

*as unemployment and low educational attainment in the Native American community.]*

*The President.* Let me just say very briefly on this one subject, I think it's also quite important—and we've been working at this steadily for 5 years, and I thank Senator Daschle, particularly—I want to thank him because he knows a lot about these issues. But the Native American tribes have a—I don't want to tie the analogy too tight, but they have experienced in the last several decades a situation in dealing with the United States that is not unlike that experienced by the District of Columbia.

I always tell people, the problem that DC's had—one problem that DC has is sort of the "not quite" place. It's not quite independent, and it's not quite dependent. It's not quite a State, but it's not quite a city that we treat like a city. It's sort of "not quite." And we've had a policy that, if it had an honest label—an honest label—toward Native American tribes, would be something like sovereign dependence, or dependent sovereignty.

And what I have tried to do is not only to recognize the sovereignty of the tribes when it came to national resource and environmental issues and even issues where I maybe didn't always agree because it wasn't my place to decide—some of the gaming issues and other things that the law gives it to the tribes to decide. I think there is this whole other sort of superstructure of the way the Federal Government dealt with Native Americans relating mostly to their economic needs and their educational needs, which in my view was not focused enough toward economic and educational and health care and other empowerment issues, where I think we could—we'll never have the right sort of sovereignty relationship until the tools for success are there.

And I really—we've worked at this for 5 years. We haven't quite got it down yet exactly right, but I think we're making a lot of progress. And I appreciate the help you've given us.

Tom, and John—go ahead, John.

*[Historian John Hope Franklin, Chairman, President's Advisory Board on Race, noted that affirmative action favoring whites operated in the Nation for a much longer time than that favoring minorities. He also suggested that the President strongly publicize actions and events relating to the race initiative because that had not attracted much media attention thus far.]*

*The President.* Thank you very much. I also want to thank you for the extraordinary amount of time and energy you've put into this. It's been humbling to the rest of us.

Tom.

*[Senator Thomas A. Daschle stated that the Democrats in Congress need to amplify the President's leadership. He noted the extremely negative statistics on reservations throughout the Midwest, citing an 85 percent unemployment rate on reservations in North Dakota, as opposed to a 1.9 percent rate off reservations, as an example of the great need.]*

*The President.* Before we go I'd like to just leave you with this thought, just sort of food for thought to keep you churning on this. First, I'll make a request. I would like anything you can do to help us get more things that work in to the commission staff, so we can put it on the Internet and get it out, let people see that there are—people always write or they E-mail us and they say, "What can we do?" We'd like to say, here's something that's working somewhere; why don't you do it? That's important. Anything you can do to help us recruit any kind of new leadership to enlist in this cause, we'd like to have your help on that.

But anyway, let me finish. Here's the thing I'd like to leave you with, just sort of as food for thought, to continue this discussion and try to narrow it further. And I may be unfairly summarizing someone else's work, so I'll try not to—I hope I'm not being unfair. Bill Raspberry had an interesting column the other day in which he said this race effort is a big deal, and there's three things involved in it, and maybe nobody could ever deal with all three things. He said, first of all, there's the feeling of racial prejudice, how people feel about each other. And secondly, he said, there is the existence of illegal discrimination that our laws prohibit. And thirdly, there is the existence of outcomes which are dramatically different by race; your life chances and education, income, employment, and ownership and health care, among other things, are dramatically different based on your race.

He said, "I once thought we could fight all three of them in the sixties because we had an enemy, the Southern white people, and everybody else was on the same side." Now, at least when it comes to—maybe everybody feels some discrimination towards somebody else or—