

The President's Radio Address

January 1, 2000

The President. Good morning, and happy New Year—or, we should say, happy new millennium. Last night Hillary and I joined thousands of Americans on the National Mall to bid farewell to the remarkable century just past and to welcome the new millennium. The feelings of good will and hope that overcame us all will be among our most treasured moments, and we're deeply grateful that the celebrations were both jubilant and peaceful here and all around the world.

The First Lady. But our celebration didn't just begin at the stroke of midnight, nor will it end today. Two years ago the President and I launched the White House Millennium Project to inspire all Americans to reflect on where we have been as a nation, who we are, and what we want to be, a project "to honor the past and imagine the future."

I've traveled all across our country, encouraging citizens and communities to think of the gifts that America can give to the future, whether it's saving our historic treasures such as the Declaration of Independence or Thomas Edison's invention factory or the pueblos of the American Southwest, opening trails and planting millions of trees for future generations to enjoy, or teaching our schoolchildren to value their own families' and America's immigrant past. The President and I invite you to join these and so many other efforts to extend our celebration far into the new year and the new century.

The President. What is perhaps most remarkable about last night's celebration is the way it was shared all around the world. Millions of Americans, and billions of others across the globe, watched on television as midnight broke first in Asia, then in Europe, then Africa, South America, finally here in North America.

That people all over the planet could experience the same events at the same time would have been impossible for anyone to imagine 1,000 years ago, even 100. Yet, the growing interconnectedness of the world today, thanks to a global economy and technologies like the

Internet, is more than just a mark of how far we've come. It's the key to understanding where we're going and what we must do in the new millennium.

It's clear that our fate in America increasingly will be tied to the fate of other nations and other people around the world. We must have prosperous partners to trade with, secure democracies to share the burdens of peacekeeping, and mutual effort to combat challenges that know no borders, from terrorism to environmental destruction. To advance our interests and protect our values in this new, interconnected world, America clearly must remain engaged. We must help to shape events and not be shaped by them.

The First Lady. Yet, it is not just by our exertions abroad but by the example we set here at home that we can influence the world for the better. For in the new millennium, the world will be looking to America for leadership in meeting our great common challenges.

If we in America can extend prosperity to people and places in this country that have not yet felt it, then perhaps the global economy can bring a better life to the 1.4 billion people who live on less than one dollar a day. If we in America can provide all of our children with a world-class education, then perhaps it will be possible in the not-too-distant future for every child in the world to have a good education. And if we can build one America and make our diversity our greatest strength, then perhaps other nations will see the advantage of working to overcome their own ethnic and religious tensions.

The President. We begin the 21st century well poised to be that guiding light. Seldom in our history and never in my lifetime has our Nation enjoyed such a combination of widespread economic success, social solidarity, and national self-confidence, without an internal crisis or an overarching external threat. Never has the openness and dynamism of our society been more emulated by other countries. Never have our values