

Repealing the estate tax would undermine the progressivity, fairness, and integrity of the tax system. In 2010, the repeal of the estate and gift taxes would provide a \$50 billion tax break. But this estate tax repeal would benefit only 54,000 estates—about 2 percent of decedents—providing an average tax cut of \$800,000. Small businesses and family farms would receive a tiny fraction of the benefits of this proposal, while the largest estates would enjoy enormous windfalls. In addition, studies indicate that, without the estate tax, charitable donations and bequests would fall by \$5 billion to \$6 billion per year.

I would like to work with the bipartisan Congressional leadership to enact legislation to reduce the burden of the estate tax on small businesses and family farms, provided it is done in an overall framework of fiscal discipline that strengthens Social Security and Medicare, invests in key priorities, and pays down the debt by 2013. I look forward to working with you to accomplish this goal.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico

June 9, 2000

Mexican Economy

Q. President Clinton, do you want to say something about the Mexican economy? How do you see the development of the last 5½ years under President Zedillo?

President Clinton. I think President Zedillo has done a truly remarkable job. Mexico has had 5 years of growth, in excess of 5 percent a year, after the very difficult financial crisis in '94. And I think it's a real tribute to him and to the people he put on his team, as well as to the hard work and industry of the people of Mexico.

But I hope the partnership that we have enjoyed together after NAFTA and through

the crisis has played some role. But I think the great credit goes to the President and his team and the people of Mexico.

Mexican Election

Q. What do you think about the Mexican election?

President Clinton. I think the Mexican people will vote and make their own decision. It's interesting to observe. It's just like this election. I'm just an observer now. I'm not running for anything.

[*At this point, a question was asked and answered in Spanish, and no translation was provided.*]

Organization of American States

Q. [*Inaudible*]*—*just failed to get the support of the Latin American countries to get the OAS as a mediator in Peru. What do you think could be the role of the OAS supervising elections in Latin America without the support of key countries like Mexico?

President Clinton. Well, I think the real question that we all have to come to terms with is, what is the right thing to do now? And that's what we've been discussing. But over the long run, I think that the OAS still has a good future and a critical future. And I don't think there's any difference between the United States and Mexico in our determination to do whatever we can to keep democracy strong throughout the region.

And so we talked about it today, and it's a difficult problem. But I think the trend is good. You can't look back on the last 20 years and not believe that. And so we'll need some mechanism to monitor these elections and to be involved in an ongoing basis, and I think the OAS still has a pretty good future.

Thank you.

NOTE: The exchange began at 2:45 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

**Proclamation 7317—Establishment
of the Canyons of the Ancients
National Monument**

June 9, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Containing the highest known density of archaeological sites in the Nation, the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument holds evidence of cultures and traditions spanning thousands of years. This area, with its intertwined natural and cultural resources, is a rugged landscape, a quality that greatly contributes to the protection of its scientific and historic objects. The monument offers an unparalleled opportunity to observe, study, and experience how cultures lived and adapted over time in the American Southwest.

The complex landscape and remarkable cultural resources of the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument have been a focal point for archaeological interest for over 125 years. Archaeological and historic objects such as cliff dwellings, villages, great kivas, shrines, sacred springs, agricultural fields, check dams, reservoirs, rock art sites, and sweat lodges are spread across the landscape. More than five thousand of these archaeologically important sites have been recorded, and thousands more await documentation and study. The Mockingbird Mesa area has over forty sites per square mile, and several canyons in that area hold more than three hundred sites per square mile.

People have lived and labored to survive among these canyons and mesas for thousands of years, from the earliest known hunters crossing the area 10,000 years ago or more, through Ancestral Puebloan farmers, to the Ute, Navajo, and European settlers whose descendants still call this area home. There is scattered evidence that Paleo-Indians used the region on a sporadic basis for hunting and gathering until around 7500 B.C. During the Archaic period, generally covering the next six thousand years, occupation of the Four Corners area was dominated by hunters and gatherers.

By about 1500 B.C., the more sedentary Basketmakers spread over the landscape. As Ancestral Northern Puebloan people occupied the area around 750 A.D., farming began to blossom, and continued through about 1300 A.D., as the area became part of a much larger prehistoric cultural region that included Mesa Verde to the southeast. Year-round villages were established, originally consisting of pit house dwellings, and later evolving to well-recognized cliff-dwellings. Many archaeologists now believe that throughout this time span, the Ancestral Northern Puebloan people periodically aggregated into larger communities and dispersed into smaller community units. Specifically, during Pueblo I (about 700–900 A.D.) the occupation and site density in the monument area increased. Dwellings tended to be small, with three or four rooms. Then, during Pueblo II (about 900–1150 A.D.), settlements were diminished and highly dispersed. Late in Pueblo II and in early Pueblo III, around 1150 A.D., the size and number of settlements again increased and residential clustering began. Later pueblos were larger multi-storied masonry dwellings with forty to fifty rooms. For the remainder of Pueblo III (1150–1300 A.D.), major aggregation occurred in the monument, typically at large sites at the heads of canyons. One of these sites includes remains of about 420 rooms, 90 kivas, a great kiva, and a plaza, covering more than ten acres in all. These villages were wrapped around the upper reaches of canyons and spread down onto talus slopes, enclosed year-round springs and reservoirs, and included low, defensive walls. The changes in architecture and site planning reflected a shift from independent households to a more communal lifestyle.

Farming during the Puebloan period was affected by population growth and changing climate and precipitation patterns. As the population grew, the Ancestral Pueblos expanded into increasingly marginal areas. Natural resources were compromised and poor soil and growing conditions made survival increasingly difficult. When dry conditions persisted, Pueblo communities moved to the south, southwest, and southeast, where descendants of these Ancestral Puebloan peoples live today.