare, when they're all so poor it breaks my heart, and I think, if only they would join hands to try to lift their children up, how much better would they be. I see my people in Northern Ireland still arguing over what happened 600 years ago between the Catholics and the Protestants, when the young people say, "We worship the same God. It's about time we started acting like it. Let's build a better future together." I see people in Bosnia—Serbs, Croats, Muslims, Western Christians, Orthodox Christians, and followers of Muhammad—who shared the same piece of land for hundreds of years and lived for decades in this century in peace, slaughtered each other for years, and now we're trying to get them back together. And they have to learn to lay down their hatreds.

If we want to lead that kind of world away from that sort of thing, we have to set a good example. We have to prove that on every street corner in this country, in every school in this country, in every workplace in this country, in every apartment house in this country, we not only say we believe we are one America and none of us are any better than anybody else in the eyes of God, we have to live like it. We have to live like it.

And finally, just in a few days, I'm going to see the Prime Minister of Israel and the head of the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Mr. Arafat, to try to end the longstanding differences in the Middle East. The beginning of the world's monotheistic religions, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, all in that little piece of land—nearly everybody in America, not all of us but most of us, trace our faith's roots

to that place. Isn't it unbelievable that people still are fighting over that, when if they would say, "We are the children of one God. Why can't we be one people and share this land of milk and honey together?"

So I say that one of the reasons I challenge people to engage in citizen service, one of the reasons I was so proud to be introduced by Ronald Cotton, is not just because he's a valedictorian, not just because he's going to be a doctor, not just because I might need him to fix my heart one day—[laughter]—but because as busy as he is, he still does his citizen service. That's what we all should do. If he's got time to do it, the rest of us should have time to do it.

Now, what's all that got to do with education? You need to understand all this if you're going to make the most of the 21st century. It can be the brightest, best time in all of human history, but it will only work for America because this is a democracy, where we think everybody should have an opportunity. It will only work if everybody has a chance to walk across that bridge to the 21st century together, if we all have a chance.

That's what's special about America. That's how we got started. We believe nobody ought to get an unfair advantage, everybody ought to have a chance, and if people need a hand up, we ought to give it to them. That's what we believe as Americans. Now, the problem is, in this world we're living in, where the pace of change and the scope of change is greater than ever before, where the world is crowding in on you as never before, there is nothing anybody else can do for you unless you're willing to make your own dream by the development of your own mind.

Therefore, the 21st century will not only be known as the information age, the age of science and technology, it will also be known by ordinary people as the education age because what you know will depend—will determine in large measure the scope of your life in the new era. It's always been an advantage to have an education. But what I want you to understand now is it's not just an advantage; it is a necessity.

Let me just give you a couple of statistics. Two decades ago, college graduates made about 40 percent more than people with a high school diploma. Today, in less than 20 years, the gap has gone to 75 percent. Over a lifetime, people who have 2 years of college will make a quarter