

of the various influence centers in our society to reinstall character and give a good life to our people. But the fundamental fact is that this is a very great country, and nearly everybody is still getting up every day and doing the very best they can to do what is right. Nearly everybody desperately wants to have children who have good character and who do good and who are good, nearly everybody.

So I think what you are here about is profoundly important. But what I want to say to you is, do not be discouraged. In the light of the whole history of our Republic, this is our job at this time. It is not an undoable job. It is profoundly important. It will be difficult because of all the forces working on people's state of mind that undermine what we have to do. Because it's so much easier in the world today to identify what we're against instead of what we're for. It's so much easier in the world today not to look at the problems within our own hearts and minds because we can always find somebody we think is worse. So it is so much easier to put this off and delay it. And there are no institutions really for bringing us all together, across all the lines that divide us, in our common cause of building what is good about America and building up what is good within the character of our people. But we can do it. And I believe we will.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Amitai Etzioni, founder and chair, Communitarian Network.

Statement on the Hospitalization of Former Defense Secretary Les Aspin

May 20, 1995

I was saddened to hear that former Defense Secretary Les Aspin was hospitalized earlier today. Hillary and I wish him a speedy recovery. Our prayers are with him and his family at this time.

Statement on the Second Anniversary of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993

May 20, 1995

Two years ago today, I signed into law the National Voter Registration Act, better known as "motor-voter." This common sense law is making it easier for all Americans to register to vote. Motor-voter promised to open up the democratic process, and I am pleased to report that it is delivering on that promise.

Across America, nearly 2 million citizens have registered to vote in the 5 months since the law went into effect. In Georgia, 180,000 people registered in the first 3 months of this year, compared to only 85,000 all last year. In North Carolina, 30,000 citizens are registering per month, up from 6,000 a month in 1991. And in Alabama, 43,000 people registered in the first 3 months of this year, compared to only 23,000 in the same period last year.

Motor-voter is working because it makes sense. The Act simply requires States to make registration easier by making more forms available, at motor vehicle offices, social agencies, and through the mail. It is that simple.

Motor-voter is the latest step in our Nation's efforts to enfranchise all our citizens, giving them the power to affect their own destiny and our common destiny by participating fully in our democracy. I am proud to see it working so well.

Remarks at the White House Photographers Association Dinner

May 20, 1995

I want to gets lots of records of you clapping for me. [Laughter] Well, ladies and gentlemen, tonight, I feel your pain. [Laughter] Is there a courier around here anywhere? [Laughter] I hate these name tags. [Laughter]

I just wanted you to see what it feels like to have your picture taken when you're eating. [Laughter]