



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM

December 27, 1993

TO: John Podesta,
Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary

FROM: Bruce Babbitt *Bruce Babbitt*

RE: State of the Union Address

The State of the Union would be a good place to develop the theme of security and opportunity that you have touched upon in earlier speeches. You should focus on just the most important domestic themes -- health care, crime, welfare reform and the associated work training concepts, and the economy.

Health care is principally a security issue, but you have and should again characterize it as an opportunity issue -- guaranteed health care provides mobility in the workforce, encourages risk-taking and initiative, and preventive care especially makes all citizens more productive.

The existing welfare system provides some security, but it does so by reducing initiative -- sketch a reform agenda that provides a measure of security (principally for the children) while providing real incentives to join the workforce.

Crime is the ultimate security issue; it can also be used to illustrate the corrosion and destruction of opportunity.

Keep pushing your definition of the entrepreneurial economy -- world competitiveness, forcing new technology, partnerships in research and development. At the same time that we are providing citizens a measure of security, you are asking them to help unleash a new wave of creative work, risk-taking, and innovation.

The same themes -- security and opportunity -- can be used to characterize your efforts abroad. In this new world, the best long-term security investment is to promote democracy and human rights. And the emerging global economy (NAFTA, GATT, the Asian initiatives) can generate opportunity for all, most especially Americans. The global economy is becoming a fact -- the only question is whether America will lead and reap the benefits, or stand by while others reach for world leadership in the coming century.

You should consider talking about a "Second American Century" of international leadership -- while the phrase has a slightly chauvinistic and provocative ring, it is, for just that reason, a nice way to contrast our leadership role in this new world and explain how it differs from the past century.

A final note. As suggested above, I would not be inclined to deal with environmental or natural resource issues as such. However, should you choose to do so, I strongly recommend that you include a sentence or two of very specific language regarding the fair pricing and sustainable harvest of natural resources, including timber, water, minerals and forage, thereby sending an unequivocal signal to many watching members of Congress that we are not backing away from grazing and mining reform.