



Taking Care of Our Problems at Home

Excerpts from recent speeches by Governor Bill Clinton

Given the problems we face at home, we do have to take care of our own people and their needs first. We need to remember the central lesson of the collapse of communism and the Soviet Union. We never defeated them on the field of battle. The Soviet Union collapsed from the inside out -- from economic, political, and spiritual failure.

Make no mistake: foreign and domestic policy are inseparable in today's world. If we're not strong at home, we can't lead the world we've done so much to make. And if we withdraw from the world, it will hurt us economically at home.

We can't allow this false choice between domestic policy and foreign policy to hurt our country and our economy. Our President has devoted his time and energy to foreign concerns and ignored dire problems here at home. As a result, we're drifting in the longest economic slump since World War II, and, in reaction to that, elements in both parties now want America to respond to the collapse of communism and a crippling recession at home by retreating from the world.

Now we must understand, as never have before, that our national security is largely economic. The success of our engagement in the world depends not on the headlines it brings to Washington politicians, but on the benefits it brings to hard-working middle-class Americans. Our "foreign" policies are not really foreign at all.

Our economic strength must become a central defining element of our national security policy. We must organize to compete and win in the global economy. We need a commitment from American business and labor to work together to make world-class products. We must be prepared to exchange some short-term benefits -- whether in the quarterly profit statement or in archaic work rules -- for long-term success.

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