

empowerment zones and community development banks, we are helping people find jobs and start businesses. And with tax incentives for companies that clean up abandoned industrial property, bringing jobs back to the places that desperately need them.

But there are some areas that the Federal Government must address directly and strongly. One of these is the problem of illegal immigration. After years and years of neglect, this administration has taken a strong stand to stiffen protection on our borders.

We are increasing border controls by 50 percent, we are increasing inspections to prevent the hiring of illegal immigrants. And tonight, I announce I will sign an executive order to deny Federal contracts to businesses that hire illegal immigrants.

Let me be clear: we are still a nation of immigrants; we honor all those immigrants who are working hard to become new citizens. But we are also a nation of laws.

I want to say a special word to those who work for our Federal Government. Today, the Federal workforce is 200,000 employees smaller than the day I took office. The Federal Government is the smallest it has been in 30 years, and it is getting smaller every day. Most of my fellow Americans probably didn't know that, and there's a good reason. The remaining Federal workforce is composed of Americans who are working harder and working smarter to make sure that the quality of our services does not decline.

Take Richard Dean. He is a 49-year-old Vietnam veteran who has worked for Social Security for 22 years. Last year he was hard at work in the Federal building in Oklahoma City when the terrorist blast killed 169 people and brought the rubble down around him.

He re-entered the building four times and saved lives of three women. He is here with us this evening. I want to recognize Richard and applaud both his public service and his extraordinary heroism.

But Richard's story doesn't end there. This last November, he was forced out of his office when the Government shut down.

And the second time the Government shut down, he continued helping Social Security recipients, but he was working without pay.

On behalf of Richard Dean and his family, I challenge all of you in this Chamber: never—ever—shut the Federal Government down again.

And on behalf of all Americans, especially those who need their Social Security payments at the beginning of March, I challenge Congress to preserve the full faith and credit of the United States, to honor the obligations of this great nation as we have for 220 years, to rise above partisanship and pass a straightforward extension of the debt limit. Show them that America keeps its word.

I have asked a lot of America this evening. But I am confident. When

Americans work together in their homes, their schools, their churches, their civic groups or at work, they can meet any challenge.

I say again: The era of Big Government is over. But we can't go back to the era of fending for yourself. We must go forward, to the era of working together, as a community, as a team, as one America, with all of us reaching across the lines that divide us, rejecting division, discrimination and racism, to find common ground. We must work together.

I want you to meet two people tonight who do that. Lucius Wright is a teacher in the Jackson, MS public school system, a Vietnam veteran. He has created groups that help inner city children turn away from gangs and build futures they can believe in.

Sgt. Jennifer Rodgers is a police officer in Oklahoma City. Like Richard Dean, she helped pull her fellow citizens out of the rubble and deal with that awful tragedy. She reminds us that, in their response to that atrocity, the people of Oklahoma City lifted us all with their basic sense of decency and community.

Lucius Wright and Jennifer Rogers are special Americans. I have the honor to announce tonight that they are the very first of several thousand Americans who will be chosen to carry the Olympic torch on its long journey from Los Angeles to the centennial of the modern Olympics in Atlanta this summer—not because they are star athletes, but because they are star citizens—community heroes meeting America's challenges—our real champions.

Now each of us must hold high the torch of citizenship in our own lives. But none of us can finish the race alone. We can only achieve our destiny together, one hand, one generation, one American connecting to another.

There have always been things we could do together—dreams we could make real—which we could never have done on our own. We Americans have forged our identity, our very union, from every point of view and every point on the planet. But we are bound by a faith more powerful than any doctrines that divide us—by our belief in progress, our love of liberty, and our relentless search for common ground. America has always sought and always risen to the challenge.

Who would say that, having come so far together, we will not go forward from here? Who would say that this Age of Possibility is not for all Americans?

America is—and always has been—a great and good country. But the best is yet to come. If we all do our part.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

At 4:12 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by

Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bills:

H.R. 1606. An act to designate the U.S. Post Office building located at 24 Corliss Street, Providence, RI, as the "Harry Kizirian Post Office Building."

H.R. 2061. An act to designate the Federal building located at 1550 Dewey Avenue, Baker City, OR, as the "David J. Wheeler Federal Building."

The enrolled bills were signed subsequently by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

At 5:31 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bill, without amendment:

S. 1341. An act to provide for the transfer of certain lands to the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian community and the city of Scottsdale, AZ, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second time by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. HELMS (for himself, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. HATCH, Mr. SIMPSON, Mr. WARNER, Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mrs. KASSEBAUM, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. KYL, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. BURNS, Mr. HATFIELD, Mr. HEFLIN, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. LOTT, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. COCHRAN, and Mr. FRIST):

S. 1520. A bill to award a congressional gold medal to Ruth and Billy Graham; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

By Mr. DOLE:

S. 1521. A bill to establish the Nicodemus National Historic Site in Kansas, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mr. ABRAHAM (for himself and Mr. LEVIN):

S. 1522. A bill to provide for the transfer of six obsolete tugboats of the Navy; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. DASCHLE, and Mr. EXON):

S. 1523. A bill to extend agricultural programs through 1996, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. EXON (for himself and Mr. KERREY):

S. Res. 210. A resolution to commend the Cornhuskers of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln for winning both the 1994 and 1995 National Collegiate Athletic Association Football Championships back-to-back; considered and agreed to.

S. Res. 211. A resolution to commend the Cornhuskers of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln for winning the 1995 National Collegiate Athletic Association Women's Volleyball Championship; considered and agreed to.