to make a solemn decision about their future by signing the Student Pledge Against Gun Violence. I further urge all Americans to help our Nation's young people avoid violence and grow up to be healthy, happy, productive adults.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixth day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 12.

Remarks on Fast-Track Trade Legislation and an Exchange With Reporters

November 7, 1997

The President. Good morning. Today we received more good news for America's workers and their families: real wages continue to rise, the American economy added another 280,000 jobs in October alone, and unemployment dropped to 4.7 percent. The American economy has now added 13½ million new jobs since 1993, while inflation has remained low and stable. All this proves further evidence that our economy is the strongest it has been in a generation.

This also shows we have to move forward with the strategy that is working, the strategy of balancing the budget, investing in our people, and expanding American exports. That has brought us to this place of prosperity.

The choice before Congress is clear. I think it is imperative that we understand that a key reason more people are working and that wages are rising and that unemployment is down to the lowest level in more than two decades is that we have opened new markets and won new customers for American goods and services.

The vote by the House of Representatives on fast track will determine whether we continue to move ahead confidently with the strategy that has brought us 13½ million new jobs and the lowest unemployment rate in nearly 25 years.

Every time there is a trade agreement, we hear dire predictions of the consequences for American workers. The opponents of fast track would have you believe that if we hadn't done these trade agreements in the last 5 years, we'd still have all the good new jobs we have, and we wouldn't have lost any jobs. That is simply not true. We wouldn't have nearly as many of these good new jobs, and most of our job losses are due to changes in technology and consumer buying choices.

Today, with 4.7 percent unemployment, we see that America's trade policy creates good new jobs; it does not lose them. It boosts incomes rather than undercutting them. It would be a folly to turn back now.

The right answer is to give us the authority to breakdown more trade barriers and to do more, more quickly, to help those who are displaced by economic changes, and to do more to raise labor and environmental standards in other nations. That is our policy.

If America is restricted in its ability to make trade agreements, then our national interest in creating good jobs, protecting the environment, advancing worker rights will be restricted as well. We must not give other nations a boost in the global economic competition so vital to our own economic strength. The question is not whether we are going to have a system of world trade but whether we have one that works for America, whether we have a level playing field or one tilted against us.

Let me just give you one example. Now that Canada has negotiated a trade agreement with Chile, every major economy in the hemisphere has duty-free access to Chile's markets, but one, the United States. And just yesterday, Canada signed a comprehensive agreement with Argentina, Brazil, and other nations ahead of the United States. That's a strategy of "America last." It is unacceptable.

Again, I say the choice before Congress is clear: We can rise to the challenge of the future, write the trade rules on our terms, spur further economic growth and more jobs, or we can turn our back on the world and

fail to compete for new markets, new contracts, new jobs. More than ever, our economic security is also the foundation of our national security. Our strength depends upon our economic allies, our trading partners, and our economy. It affects our ability to get other nations to cooperate with us militarily and against the new threats of terrorism and drugs, organized crime, and weapons proliferation.

If we want to keep our leadership strong and our economy on the right track, Congress simply must give our Nation the power to negotiate pro-growth, pro-jobs, pro-American trade agreements. To maintain the momentum and confidence our economy enjoys, a Member of Congress who votes for fast track is doing the right thing for America.

Iraq

Q. Mr. President, given the statement of Chairman Butler this morning that he got nothing out of Saddam Hussein and given that Saddam Hussein hasn't responded to the international community positively unless military action has been taken, are you going to recommend either U.N.-sponsored or unilateral military action that would involve in some way, shape, or form U.S. forces? And when would that be?

The President. Well, first of all, the delegation that was in Iraq is on its way home now, and they will report, and then the international community must decide what to do. I think it is important that we be resolute, and I think it would be a mistake to rule in or out any particular course of action at this moment.

Q. How long will you be willing to wait——

The President. Wait, go ahead, Terry [Terence Hunt, Associated Press] and then——

Q. Actually, I was just going to ask you, Mr. President, do you think that—do you see any sign that Saddam Hussein is anything but defiant, that he is willing to give at all? He is still threatening to shoot down the U–2 spy planes, and he's refusing to let the Americans be part of the inspection teams. Do you see any reason for hope here?

The President. No. I don't. But we have to be resolute and firm. Keep in mind what is at stake here. The international community has made a decision, embodied in the United Nations resolution that Saddam Hussein must not be permitted to resume producing weapons of mass destruction. The advisers in UNSCOM, the inspectors there, they are the eyes and ears of the international community. They have been very successful, as you know, in doing their job. That is the issue.

And whether he's firm or weak, in the end, the international community has to be firm to make sure that his regime does not resume its capacity to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Q. Mr. President you seem willing to wait until the U.N. diplomats come back. How much longer are you willing to wait for compliance?

The President. Well, let me say, I think we have to wait until the U.N. diplomats come back. We have to counsel with our allies. We have to give them a chance to be heard and see what we're going to do. But I have seen no indication that any of our allies are weakening on this. Everyone seems to be united in their determination to restore the inspections on terms that the United Nations decides, not on Saddam Hussein's terms.

Q. Mr. President, will you give a visa to Tariq Aziz? And also, will you recommend to the Security Council or to the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. that they do take military action in the Security Council? That is one of the options.

The President. Well, on the Tariq Aziz question, we normally give anybody a visa to come to the United Nations, and that has been our policy. However, I don't think it ought to be used for stonewalling or foot-dragging, and we have that under review.

On the second issue, I can only say what I said before: I think we have to be firm and resolute. At this moment, in my view, it would be a mistake to rule in or out any option.

Fast-Track Trade Legislation

Q. On fast track, Mr. President, what's wrong with leaving the policy as it is now—you negotiate the deal, let Congress tinker with it?

The President. First of all, the main thing that's wrong with it is that other countries aren't interested in negotiating with us this way. No other country has to face that. Every country recognizes that a nation's parliamentary body has the right to vote up or down on the action by the executive. But no one—these deals are very complicated to negotiate; there are always lots of different aspects to it. And you can't say, ''Well, we're going to negotiate it and then subject it to a thousand amendments.'' Even within this framework there are ways to deal with major concerns.

But I asked Ambassador Barshefsky last night, I said, ''Just tell me one more time, do you really think we can negotiate seriously with any country without this authority?'' And she said, ''No. Unambiguously no.''

Let me emphasize, however, something we have done in this. Because I think it's very important, and it's been completely lost in the debate. We have agreed to have congressional observer groups in every single trade negotiation the way we have congressional observer groups now on NATO expansion, the way we have a congressional observer group on the chemical weapons treaty. Any Member of Congress who has ever been on one of those observer groups will tell you that that dramatically increases the effective input of the Congress into the process on the front end. And we have agreed to very specific stages of involvement for the Congress here. And presumably, the observer group in the trade issues would be just like the observer group in NATO. It would include people who are strongly for what we are doing, people who are skeptical, people who may be opposed. All of them get their input.

You know, I took a number of the congressional observers with me to Madrid, to the NATO conference. I would expect that to be done on all these trade issues. So we have offered Congress, including those who have reservations about certain trade agreements, an unprecedented amount of input on the front end into this process.

I strongly support it, by the way. I think it is a good idea, but it ought to be recognized for what it is. The question that Congress should ask themselves is, are we going to have more or less influence over trade policy if this bill passes? Are we going to have more or less input in labor and environmental issues and more advance of that if this bill passes or if it fails? The answer is, more influence in other countries on labor and environmental issues, more input for Congress if the bill passes.

No fast-track legislation has ever proposed this before. I support it. My policy is to push the labor and environmental issues. My policy is to push congressional involvement. And my policy is to do more at home to help people who are dislocated from their jobs for whatever reason. But that is not an excuse to send a signal to the world that we just don't expect to do trade agreements anymore with other countries, and we don't expect to be partners.

And other countries do not understand—what is America afraid of? No other country has 13½ million jobs in the last 5 years. No other country has a 4.7 percent unemployment rate, except for Japan, which has a different system, as you know. This country has out-performed every other country in the world, and the 220 trade agreements that we negotiated had a lot to do with that.

Our barriers are lower on average than virtually every other country in the world. We have more to gain from this economically. What they want is the sort of long-term, stable political relationships that will stabilize democracy and guarantee long-term economic growth for them and give them access to high-quality products. This is a no-brainer on the merits. This is clear on the merits. And it is in the interest of working people, and it is especially in the interest of working people who either have or want to get higher wage jobs, because they are the jobs that are created by the expansion of trade.

One of the reasons you've got these income figures going up now is not only that unemployment is low and therefore the labor markets are tighter but we are slowly changing the job mix in America because as we get into more trade, trade-related jobs pay higher wages. So this is clearly the right thing to do, and I'm determined to keep working until we convince a majority of the House of Representatives that it is.

Thank you.

Q. How close are you?

The President. Close.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz of Iraq.

Proclamation 7050—Veterans Day, 1997

November 7, 1997

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Americans have always looked to the future. Planning for next week, next month, or next year, we rarely dwell on the past, but rather look ahead to tomorrow. But each year in November, we pause to look back, to reflect with pride and profound gratitude on the achievements of our Nation's veterans. The service and sacrifice of these millions of courageous men and women is a gleaming thread that weaves, unbroken, through the fabric of American history.

More than two centuries ago, the framers of the Constitution outlined in a few brief words the burden and privilege that generations of American veterans would willingly embrace: to "provide for the common defence . . . and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity . . . ." Since the days of the American Revolution, nearly 42 million patriots have taken up arms to defend America and to guarantee that the blessings of liberty are, indeed, secure. From Lexington and Concord to Fort McHenry and San Juan Hill, from the Argonne Forest to the shores of Normandy, from the frozen terrain of Korea to the jungles of Vietnam and the sands of Kuwait, America's veterans have risked—and more than half a million have lost—their lives to preserve our freedom and defend our national interests.

Today, more than 25 million American veterans live among us. They come from every walk of life and from every ethnic, religious, and racial background. They are our family members, friends, and neighbors, but these seemingly ordinary citizens have accomplished extraordinary things. They have defended our liberty against every challenged, preserved our values, advanced democracy across the globe, and made America the world's best hope for freedom and lasting peace.

For these contributions, and for so much more, we owe our veterans an enormous debt of gratitude that we can never fully repay. To those who have completed their service and returned to civilian life, we owe the opportunity for a good education, a good job, and the chance to buy a home. For those who have suffered injury or illness in service to America, we must provide relief, quality health care, and the opportunity to live out their dreams. To the families of those still missing, we owe the fullest possible accounting and every effort to determine the fate of their loved ones. And to those who have died for us and for our country, whether here at home or on some foreign battlefield, we owe our lasting respect and the pledge to meet America's future challenges with the same valor and generosity that infused their sacrifice.

In recognition of and gratitude for the contributions of those who have served in our Armed Forces, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor America's veterans.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, November 11, 1997, as Veterans Day. I urge all Americans to acknowledge the courage and sacrifice of our veterans through appropriate public ceremonies and private prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to encourage and participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with suitable commemorative expressions and programs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton