

REMARKS OF GOVERNOR GEORGE ALLEN TO THE

HERITAGE FOUNDATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. - DECEMBER 9, 1998

Ladies and gentlemen, as we embark on the new horizon that is the 21st century, it is important to recall the journey that mankind has traversed in this millennium in its quest for freedom. Since 1215, when King John was forced to grant certain rights to his subjects through the Magna Carta, the cause of liberty has encountered many challenges.

Five and one-half centuries after that fateful day at Runnymede and following many fits and starts, the flickering flame of freedom became a blazing torch of freedom in 1776. It was then that our Declaration of Independence acclaimed to the entire world the specific reasons for our secession from Britain and its monarchy. The Declaration set forth our nation's foundational principle that all men and women "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" and that governments derive "their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed."

Throughout the decades, when the leaders of our great nation have abided by these enlightened principles, the cause of liberty has flourished. Now, as we close the door on this millennium in which enduring freedom for mankind began, we assess how we, as conservatives have succeeded in the competition for ideas and to where we must continue to stride. But we are still guided by certain principles of our Founding Fathers. Our administration and I believe most of you all are guided by what we call "common-sense Jeffersonian conservative principles".

During his first inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson defined the sum of good government as a wise and frugal government. He said:

"Government shall restrain men from injuring one another, but otherwise shall leave them free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned."

That was the sum of good government nearly 200 years ago and I trust you will agree with me that remains the sum of good government today!

Ladies and gentlemen, these principles do work. And we owe it to future generations of Americans to apply those common sense Jeffersonian principles to improve society, protect our freedoms and to attain a more secure and prosperous life.

What we did in Virginia is consistent with what was done in many other States. You can take any State in the union where they used common —sense Jeffersonian conservative principles. Its not just a bunch of people sitting around a table saying, "wouldn't that be great". These principles have a very clear positive impact in people's lives. Anyone who pays taxes, works for a living or cares about their families should agree with our principles and the impact that these principles — when applied to policies at the federal or State level — will have on their

lives.

Reducing Taxes

In order for all Americans to enjoy prosperity, government must understand that the burden of high taxes falls heaviest on those who can least afford it. That's why in Virginia we rejuvenated our attractiveness to new and existing business, cut the size and cost of government, and lowered taxes.

In our administration, we significantly reduced the tax burden on our senior citizens, on small businesses, and in enterprise zones that attract jobs for people in urban and rural areas. And, further tax relief for working families is becoming a reality in Virginia with Governor Gilmore's elimination of the "car tax," part of which was funded in my outgoing budget.

However, for years now, federal government has been asleep at the switch. The federal government taxes have been taking more and more of the average American family's income. And now, even though there is a surplus — even though the federal government is taxing even more of our hard-earned money than it is spending — they still won't allow a tax cut to ease the burden on the men, women and families of this country.

It's up to us as conservatives to stand up and speak up for those young people, families and entrepreneurs — black, white, Native American, Hispanic and Asian — who are trying to achieve the promise of our land of opportunity.

Safe Communities

The people also expect their government to fulfill its foremost responsibility — protecting public safety. In 1993, Virginia had skyrocketing crime and Virginians agreed with our decisive proposal to abolish Virginia's lenient, dishonest parole system that was releasing violent criminals after serving only a quarter of their sentence. We stopped listening to criminal apologists and the criminal defense attorneys and started listening to the people. We said there is an objective difference between right and wrong. And we're sick of listening to the excuses "They did this because of bottle-feeding or his teacher didn't give him enough attention." We enacted truth in sentencing, so that when a judge or jury sentences a rapist to 12 years, he serves 12 years, not three.

We completely overhauled our juvenile justice system with tougher sentences and programs that instill discipline and respect for law-abiding citizens.

You know who has been helped the most by these historic reforms that have reduced violent crime by 16% and juvenile crime by 13%? The most vulnerable among us: The elderly...women...the people in low-income housing projects and in communities stalked by fear . . .the people who will never be a victim or a statistic because they were assaulted, raped, or even murdered by a violent criminal who was released early on parole.

There is still more to do to combat the scourge of drugs and violence that endangers our young people. But in Virginia we have shown that common sense, logical policies that crack down on the criminals and protect the innocent do indeed work.

Welfare Reform

We also proved that welfare no longer must be a way of life for generations of Virginians. Despite scare tactics and resistance at every step of the way from the liberal establishment, we passed the strongest, most pro-work ethic, pro-family welfare reform bill in the nation. It reflected the people's common sense belief that every able-bodied, able-minded person should be required to work. And our changes preceded the federal changes by two years.

Built upon the twin pillars of the work ethic and personal responsibility, our reforms have reduced Virginia's welfare rolls by 47%, and resulted in a 99% paternity establishment rate — the highest in the nation and child support enforcement is way up because we are revoking drivers licenses and professional licenses. Welfare rolls are down, we're saving taxpayers well over \$100 million, and, best of all, tens of thousands of Virginians and their families have moved from dependency to self-sufficiency and the dignity of holding a job.

Creating Jobs and Opportunity

On the subject of jobs, we made sure that all the world knew that Virginia was "Open for Business." With tax cuts and regulatory reform, we set to work five years ago aggressively attracting new businesses and new investment to Virginia. And we produced results, notwithstanding the loss of thousands of military related jobs. We created the conditions that produced over 3 12,000 net new private sector jobs. Though the previous annual record for new business investment in Virginia was a little over \$1 billion, we attracted over \$ 14 billion in new investment in just four years and transformed Virginia into the "Silicon Dominion".

With unprecedented investment from newly recruited and expanding existing businesses, job growth in 1997 was 7.2% — the best in the nation. And to make sure that growth continues in the future, our aggressive regulatory reform effort — led by Becky Norton Dunlop — resulted in the amendment or outright repeal of over 70% of all existing state regulations. We regulated the regulators. We thought that regulations should take into affect, not just the impact on isopods and woodpeckers, but also the impact on people. This is a continuing effort and is making Virginia able to compete and win.

Educational Excellence

Desirable tax and regulatory policies, public safety, roads and ports, all matter. But the most important asset of Virginia is the people of Virginia — their capability, work ethic and knowledge. And the most enduring legacy of our administration is our improvements in the education of our children.

During the 1980s the sole solution was to throw more money at education. But that did little to increase quality — little to make sure that our young students benefited from all those tax dollars by actually learning how to read, write and speak the English language.

It was in 1994, when we embarked on the long and challenging goals of developing new, high academic standards in the basic subjects that are being emulated by other States. Then we instituted testing to measure student progress against those standards. And, finally we are bringing accountability with school performance report cards, so that parents, taxpayers, educators, businesses and everyone involved in the educational mission can evaluate schools' and students' academic performance. Schools will now be accredited based not on how many fire drills they run per year, but whether students are learning English and higher levels of math and science, as well

as the history of our country and world civilization. One component of all of this is what we call the School Performance Report Card — it's like an annual shareholder's report. It shows how each and every school did in each subject at the third, fifth, eighth and high school. And parents, taxpayers and school administrators can see how their schools are doing.

As rigorous academic accountability takes hold in our schools, Virginia's school children will acquire the educational competence they need to compete and succeed in the international competitive marketplace. And you know, we put those improvements in place in Virginia on our own, without being told to do so by a swarm of bureaucrats in Washington, or because it was mandated by Goals 2000, School-to-Work, or any other federal program.

All of these revolutionary changes in Virginia's government occurred in four short years. And although there were those who attempted to block and thwart our reforms at every turn, we kept our promises and produced positive results for the people.

Best of all, we achieved all this with 10,000 fewer State employees than when we took office. We proved to the faint-hearted that smaller government and privatization of government services actually works — from collections...to transportation...to prisons...to the sale of surplus State land.

There is no doubt that we, as common-sense conservatives, have great success stories to tell. We have shown that if one builds on the solid rock of principle and not the shifting sand of political expediency, our policies will stand as salutary models that withstand all tests of accountability to the people.

Indeed, whether it is taxes, public safety, jobs or education, it's time show Washington that our principles can and do work.

We will encounter resistance from the same, predictable liberal quarters. Those elitists are wedded to the old Washington ways: Always taxing more and delivering less. Always substituting their out of touch, bureaucratic notions for the common sense ideas and solid values of the people. Always imposing their will on the States and local communities, rather than letting people chart their own course.

My friends, let's let freedom ring!

The United States of the next millennium must unleash the free enterprise system to provide jobs and opportunity for all Americans — regardless of the color of their skin, their national origin, their gender, or their religious beliefs...a country that respects the hard work and industriousness of our people, and that minimizes the burden of taxation it imposes.

Our States must compete in a race to the top for higher academic standards and accountability in their schools...and every child — no matter their economic circumstance, no matter where they live — learns to compete and succeed in the increasingly competitive international marketplace because their parents and local public schools strive to be Champion Schools.

We must work for an America where citizens no longer live in fear of violent crime...a country that shows compassion and respect for the victims of crime and for law enforcement officers, and holds criminals accountable for their despicable acts.

America in 2000 must celebrate its historic treasures and help preserve them for the inspiration and benefit of future generations...and we must utilize technological advances to produce more efficient and top quality products, systems and services so that we will leave our land, water and air cleaner for our children.

Our policy makers in the next century must respect our senior citizens and cherish the contributions they have made — and can continue to make — to the future...and honor the guarantee of a sound Social Security system but also offer additional opportunities for all Americans to retire in a dignified manner and to a better standard of living than the generations before.

We must invest wisely again in our military and provide our troops with the best equipment and training they need for their safety when protecting our interests, and yes, we must have the best available missile defense system to protect people of our country and must always adhere to President Reagan's principle that the best way to preserve peace is through strength.

And as challenging as it is to advance the cause of freedom right here at home, in North Korea...China...and Iraq...and Cuba...and in other countries, there are people who have never even tasted the sweet nectar of freedom. And there are other tyrants and despots and terrorists, who fear democracy and freedom of religion, and who would snuff out the flame of liberty if they could. But they must not.

It has taken mankind more than seven centuries to attain the level of freedoms we enjoy today. The United States of America proudly stand, as we have for over 200 years, as a shining example of what can be achieved when the God-given rights of men and women are secure...secured by those who have lost their own lives and future to protect their families, home, State, and nation, and to secure freedom for fellow human beings all over the world. Our country must stand as an example of prosperity where the people enjoy the fruits of their hard work and ingenuity without an overly burdensome government. And it must stand as a model for the healthy competition of ideas, which, while sometimes unsettling, is encouraged in responsible debate.

Johann Gutenberg changed the course of human history with the printing press. The telegraph and telephone enabled us to communicate at greater distances. The radio allowed thoughts and ideas to be broadcast to wide audiences, including those who listened to Radio Marti and Radio Free Europe. Television enabled viewers to witness the exhilarating tearing down of the monument to the inferiority of the oppressive Communist tyranny — the Berlin Wall.

The Internet now provides to us the next frontier in technology, and it will enable us to shine the thoughts, theories, opportunities and responsibilities of freedom in corners of the world that have been cloaked in darkness. It allows us to disseminate our country's foundational principles all across the globe in order to promote free thought and the competition of ideas and markets.

That great man understands that America is a beacon to the rest of the world and that our creative, common sense Jeffersonian conservative principles can provide hope and opportunity for generations to come.

Thank you all for your commitment to our great country. May the torch of liberty continue to blaze brightly and may God continue to bless the United States of America with people of your unflinching courage, perseverance and character.

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Note: These are Governor George Allen's prepared remarks.