

PRESIDENT CLINTON ANNOUNCES FOOD RECOVERY POLICY

From U.S. Dept. of Agriculture

■(WASHINGTON) The Clinton Administration put the emphasis on the "thanks" and the "giving" last week as the President announced that it would be the federal government's policy to promote and to practice gleaning and food recovery.

In his weekly radio address last Saturday President Clinton said he will sign a directive making it his administration's policy to promote food recovery and to assure that no wholesome food goes to waste that can be provided to those in need. The President directed every federal agency to actively work to recover surplus food from their cafeterias, commissaries, public events and other food service facilities and to encourage state, local, and non-governmental partners and grantees to participate.

The President also announced that the Department of Agriculture would release "A Citizen's Guide to Food Recovery" — a guidebook for getting prepared, perishable food that would otherwise be thrown away to those people who need it.

"The Bible tells us that when we harvest, we must not take everything for ourselves, but remember to leave something for the poor to glean. Today, those gleanings are the gifts of food we give to the less fortunate among us," President Clinton said in his weekly radio address. "Across our nation, in food banks and houses of worship and community groups, thousands of Americans are taking the initiative to fight hunger and feed their neighbors. We must do our part and support their efforts, because the job is far from finished."

Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "On Oct. 1, the President signed the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act, which encourages food donation by limiting the liability of good-faith donors and by providing basic nationwide uniform definitions pertaining to donation and distribution of nutritious foods. Such initiatives empower communities to solve the food shortage problem experienced by their low income residents.

"The resource guide will make it easier for individuals, groups, and businesses to get involved in gleaning and food recovery efforts, nationally and in their own communities. It will provide information on starting such an effort and give names and addresses of charities involved in these efforts," Glickman said.

The President also established an inter-

agency task force on gleaning and food recovery to carry out the new policy and to assist agencies with food recovery efforts. Glickman will chair the working group comprised of all federal agencies.

In his remarks, the President also praised the AmeriCorps members who devoted their summer to gleaning and food recovery activities. As directed by Glickman, the USDA AmeriCorps members gleaned at the Olympics and in communities across the country — recovering more than one thousand tons of food, providing over 1.3 million meals.

As part of his continuing efforts, Glickman:

- Established a toll free number (1-800 GLEAN IT) to facilitate food recovery efforts;

- Sponsored four farmers' markets (and a fifth Tuesday) where at the end of the day, the D.C. Central Kitchen recovered about 800 pounds of food not sold and distributed it to needy families in Washington, D.C.;

- Hosted a national round table to discuss food recovery and two regional meetings to talk about dismantling barriers to food donation.

Citizens can obtain "A Citizen's Guide to Food Recovery" by calling 1-800-GLEAN IT.

TRADE SCHOOL OPERATORS PLEAD GUILTY TO FRAUD AND CONSPIRACY

From U.S. Dept. of Education

■(WASHINGTON) The president and CEO of a national chain of computer schools has pleaded guilty to felony charges filed in Akron, Ohio.

Irwin Mautner, of Greenwich, Conn., was charged with mail fraud, conspiracy to defraud the U.S. Department of Education, and making a false statement in connection with a matter within the jurisdiction of the department. Each violation carries a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment and/or a \$250,000 fine.

Mautner was the head of Programming and Systems, Inc. (PSI), headquartered in New York. PSI operated vocational schools in Baltimore; Charlotte, NC; Cleveland; Columbus, Ohio; Flint, MI; Indianapolis; Miami; New York; Philadelphia; Southfield, MI; and Washington, DC. The schools closed in 1992 and 1993.

From July 1988 through Sept. 1993 — the period covered by the indictment — PSI schools received federally insured student loans totaling more than \$100 million and Federal Pell Grant funds totaling more than \$41 million. The indictment charged that Mautner participated in a scheme to defraud the Education Department by concealing the high rate of student withdrawals at PSI schools in order to prevent the schools from losing their accreditation, and consequently, the schools' eligibility to receive federally insured loans and grants.

PSI was a publicly traded corporation, which at one time had more than 3.6 million shares of stock outstanding and annual revenues in excess of \$31 million.

Mautner had previously consented in

Dec. 1994 to civil penalties imposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission in connection with false financial statements submitted to the commission.

Mautner, PSI National Financial Aid Director Ronald Sundick, and the corporation were indicted in Cleveland on Aug. 13, 1996, by a federal grand jury for the Northern District of Ohio. In a plea agreement with the government, Sundick pleaded guilty on Nov. 14, 1996, to a one count information that charged him with violation of Title 18, United States Code 1516, Obstruction of a Federal Audit.

Mautner and Sundick are scheduled to be sentenced early next year.

Assistant United States Attorney James C. Lynch presented the plea before Federal District Court Judge Sam Bell.

In reaction to the pleas, Education Department Inspector General Thomas Bloom said, "We are pleased with the progress of the PSI investigation. The Office of Inspector General is committed to a continuation of aggressive investigations of individuals who commit fraud in education programs. Neither taxpayers nor students can afford fraudulent activities in programs designed to help those who are ultimately victimized by those same activities."

The case was investigated by the Cleveland office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General in Pittsburgh.

"It takes time to save time."

Joe Taylor