

October 22, 1994

Carlmont High Ready for Clinton

President expected to discuss guns on campus in visit today

By Mark Simon
Chronicle Peninsula Bureau

At Carlmont High School in Belmont, there was a palpable excitement and pride yesterday that the school had been chosen as the site for a visit today by President Clinton, even if the subject was guns on campus.

In Lucille Clark's English-as-a-second-language class, students whooped for joy when they learned that their class had been among six chosen by lottery to attend the president's noontime appearance at the school gym.

"Not every school has the opportunity to have President Clinton go there," said Sandra, a junior.

The 20 students in Clark's class are among the 150 pupils selected to sit in bleachers behind the president, providing what presidential staffers hope will be an exuberant multicultural backdrop.

Clinton is scheduled to talk to a crowd of about 1,700 in the gym, plus a spillover group at the football field who will listen via loudspeakers.

The president will be accompanied at Carlmont by U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein, D-San Francisco; Treasurer Kathleen Brown, the Democratic nominee for governor; Representative Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, in whose district Carlmont sits; and Madeline Kunin, deputy education secretary.

Clinton will talk about a provision in the just-signed Elementary and Secondary Education Act that addresses schools' authority to expel students who bring guns to campus. He also is expected to sign an executive order putting that authority into effect.

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SCHOOL: Students Set for Presidential Visit

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a pistol, Hunter said.

Belmont Police Chief Mike Oliver confirmed that there have been no incidents of guns on campus reported to his office in several years. His officers work closely with the administration to establish a steady and prominent presence at the school.

"If you pulled out the toothpick from a Swiss Army knife to pick some apple from your teeth, you're automatically recommended for expulsion," Hunter said. The principal has the discretion to make the punishment fit the crime, he added.

But Hunter also acknowledged that it is impossible to know everything that might be going on at the ethnically diverse school of 1,400 students.

The students in Clark's class

said that it is quite possible that there are more guns on campus than administrators might think.

All the students in the class said that they had had some problems with gangs and violence on the campus — fistfights and violent threats — and quite a few said they had seen or heard of people who brought guns to campus.

One said students ought to be required to pass through metal detectors before they board buses to school.

All the students also said that if given a chance to say something to Clinton, they would tell him to stop racial discrimination.

But those worries clearly were secondary yesterday. The students were excited about being part of a major presidential event and entranced by the distinctively intrusive presence that is part of a presidential visit.

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As Secret Service agents toured the campus, students gawked or watched as bleachers and sound system equipment were unloaded and carted into the gym. Others proudly displayed the blue tickets that will admit them to today's event.

In less than 24 hours, a coat of white paint was slapped on the walls of the gym — the lower half only — and one veteran teacher said it is the first new paint in 28 years.

Like the paint, the imprint of a presidential visit has the potential to last longer than the actual event.

"I think a lot of people will remember the president came to our school," said freshman Lauren Cirlin, who works afternoons in Hunter's office. "There are so many other schools they could have chosen, but they picked our school."

LAB: Official Announcement

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the stairway to heaven," said E. Michael Campbell, associate director for lasers at the 7,000-employee lab.

The huge machine, with 192 separate lasers, their tubes as big around as wine barrels and hun-

ic research that may, as a bonus, lead to new sources of cheap fusion energy or other industrial payoffs.

In a clear sign of the end of Cold War psychology, O'Leary singled out for praise the "leadership" of East Bay Representative Ronald Dellums, a longtime anti-

ROMANCE

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time, really enjoying herself," Michael Thompson said. "This is just a real tragedy."

Flanagan's brother Richard, who lives in San Jose, said yesterday that the family is still shocked by his death. "He was a great

Clinton will speak

School safety is president's topic

By DALE MARTIN

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — The president of the United States will make a rare appearance in San Mateo County when he speaks Saturday afternoon at Carlmont High School.

President Clinton is expected to give a 15-minute address at noon on school safety to an audience of students, parents and school officials.

"The president was told this school is an example of the tough application of zero-tolerance regarding violence," said Jess Sarmiento, a spokeswoman for the White House Office of

Media Affairs.

The president will discuss enforcement of some of the provisions in the "Improving America's Schools Act," which he signed Thursday.

Included in the act are provisions that call for a one-year mandatory expulsion of students caught with weapons on campus. Schools within the Sequoia Union High School District have been shown to be examples of the tough policies the president wants to see put in place, Sarmiento said.

The president's visit was confirmed Thursday afternoon, although rumors had started flying Wednesday evening.

"It certainly is exciting. It will be a historical experience for our students," said Carlmont's new principal, Michael Johnson, who was working on a lottery system to select which students will be able to attend Saturday's session. A school official said lottery winners will receive three tickets each.

Up to 1,700 people — including the media — will be allowed into the gymnasium to hear the private address.

The president's visit to the area will culminate in a campaign stopover that includes an appearance at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco on behalf

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San Mateo
Times
Fri Oct 21, 1994



Associated Press

President Clinton addressing an audience this week in New York.

Clinton

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of Kathleen Brown, the Democratic candidate for governor.

Much of the credit for the president's appearance may go to Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Floyd Gonella, superintendent of the San Mateo County Office of Education. Gonella was asked for his recommendations for a school by the senator, who helped arrange the president's visit to the Peninsula.

"They wanted an ethnically diverse school that had experienced some problems and was dealing with them," said Gonella, who recommended

several schools in the three union high school districts in the county, including Westmoor High in Daly City and Capuchino High in San Bruno.

The senator, however, had reportedly recalled an incident involving Carlmont students: a shooting Feb. 14 in which a Carlmont youth was killed by a fellow student in eastern Menlo Park.

"In her mind, she had seen something about Carlmont and kept coming back to it," Gonella said.

Regardless of how the choice was made, Gonella noted, "I'm elated a school in San Mateo County was chosen."

Local historians believe Clinton is the first president to appear at a school in San Mateo County. Michael Dukakis was a presidential candidate when he spoke at Jefferson High School in 1988, and George Bush appeared at the College of San Mateo as a vice-presidential candidate in 1980.

"I don't remember a sitting president visiting a school in the county," Gonella said.

By coincidence, Gonella learned Thursday that Teddy Roosevelt was greeted in 1903 by cadets of St. Matthew's military school on a visit he made to the Burlingame Country Club. Still, the one line he delivered

didn't constitute an address.

Carlmont students, in the midst of preparing for Homecoming, were excited to hear the news.

"I'm hoping I'll be able to go," said Carly Au, a senior whose mother, Judy, was given two tickets because she is the PTA president. "I may have to fight my father for the ticket."

Ernest Chan, another senior, predicted that students will have a special interest in what the president has to say.

"School safety is an interest for any student. It doesn't take a president's visit to remind us of that," he said. "But I think kids will be tuned in to what he has to say."

Enquirer Bulletin Nov 9, 1994

Enquirer Bulletin 11/9/94

Thanks for coming, Mr. President ... here's the bill

Carlmont High School is still buzzing over President Bill Clinton's visit on Oct. 22.

What an honor for the school, the city of Belmont, and the entire Peninsula to be graced with the presence of the world's most powerful person.

All these wonderful memories ... and it only cost us \$20,000.

Yes, that's the estimated cost in overtime pay for the 200 law enforcement officers who provided security for the president.

Belmont police (and taxpayers) bore the greatest burden - approximately \$7,500 for the department's 243 hours of overtime and 58 hours of compensation time.

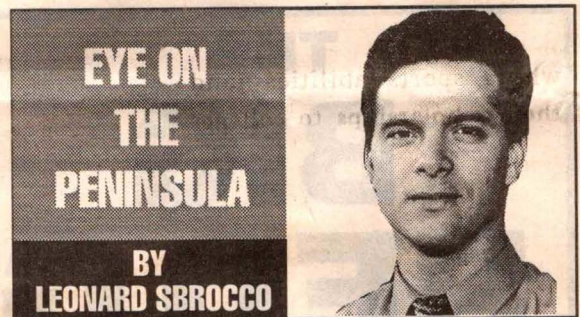
"That's about 8 percent of the overtime budget for the year," said Belmont Police Chief Mike Oliver.

Under a mutual assistance program, officers from throughout the county supported the Belmont police. The most helpful cities were:

- Redwood City provided a sergeant and five officer, expending about \$1,000 in overtime pay.
- The county sheriff sent 20 personnel, costing \$4,300.
- Burlingame's officer commitment cost its citizens \$1,000.
- San Carlos sent 14 officers, but nine of those were reserves; thus, its cost was only \$500.

Don't get me wrong. I'm not advocating that we cut back on presidential security to save a few bucks.

Instead, what irks me is why should local



taxpayers get stuck with the bill?

President Clinton wasn't visiting the Peninsula on official business; he was on a campaign trip, stumping and fundraising for his fellow Democrats.

Why should local taxpayers expend \$20,000, while the president raises \$250,000 for Kathleen Brown and Dianne Feinstein?

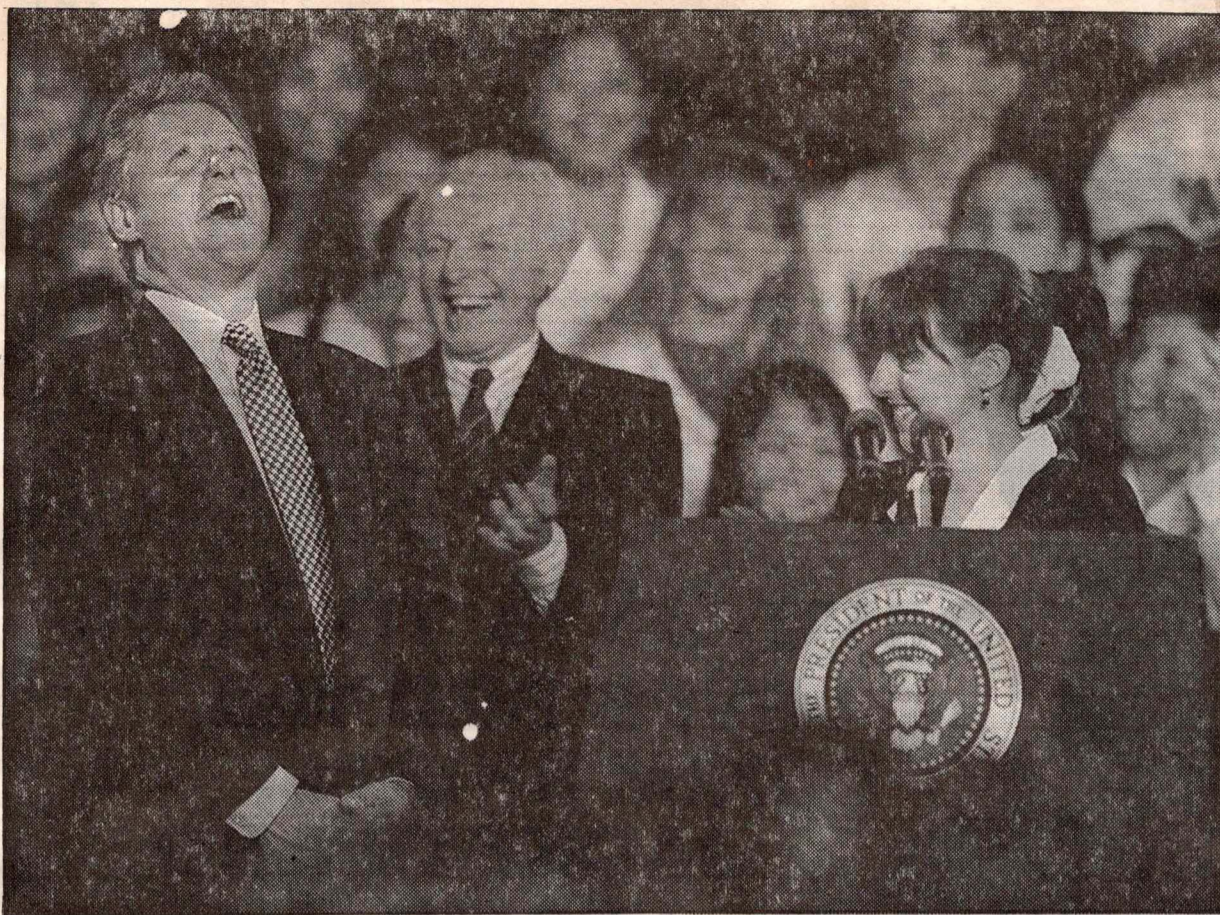
Shouldn't the federal government or maybe the Democratic National Committee reimburse local law enforcement agencies for all the overtime pay?

In 1989, Burlingame Police Chief Fred Palmer sent a bill to the White House for expenses incurred by his department to protect a campaigning President Bush.

"I never heard back from them," Palmer said.

It's just not fair. If the president's visit involved official business, that's acceptable. But if he's out raising money, how about sharing some of the donations with the local municipalities?

It makes sense to me.



EXAMINER/KURT ROGERS

President Clinton erupts in laughter as Carlmont High student body President Therese Sargervasi, right, jokingly thanks him for having the Belmont school's gym repainted.

◆ CLINTON from A-1

Clinton renews call for political change

parents from coming here looking for work? What does it do for your treasury if kids are out of school where they will be free to get in trouble? I don't know that you're going to save a split nickel on this deal," Clinton said.

The president described the gubernatorial race as "old fashioned." He said it described "hope versus fear, the future versus the past, plan versus a wedge."

540,000 new Democratic voters

Brown suggested polls do not tell the complete story of the race, as left unseen in news coverage and missing from negative TV ads are the 540,000 new Democratic voters registered in a \$9 million get-out-the vote effort.

Her opponent, she said, "has tried to divide us as a people," and has "played on our fears rather than worked to inspire our people with hope." Prop. 187, she said, "makes us think about people differently."

Brown contended that Wilson is using the issues of crime and immigration as campaign vehicles "just to hold on to power." She added, "I think he knows better and that makes it even worse."

Brown's effort to unseat Wilson, however, is in trouble. According to the Examiner poll, Wilson has a lead of 48 to 43 percentage points, with 9 percent undecided. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 percent, making the race for governor, in the thinking of the Brown campaign, "a statistical dead heat."

Earlier Saturday, in Belmont, Clinton signed an executive order to implement in American schools a gun-free policy that was written by Feinstein.

The law will withhold federal

education funds to schools not complying, and was prompted by statistics showing a rapid increase in the use of weapons by the young and also by Feinstein's election eve political requirements.

With slightly more than two weeks remaining in the campaign, an Examiner poll published Saturday showed Feinstein leading her rival, Rep. Michael Huffington of Santa Barbara, by only 6 percentage points — 48 to 42 percent — meaning, with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.5 points, he may be within striking distance.

It is a bitter struggle over issues important to Californians, crime prevention being foremost.

"You must say no to guns, no to gangs, no to drugs — yes to education, yes to hope and yes to your own future," Clinton thundered in campaign-like cadence to the feet-stomping, hand-clapping invited audience at Carlmont High School.

The school of 1,400 students was in part chosen because it has a policy of zero tolerance for guns and troublemakers and enjoys a broad racial mix, including African American students bused in from East Palo Alto under a desegregation plan drawn by the school district.

Some 1,600 people filled the school gymnasium in Belmont, having received tickets from Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, who represents the district, and local Democratic organizations. Hundreds more lingered outside.

There wasn't a political naysayer in or outside the gymnasium for the event that joined politics and official business in the heart of this tidy Peninsula town of 26,000 people.

Therese Sargervasi, the student body president, handed Clinton a Carlmont sweat shirt and "Scots" cap, and thanked him for bringing attention to the school. "We would also like to thank you for having our gym painted."

Besides Feinstein, Brown at-

tended the event as did Rep. Tom Lantos, D-Burlingame, and Eshoo. "We welcome you with open arms," Eshoo told Clinton, a phrase he has not heard in other regions of the country where Democratic candidates have distanced themselves from the president.

Clinton spent nearly an hour afterward, shaking hands and posing for snapshots with the festive crowd, but the grim realities of school violence were not far from the thoughts of students and educators.

On Valentine's Day, Edward Sims, a 15-year-old Carlmont student, was shot and killed off-campus by another student who had earlier threatened him with a gun at school. "We know (the possibility of) violence is there, but you don't think about it. It happened, and hopefully this event will lessen the chance it will again," said Diane Foerder, 15, a sophomore.

The presidential directive Clinton signed instructs the secretary of Education to require strict enforcement of the "zero tolerance" for guns in schools provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Feinstein wrote it with Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D.

There is no legal requirement for Clinton to issue an order for implementation of a provision of the act, but there are political demands for assisting Feinstein in her battle against a one-term congressman riding the tide of anti-incumbency politics.

Clinton noted that Feinstein also wrote the ban on assault weapons included in this year's crime bill, and, with urgency in his voice, described scenes of fear in which young people must live.

"Young people simply should not have to live in fear of young criminals who carry guns to school," he said. "We cannot operate in a country where children are afraid. We cannot learn in that kind of atmosphere." The crowd cheered.

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President Clinton Comes To Carlmont

*Enquirer -
Bulletin
Wed.
Oct. 26, 1994*

Clinton Signs Bill During Carlmont High School Talk

BY MARILYN GREEN

It hasn't happened in more than a century, but on Oct. 22 the President of the United States was in Belmont.

According to local historian Tom Seivert, the last acting president to visit Belmont was the Rutherford B. Hayes, who held the office from 1877 to 1881.

It would be hard to imagine any group that could have given President Bill Clinton a more enthusiastic welcome than the cheering crowd of about 2,000 who gathered in the Carlmont High School gym last Saturday morning.

Clinton came to Carlmont to sign an executive request urging the U.S. Education Department to immediately implement "gun-free schools" legislation. The legislation requires any school district that receives federal funds to adopt a gun-free schools policy and expel any student who brings a gun to school for a minimum of one year.

The gun-free schools legislation, co-authored by U.S. Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Byron Dorgan (D-N.D.), was unanimously approved Oct. 5 as part of the \$12 billion Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The president signed it into law Oct. 20.

Under the legislation, any school that does not adopt the gun-free schools policy would



PRESIDENT ON THEIR SIDE — Clinton donned a Carlmont Scots hat during his visit to the high school.

not be eligible for federal funds.

"Young people simply should not have to live in fear of young criminals who carry guns instead of books," Clinton said.

Carlmont was chosen for the president's visit because of its policy of zero tolerance for guns, strict policies for dealing with troublemakers

and its diverse student body.

Although Clinton's mission at Carlmont was serious, spirits could not have been higher as he walked into the gym.

He was accompanied by Deputy Education Secretary Madeline Kunin, Feinstein, Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-Atherton), Rep. Tom Lantos (D-San

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Clinton Comes to Town

•PRESIDENT

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Mateo), Carlmont Principal Michael Johnson, Belmont Mayor Pam Rianda and San Carlos Mayor Tom Davids.

Rianda thanked the president for his tough stand on crime and his "continued willingness to provide the leadership, to roll up your sleeves, in an effort to break gridlock and solve problems (which) inspires us all."

"We need to destroy the myth that government can't work," Rianda said.

In his introductory remarks, Davids acknowledged that a couple days ago Carlmont High, which draws students from both San Carlos, Belmont, Redwood Shores and East Palo Alto, was just a wide spot on the road.

"Thank you for making Carlmont the place of the day," Davids told the president.

Some students could not believe their good fortune in getting to see the president.

Jane Yanshina and Julia Kochuev were the last two students to get tickets.

"We were jumping up and down," Kochuev said.

"He looks just like on TV," Yanshina said.

Neither girl could quite get over having the chance to shake the president's hand.

"It just doesn't seem real," they said.

Clinton's visit coincided with Carlmont's Homecoming weekend.

"It has affected it big time," said Kevin Wilcox. "Last night everyone was really pumped at the game."

English teacher Wayne Stam's fifth-period English class was one of the few selected to attend through a lottery system that included all English classes.

"They found out before I even got to school on Friday and they were very excited," he said.

Student body President Therese Sangervasi had the chance to give a personal message to the president.

After thanking Clinton for taking action against crime on campus, she presented him with a Carlmont sweatshirt and cap — "to wear when you jog" — and thanked him for being the inspiration for getting the gym painted.

Clinton Brings Bay Area Fans To Their Feet

President's welcome may spell hope for Demos

By Susan Yoachum
Chronicle Political Editor

President Clinton may be political poison in much of the country, but he won five standing ovations in San Francisco on Saturday night.

Rather than run away from the president, as many Democrats across the nation are doing, top Democrats in California seized the moment to publicly embrace him at a costly fund-raiser for gubernatorial candidate Kathleen Brown at the Fairmont Hotel and in the packed gymnasium of the Carlmont High School in Belmont.

From Brown and Senator Diane Feinstein, who are facing tough races, to Senator Barbara Boxer, and local members of Congress whose re-election is all but assured, the message to the president during his 12-hour visit on Saturday was one of welcome.

"I want you to know how much we appreciate this president and how much he has done for California," Feinstein told the cheering,

CLINTON

From Page 1

overflow crowd at the freshly painted Carlmont gym. "This president cares about our great state. So, Mr. President, as the senator from California, it's a great treat for me to welcome you once again to this magnificent and beautiful state."

No Cold Shoulder Here

Perhaps the excitement for Clinton inside the high school gym could be written off to youthful exuberance. And maybe the enthusiasm at the Fairmont could be attributed to the feelings of the party faithful.

However, the warm reception for Clinton in the Bay Area was in marked contrast to the cold shoulder he has received from many Democrats throughout the country who are running for re-election and feeling it necessary to distance themselves from the president.

Republicans have been nothing short of gleeful over Clinton's decline in the esteem of the public and many Democratic candidates.

"The only bad thing for us," said Dan Schnur, Republican Governor Wilson's campaign press secretary, "is that (the president) didn't stay longer."

Although Republicans have predicted vast gains in Congress and the nation's statehouses, some Democrats now argue that the GOP may have inflated expectations for the party in the November mid-term elections — particularly in California.

The reaction to Clinton's visit in one of the most liberal areas of the country may simply be a case of Democrats coming home before the election — or it could presage the possibility that the expected electoral slaughter among Democrats may not be as bad as the party once feared.

The only mar on the president's visit, which included a round of

The president hopes to come to California again just before the November 8 election

golf, came Saturday night in the Grand Ballroom of the Fairmont, where an unidentified man repeatedly yelled "What about (Proposition) 186 (the single-payer initiative)?" while Clinton was making his speech.

His face flushing beet red, Clinton angrily asked the man, "Do you want to hear the speech? Do you know the first thing about manners?"

Before the man uttered any more words, Clinton said, "I tried to solve the health care problem in a manner I thought was right," drawing a rousing standing ovation from the audience.

It was perhaps the most sympathetic reaction Clinton has heard for his unsuccessful try at health care reform, which was roundly panned before Democrats in Congress abandoned the effort for this year.

Just Say No

The fighting spirit Clinton showed as a candidate returned on Saturday night as he said, "You have to say no, no, no, no, no" to the Republicans in November.

"This is an old-fashioned election," Clinton said. "It's about hopes versus fears, about the future versus the past. . . . People are uncertain and insecure. . . . What will turn this election is everybody in this room going out and talking to people who aren't in this room tonight."

Earlier in the day, those who could not crowd in among the 2,000 people at the Carlmont High School gym listened on loudspeakers on an adjacent football field.

Inside the gym, the president signed an executive order requiring that states and school districts adopt policies imposing one-year expulsions for students bringing guns to school. If such policies are not adopted, schools will lose federal financing.

"Zero tolerance is a common-sense policy," Clinton said. "Why does anybody need a gun in school? Young people simply should not have to live in fear of young criminals who carry guns to school."

His words received an ear-splitting cheer inside the gym.

It probably comes as no surprise that the president hopes to come to California again just before the November 8 election. Like New York and Massachusetts, California may be one of the best places for the president to visit.

A12 San Francisco Chronicle

☆☆☆☆ MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1994

Belmont Students Greet President in Style

By *Carolyn Zinko*
Chronicle Correspondent

The Carlmont High School band called an 11 p.m. rehearsal on Friday to fine-tune its repertoire of patriotic songs.

The student body president laid out her best Christmas dress for the occasion.

Hundreds of residents changed their weekend plans in order to line the sidewalks of Belmont for an event even larger than the town's annual Greek festival.

President Clinton's visit to Belmont's Carlmont High School on Saturday drew about 2,000 cheering students and teachers, who witnessed his signing an executive order that provides for the expulsion for one year of any student caught carrying a gun on any campus.

Unlike in Silicon Valley to the

south, where a presidential visit is old stuff, Clinton's trip to Belmont awakened the sleepy city of 24,000 nestled into the coastal hills of the Peninsula.

Moments before Clinton arrived at the hot and stuffy but freshly painted gym, the Carlmont High School band, clad in tuxedos and black bow ties, began playing the school fight song.

Eric Leong, a cornet-playing senior, admitted to being nervous before the visit.

"I would have been really excited, but I was scared," Leong said.

Therese Sangervasi, student body president, ended a serious afternoon on a light note by presenting Clinton with a school sweatshirt and cap and a special, only-in-Belmont type of mug.

"To commemorate this historic

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BELMONT: Big To-Do at School for Clinton

From Page A15

event — your visit to Carlmont, the world headquarters of the Friends of Millard Fillmore — I present you with this Friends of Millard Fillmore mug, thereby making you the first president of the United States to own such a unique piece of presidential memorabilia," Sangervasi declared.

She was referring to the annual Millard Fillmore Trivia Contest for students, sponsored by the school for 26 years.

Before leaving, Clinton spent

several minutes mingling with a crush of students, slapping high fives like Bono at a U-2 concert.

"I shook his hand! I shook his hand! It was cool!" gushed 11-year-old J. J. Smith as she ran back to her parents in the bleachers.

Down the street, in front of the Carlmont Shopping Center, Henry Rodriguez, 22, was pleased that the president was appearing at his alma mater.

"Knowing he was going to be in the same gym where I played badminton and took P.E. classes — I

had to come see him," the 1991 Carlmont graduate said. "It was neat. It kind of put Belmont on the map."

Scores of retail employees left their workplaces unattended to join residents waving their flags at the motorcade, something many had never seen.

"I know Belmont natives who drove in from San Francisco for this," said one resident, Holly Jung. "Everyone knew about it before it was in the paper. It was the talk of the town — the tiny hamlet of Belmont."

**PENINSULA
EDITION**

ST Chronicle

**PENINSULA
INSIDER**

Mark Simon

Clinton Still Topic 1 at Carlmont

School principal hopes visit will foster pride

It's been a little more than a week since President Clinton's visit to Carlmont High School in Belmont and there are signs the aura lingers.

In fact, there is one sign in particular — the one they use for school announcements at the main entrance to the campus, which carries the words: "Clinton Was Here."

But beyond the excitement that the visit may have been generated, school officials and student leaders are hoping they can use the presidential appearance as a means to begin building a new sense of pride about the school.

To that end, officials followed up Clinton's appearance with a schoolwide assembly Friday. The assembly was noteworthy in that it was the first one in many years — previous administrations had been uncertain that the students could behave themselves well enough to avoid turning the gathering into some kind of melee.

The students lived up to the expectations of Principal **Michael Johnson**, given that these were teenagers packed side-by-side into a gym and that they were being asked to pay polite attention to a 45-minute presentation of pep band music, a videotape of TV news highlights of the Clinton visit, introduction of staff and students who worked on the president's visit, remarks by student body President **Therese Sangervasi** and extended remarks by Johnson.

"We have to remember we are in the public eye now," Sangervasi told her schoolmates.

"People will look at us differently," Johnson said. "Anything and everything that happens on this campus will perhaps be news outside." The issue now, he said, is whether "we will live up to the kind of image and standard that's been set by the president's visit."

JOHNSON'S DEBUT: The assembly was Johnson's debut before a gathering of the whole school, and that's a fairly remarkable story in itself. In San Diego, where he taught and was an administrator for nearly 20 years, Johnson was a runner-up last school year for the national Principal of the Year Award. He's in his second month running Carlmont, having been brought into the job from outside the Sequoia Union High School District, an unusual hiring move by a district that, like most, tends to find its principals from within.

Johnson said before the session that he saw Clinton's visit as an opportunity to raise such issues as self-esteem and school imagery and to create momentum for a meeting Thursday evening to launch "Project Pride" — an effort to involve the community and the students in such matters as a dress standard, school beautification and even possibly requiring students to remain on campus during the lunch hour.

Among his preliminary remarks, Johnson requested — emphasis on requested — that the male students remove their omnipresent caps during the assembly. Most complied. Later, he asked students to consider modifying the language they use on campus.

Then he drove home the central point he hoped to make at the assembly.

Describing Clinton's visit as a "once-in-a-lifetime experience," Johnson stressed, "Whether President Clinton visits this campus or not does not change the fact that you are special and important. You've always been special to us and I don't want anyone taking that away from you. President Clinton could not add or subtract from that."

San Mateo Times
Oct 24, 1994

Carlmont still abuzz over visit

President wins new friends on Peninsula

By DALE MARTIN

Times Staff Writer

BELMONT — Student body president Therese Sangervasi will remember how Bill Clinton made her feel at ease in front of the packed crowd at Carlmont High School.

Clinton's Carlmont address was a prelude to a campaign fund-raiser Saturday night in San Francisco for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Kathleen Brown.

With just two days' notice and in the midst of homecoming events, Carlmont students put on their best to give a warm welcome to the president and an entourage of candidates and public officials that included Sen. Dianne Feinstein, Deputy Education Secretary Madeline Kunin, and Reps. Tom Lantos, D-Burlingame, and Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, who officially hosted the president. San Carlos Mayor Tom Davids and Belmont Mayor Pam Rianda were on hand to introduce the president to the 1,700 students, parents and assorted Peninsula personalities able to wrangle invitations from Eschoo's office.

Election-season politics or not, the president's message will carry some weight with students, according to Johnson.

"I think the students have seen leadership that is talking for the first time about the safety and security of our campuses," Johnson said later. Students who witnessed the signing of an executive order that will implement a nationwide gun-free policy on campus agreed.

"The order he signed is really important for California. Hopefully, it will make it safe for everyone to go to school," said freshman student Lauren Cirlin of Redwood City, who recalled an incident in which a student brought a gun to her middle school.

"The brother was good," said junior Tasha Clark of the president. "Everything he said was true. I think it will change a lot of schools."

Minutes before, Clinton had addressed the students on the subject of campus safety. He had been introduced by Johnson, who said that, as a 1994 runner-up for Principal of the Year, he did not have the opportunity to meet the president in Washington as did the winner. With a broad smile, Johnson said, "I certainly count it as a greater honor when the president of the United States flies 3,000 miles to meet with me."

The president responded in kind.

"This should not be interpreted as a sign of dissatisfaction with the lady who got to be the principal of the year — but he would have made an awful good one," Clinton said of Johnson.

Clinton then discussed the atmosphere of fear that exists in

many schools.

While he promised a stronger national policy, he also noted that students must take responsibility.

"We can do better, and we must," the president said. "Zero-tolerance is a common sense policy. That's why this order directs the secretary of education to withhold funding to states that don't comply with this law. Young people simply should not have to live in fear of young criminals who carry guns to school," he said.

Clinton credited the bill as well as recent federal anti-assault weapon legislation to Feinstein, who is facing a tough battle to keep her seat against Republican challenger Michael Huffington, a Santa Barbara congressman.

Although Carlmont was recommended by Feinstein to Clinton for its zero-tolerance policy toward weapons on campus, some students were concerned that the address on school violence would imply the campus has had a problem with weapons.

Sangervasi dispelled that notion in her own comments. "I'm proud to say no one has ever been the victim of an assault with a deadly weapon on campus," she said, minutes before giving the president a Carlmont Scot sweatshirt, jogging cap and a "Friends of Millard Fillmore" mug. (The school is the headquarters for the annual Fillmore trivia scavenger hunt.)

At least one student hoped the president's appearance would allay her mother's fears about Carlmont.

"My mom heard Carlmont had a bad reputation. I guess it's safer than people think," she said.

Belmont • San Carlos • Redwood Shores

Enquirer-Bulletin

Independent Newspapers

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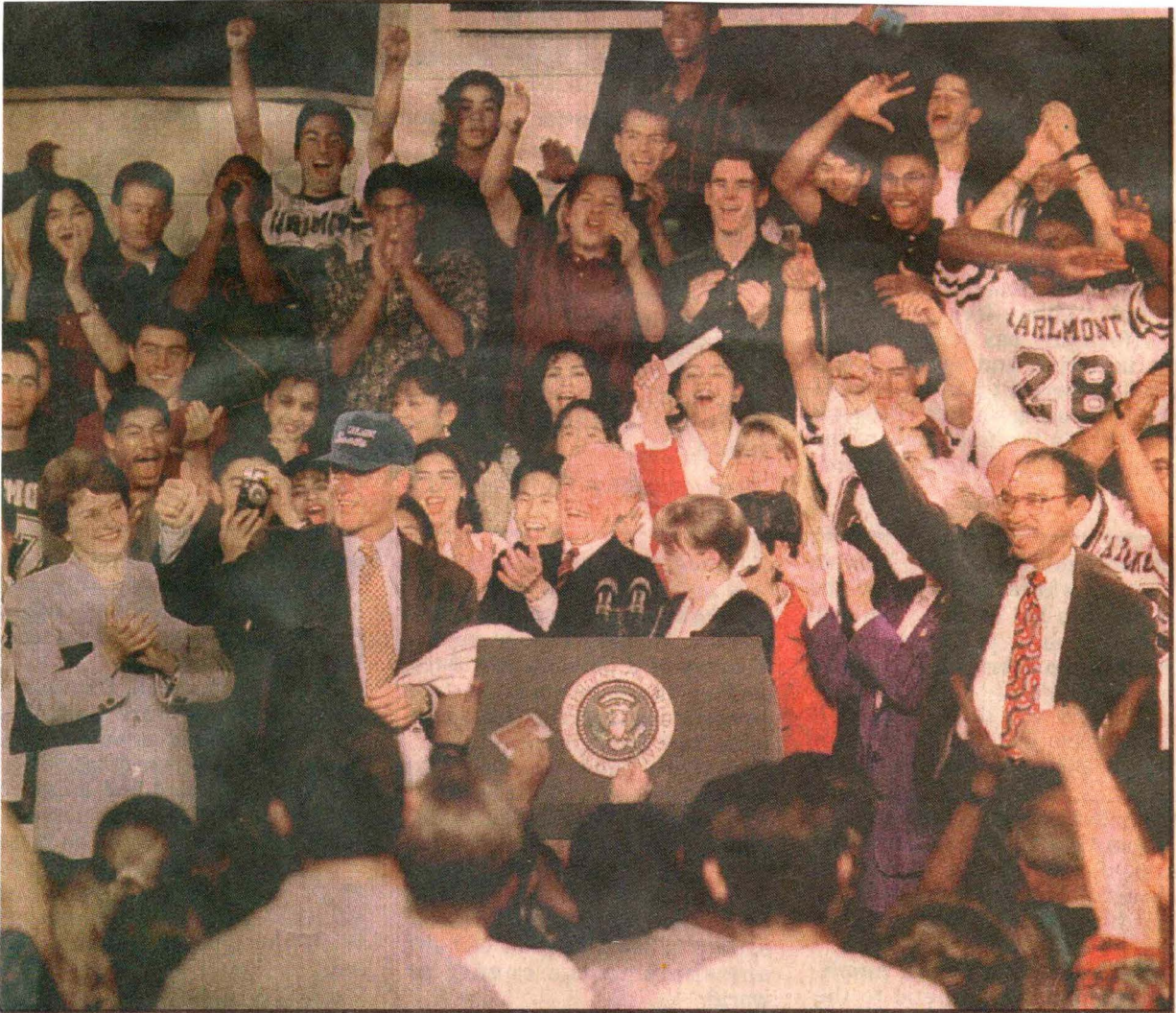
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PHOTOS: MATT SUMNER/EB

BILL ON BILL — President Clinton signed an executive request urging the passage of a policy for gun-free-schools while surrounded by Carlmont staff and students.

San Mateo Times
Oct 24, 1994



JOHN GREEN/The Times

Carlmont students cheer President Clinton, flanked by Dianne Feinstein and Tom Lantos.