

mander of our district here, General Gorden. And of course, we heard the 220-year saga tonight that led from Crispus Attucks to General Colin Powell.

Today I say to you ladies and gentlemen who have served us in uniform, at last our children, without regard to their race, see in you nothing more and nothing less than what you are: American heroes in the proud tradition of George Washington, John Pershing, and George Marshall. You have earned their way into the Nation's hearts, and you are there now forever and ever.

Tonight let me salute you for many things but most of all for never giving up on America. Finally, finally, in the military your country is worthy of you, worthy of the words of the Con-

stitution and the Bill of Rights, worthy of the sacrifice that you and your forebears have given. Let us never forget it. And let us now say: Wouldn't it be nice if the rest of America worked together as well as the United States military?

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:13 p.m. at Constitution Hall. In his remarks, he referred to Gen. Colin Powell, USA, Ret.; Maj. Gen. Frederick Davison, USA, Ret.; Vice Adm. Samuel L. Gravelly, Jr., USN, Ret.; Ossie Davis, narrator of the salute; Mrs. Charity Adam Earley, former Lieutenant Colonel, Women's Army Corps; and Maj. Gen. Fred Gorden, Commander, Military District of Washington..

The President's Radio Address

February 18, 1995

Good morning. I'm joined today by the Houston Rockets, last year's National Basketball Association champs. I'm glad they're here to have their recognition and take their tour of the White House, not only because of what they've achieved but because I believe team sports reflect America at its best.

And in America, as in team sports, anyone can rise as far as his or her God-given talents and hard work will take them. That doesn't mean everyone can lead the NBA in scoring. The American dream doesn't guarantee results for anybody. But it does mean that opportunity is there if you're willing to work and struggle and do your very best. At the same time, for teams to succeed, people have to work hard and work together. Hakeem Olajuwon would probably be the first to admit that stars can break records but only teams win championship rings.

That's what I mean when I talk about a New Covenant in America. It's about teamwork, partnership among all of our people.

In this country at this time, as we move into a new century and a new economy, the Government's job is to expand opportunity while shrinking Government bureaucracy, to empower people to make the most of their own lives, and to enhance our security, not just abroad

but here at home on our streets, too. At the same time, we must demand more responsibility from every citizen in return, not just for ourselves and our families but responsibility for our communities and our country. We're all in this together—more opportunity and more responsibility.

I know the American people want us to practice that here in Washington, and I've reached out to the Republican Congress. At the end of the cold war as we move into this information age, there are many areas where we can work together to improve the lives of hard-working Americans: reducing the size of the Federal Government, reducing the burden of unfunded requirements on State and local governments, requiring Congress to live under the same laws it imposes on people in the private sector, the line-item veto to control unnecessary spending, and giving more flexibility to States to reform their welfare and health care systems.

But we still have our differences as well. And when we do, I'm going to judge a policy not on whether it's a Republican or a Democratic one but on whether it's best for the American people. If it is, I'll support it, fight for it, sign it into law. But if it isn't, I will oppose it.

Just this week, we've seen where some of these differences lie. When I ran for President,

I pledged to cut 100,000 Federal bureaucrats and use the money to put 100,000 new police officers on the street. I did it because one of the jobs of the Federal Government is to enhance our security at home and because crime and violence is a problem all over America, in communities small and large.

Well, we're keeping that promise. Last year's crime bill reduces the Federal bureaucracy and takes all the money and gives it to our communities to fight crime. It provides explicitly for 100,000 new police officers. Just since the 4 months since the crime bill took effect, police departments in America have been able to hire over 16,000 police officers. That's in just 4 months. We're going to make the 100,000 goal.

And just so you'll know how much that is, there are only 550,000 police officers in America. So with these 100,000 all going on the streets, that's about a 20 percent increase in the police forces of America to keep our people safer.

Incredibly, Republicans in the House of Representatives voted to replace our guarantee of 100,000 police with a blank check that has no guarantees at all, with money that can be used for all kinds of things other than police. Now, I'm all for cutting bureaucracy; under our plan, communities can apply for police with a one-page, eight-question application. But I know the American people want more police on the street, and I know the law enforcement officers of this country know it's the best crime-fighting tool there is. I'm going to work with the Senate to fix this proposal. But I will veto any effort to repeal or undermine our promise.

Some are saying that this change is necessary because police departments won't hire 100,000 people because we require them to come up with a little of the money, too. To them I say, in only 4 months, one-half of all the communities in the entire Nation have written to us asking for more police. This is popular in the country, and it ought to stay the law here in the Congress.

As we enter the 21st century, the keys to opportunity for every American are education and training. That's another one of our jobs here in Washington, to give people the tools they need to make the most of their own lives. That's why we reformed the student loan system, eliminating middlemen and actually cutting the cost to the taxpayers and making college loans more affordable for all kinds of middle

class students all across this country, lower cost and easier to pay back. We also expanded the Head Start program by 30,000 children and made it apply to younger kids. We're helping young people who don't choose college learn the skills they need to get and keep high-paying jobs.

In the last Congress, many Republicans supported these things as well as Democrats. But in this Congress, some Republicans want to limit the reach of our college loans so over half the students in the country can't get them. They want to slow down or stop or reverse a lot of these other educational gains.

But creating opportunity for people who take responsibility for themselves is exactly what the Government should be doing at this time in our history. Some of these Republicans see education as just another place to cut and gut. I want to cut Government. I have cut Government. There are already more than 100,000 fewer people working here than there were the day I became President. But I don't want to do it at the expense of our children's skills and education and our future.

Finally, this week our administration opposed Republican efforts in the House of Representatives to force the Government to spend billions on a Star Wars-type defense system, diverting those resources from high priority national security areas and threatening our Antiballistic Missile Treaty. I was gratified that the Democrats and some Republicans who joined them had the courage to defeat this unacceptable and unconstitutional infringement on the President's authority. America's security must never be about Republicans and Democrats, about who happens to be President and who happens to control Congress. Our national security should never be a partisan issue. And I will not allow Congress to jeopardize that security by making it one. After all, our job, no matter what our party is, is to work together to move America forward and to preserve the American dream for all Americans in the new global economy.

That's why I proposed the middle class bill of rights, to cut taxes for ordinary people to help them invest in their families and in their education; why I want to raise the minimum wage, so people who will take the responsibility to work full-time and stay away from welfare can earn a decent living for themselves and their children while they're doing it.

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I will fight for every idea, every proposal, every piece of legislation that strengthens the American dream. And I'll keep doing everything in my power to fight against anything that weakens it.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks Congratulating the 1994 National Basketball Association Champion Houston Rockets and an Exchange With Reporters February 18, 1995

The President. Good morning, everyone. I am delighted to be here with the Houston Rockets; along with NBA Commissioner David Stern; Congresswoman Sheila Jackson-Lee; the owner of the Rockets, Leslie Alexander; and of course, Rudy Tomjanovich, the head coach.

I want to congratulate the Rockets formally on their championship last year. We've been trying to find a time for them to come to the White House and make their official visit for some time, and as you know, they played the Bullets here last night, and I'm glad to have them here.

I enjoyed last season immensely. I enjoyed watching the Rockets win. It was the first-ever major championship in sports for a Houston team. It opened the season with 15 straight wins, tying an NBA record. And the victories, the number of victories they had was the best in the team's history. So it was a great season for them. And you all know, I kind of liked basketball last year anyway. And I'm beginning to like it better this year as it goes along.

It occurs to me that basketball is a lot like my work around here: You get behind; you get ahead; you never know whether you're going to win until the end of the game. But the most important thing is that you keep playing and doing the best you can and working on the teamwork.

Coach Tomjanovich did a great job in leading the Rockets to victory last year. He's been with the Rockets for 24 years. And I might say that's sort of a rarity in professional athletics today. But it's the kind of loyalty to an organization that I think we need more of all across America, in every walk of life.

I was just told that, before I came in here, that Hakeem Olajuwon's name in Arabic translates into "always on top." [Laughter] I would

say that even for the NBA's most valuable player and defensive player of the year, it helps to be on top if you're 7 feet tall. And he's really done very, very well.

Let me say in closing, I think all Americans enjoy athletics, and I think it's a very healthy thing. But as I said in my radio address today, the thing I like best about basketball is that it is, every play, in every way, a team sport. And it requires a team mentality, even with a lot of stars, to win. You can't win without great players, but you can't win without good teamwork either. And that's what our country needs more of. And I'm delighted to have the Houston Rockets here.

I'd like now to ask the NBA Commissioner, David Stern, to come forward and say a few words.

[At this point, Mr. Stern made brief remarks and presented the President with a jacket.]

The President. What do you think this will do for my image, guys? [Laughter] I love this. I love this.

Mr. Stern. It's an extra large, Mr. President. [Laughter]

The President. I need an extra large. That's great. [Laughter]

Mr. Stern. With that, I'd like to introduce the owner of the Houston Rockets, Les Alexander. Les.

The President. Thank you.

Mr. Alexander. Thank you, Mr. President, for having us here today. I'd like to present you with a championship ring with your name on it, and it says, "To the number one fan in America, from the Houston Rockets."

The President. Thank you so much. That's beautiful. Thank you.