deal about Argentina that a child of Syrian immigrants would grow up to be its President. It is remarkable to consider how far you have come and how far the nation has come under your leadership in the last 9 years.

Over the last decade, the world has undergone a remarkable transformation. No where has it been more dramatic or complete than in the Americas, where Argentina has led by its example at home and its commitment abroad to freedom and democracy, to peace and prosperity. A great deal of the credit for South America's achievements and for its promise belongs with the man we honor this evening.

Borges once wrote a poem about our great 18th century theologian, Jonathan Edwards. It included this line: ''Today is tomorrow and yesterday.'' Tonight let us remember the best days of our past and plan even better days yet to come. But first, let us enjoy an unhurried dinner together. [*Laughter*]

I ask you to join me in a toast to the President and to the people of Argentina.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:33 p.m. on the State Floor at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Menem.

Remarks Following the Entertainment at the State Dinner Honoring President Menem

January 11, 1999

President Clinton. Well, we want to say, first of all, thank you to our wonderful musicians, our magnificent dancers. I will never look at you again in quite the same way, Robert. [*Laughter*]

We are very grateful to you, and I hope, Mr. President, you feel a little more at home. Thank you, again.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:50 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to actor Robert Duvall. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Menem.

Remarks Announcing the Lands Legacy Initiative

January 12, 1999

Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for that welcome. Thank you, Jean Mason, for taking the tour with us and for the work you do with the neighborhood association. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, for showing up here today and being with us.

Jean was telling us that a lot of the schoolchildren in Washington, DC, come to the Arboretum every year on tours. I hope your presence here and her remarks here will lead even more of the city's children to find their way to this remarkable place.

I'd like to thank Thomas Elias for the tour that he gave the Vice President and me and Jean today. And I thank Secretary Babbitt for his strong leadership for the environment, especially in the area that we're discussing today, and Deputy Agriculture Secretary Rich Rominger and the other representatives here from the Agriculture Department, the Commerce Department, the EPA.

And I want to thank Theodore Roosevelt IV for being faithful to his family and his national heritage, in all the wonderful work he's done. And I'd like to say just a special word—I see my good friend Senator Gaylord Nelson out there—people in public life have periodic chances to make an impact that will last far beyond their own lives. I think Senator Nelson certainly has.

Six and a half years ago, in the summer of 1992, in the late spring, when I first talked to Al Gore about joining the ticket in the '92 election, this—what we're here to do today—this is one of the things that I talked to him about. And I said, ''I want you to come help me. There are things you know more about than I do.'' We differ on how many and what they are. [*Laughter*] But anyway, I said, ''You know, there are things you know more about than I do.'' And I said, ''We can make a difference that will last forever, for as long as the United States lasts.'' And he has been faithful to that in this administration. And I'm very grateful to him.

I also want to thank George Frampton for the work that he has done to put this proposal together.

We just took this tour to learn about the vital research the Agriculture Department does here, to also hear about the young children, the families that use this facility. I also heard about the elementary schoolers who grow vegetables and donate much of their harvest to the D.C. Central Kitchen. I heard about the AmeriCorps members and hundreds of other dedicated volunteers who work here to make sure that we'll always have this beautiful sanctuary in the middle of our Capital City.

I'd like to mention one of them who is here, Mary Morose, over here. Thank you for being here. She is a retired Government geologist who recently donated more than $1 million of her life's savings to help ensure that the Arboretum will always be here, for the children to see. Thank you, and God bless you.

We're just here trying to follow Mary's lead. We think every child in every community ought to have a chance to grow up around tall trees as well as tall buildings, to know what vegetables look like when they're growing in the ground, not just when they're in the grocery store, to know what it feels like to walk on a carpet of pine needles as well as one of asphalt.

At the dawn of the century, many Americans saw nature only as a resource to be exploited or an obstacle to be overcome. We can all take pride, each of us, in the work that we have done and will do. But it really is truly astonishing that, at the dawning of the industrial age in America, Theodore Roosevelt, even then, knew nature was a divine gift, that old-growth forests were more than trees to be cut down, that a pristine peak was more than a repository of ore. He set aside millions of acres of forests and mountains and valleys and canyons, land shaped by the hand of God over hundreds of millions of years. He defined his great central task as leaving this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.

In the last hundred years, I think only his kinsman, Franklin Roosevelt, approached his devotion to setting aside land and preserving resources. We have tried over these last 6 years to fulfill that vision. We have set aside more than 1½ million acres in the spectacular red rock canyons in Utah. And I might say, I think more and more folks out there have decided it's not such a bad idea. [*Laughter*]

We have protected vast acres of the Mojave Desert of California, designating three new national parks; saved more than 400,000 pristine acres of land in Alaska. We're about to complete an historic agreement to save vast tracts of ancient redwoods in California. We have worked hard to preserve the Florida Everglades and to restore much of them; and put a stop to a massive mining operation planned for right next to Yellowstone, America's very first national park.

But we have a lot to do. All of you know that. Our population is growing; our cities are growing; our commitment to conservation must grow as well. We'll never have a better time to act because of the unprecedented prosperity, because we had our first surplus this year—or last year—in nearly 30 years. And we ought to remember what Theodore Roosevelt said, ''We are not building this country of ours for a day. We have to make sure it lasts through the ages.''

So today I am proud to announce a lands legacy initiative: $1 billion to meet the conservation challenges of a new century, fully paid for in my new balanced budget, more than doubling our already considerable commitment to protect America's land. It represents the single largest annual investment in protecting our green and open spaces since Theodore Roosevelt set our Nation on the path of conservation nearly a century ago. And to keep on that path, we will be working with Congress to create a permanent funding stream for this purpose, beginning in 2001.

The first part of the plan builds directly on Theodore Roosevelt's conservation legacy by adding new crown jewels to our endowment of natural resources. Next year alone, we will dedicate $440 million, largely from the sale of oil from existing offshore oil leases, to acquiring and protecting precious lands and coastal waters. Secretary Babbitt and I were talking about it on the way in.

Among our many priorities, we intend to secure an additional 450,000 acres of private land in and around the new Mojave and Joshua Tree National Parks, to expand beautiful forest refuges in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and New York, to continue our

massive restoration of Florida's Everglades, to extend America's marine sanctuaries and restore coastal reefs.

In addition, I will propose to add the highest level of wilderness protection to more than 5 million acres of back-country lands within Yellowstone, Glacier, Great Smoky Mountain, and other national parks. If Congress approves this request, then these places will never know the roar of bulldozers and chainsaws. They will never drown out the call of the wild. Families will still be free to enjoy the lands, but they will be expected to take only photographs and leave only footprints.

The second part of our plan, which works in tandem with the livable communities initiative the Vice President announced yesterday, represents a new vision of environmental stewardship for the new century. Today, it's no longer enough to preserve our grandest natural wonders. As communities keep growing and expanding, it's become every bit as important to preserve the small but sacred green and open spaces closer to home: woods and meadows and seashores where children can still play; streams where sportsmen and women can fish; agricultural lands where family farmers can produce the fresh harvest we often take for granted.

In too many communities, farmland and open spaces are disappearing at a truly alarming rate. In fact, across this country, we lose about 7,000 acres every single day. And as the lands become more scarce, it becomes harder and harder for communities to then afford the price of protecting the ones that are left. That's why we have to act now.

So we will also dedicate nearly $600 million to helping communities across our country save the open spaces that greatly enhance our families' quality of life. With flexible grants, loans, and easements, we will help communities to save parks from being paved over. We'll help to save farms from being turned into strip malls. We'll help them to acquire new lands for urban and suburban forests and recreation sites. We'll help them set aside new wetlands, coastal and wildlife preserves. There will be no green mandates and no redtape. Instead, the idea is to give communities all over our country the tools they need to make the most of their own possibilities.

Let me just give you an example of what I mean. South Kingstown, Rhode Island, was a quiet farming town for more than two centuries. Today, it's the fastest growing community in the State. Its citizens welcome growth, but they want to maintain their parks and their open spaces. They want to make sure parents won't have to sit in traffic jams when they could be home reading to their children. They want to remain the kind of livable town where employers have no trouble recruiting educated workers interested in a high quality of life. So South Kingstown is setting aside one of every five acres as green space. They're revitalizing the historic downtown by creating a greenway along the Saugatucket River so people can stroll and bike right through the heart of town.

And in November voters overwhelmingly approved a million-dollar bond measure to protect more farms and more open spaces. This is the work we will help them to complete and the kind of work we will help people all over America to do. This is the kind of future-oriented community action all Americans, without regard to party or region, should be supporting, action that combines a vigorous commitment to economic prosperity with an equally vigorous commitment to conservation.

Ever since Theodore Roosevelt launched our Nation on the course of conservation, pessimists have claimed that this would hurt the economy. They've been wrong for 100 years now, but they haven't given up. Time and again they have been wrong. Whether the issue was park land preservation, acid rain, deadly pesticides, polluted rivers, the ozone hole, or any number of other environmental issues all of you know very well, we have always found ways to improve our environment, protect the public health, and enshrine our public heritage and still continue to grow our economy.

In fact, with the recent developments in technology and the looming problems of climate change, we now know that we will have a far more prosperous economy if we do the right things by the environment. And I hope that in the 21st century we will not have to fight that battle for another 100 years.

With this historic lands legacy initiative and the farsighted livable communities plan

the Vice President announced yesterday, we will use flexible, innovative means to protect our Nation's and our communities' natural heritage. We will help to create livable cities where both citizens and businesses want to put down roots. We will honor the core principle Theodore Roosevelt set out for us 100 years ago: to leave this magnificent country even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:15 p.m. at the National Arboretum. In his remarks, he referred to Jean Mason, president, Arboretum Civic Association, who introduced the President; Mayor Anthony A. Williams of Washington, DC; Thomas S. Elias, Director, National Arboretum; Theodore Roosevelt IV, member, board of directors, League of Conservation Voters, and great-grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt; former Senator Gaylord Nelson, Earth Day founder; and George T. Frampton, Jr., Acting Chair, Council on Environmental Quality. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Vice President Al Gore.

Executive Order 13111—Using Technology To Improve Training Opportunities for Federal Government Employees

January 12, 1999

Advances in technology and increased skills needs are changing the workplace at an ever increasing rate. These advances can make Federal employees more productive and provide improved service to our customers, the American taxpayers. We need to ensure that we continue to train Federal employees to take full advantage of these technological advances and to acquire the skills and learning needed to succeed in a changing workplace. A coordinated Federal effort is needed to provide flexible training opportunities to employees and to explore how Federal training programs, initiatives, and policies can better support lifelong learning through the use of learning technology.

To help us meet these goals, I am creating a task force on Federal training technology, directing Federal agencies to take certain steps to enhance employees' training opportunities through the use of training technology, and an advisory committee on the use of training technology, which also will explore options for financing the training and post-secondary education needed to upgrade skills and gain new knowledge.

Therefore, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (5 U.S.C. App.), and in furtherance of the purposes of Chapter 41 of title 5, United States Code, the Government Employees Training Act of 1958 (Public Law 85–507), as amended, and Executive Order 11348, ''Providing for the Further Training of Government Employees,'' and in order to make effective use of technology to improve training opportunities for Federal Government employees, it is ordered as follows:

Section 1. *Establishment of the President's Task Force on Federal Training Technology.* (a) The ''President's Task Force on Federal Training Technology'' (Task Force) is established. The Task Force shall provide leadership regarding the effective use of technology in training and education; make training opportunities an integral part of continuing employment in the Federal Government; and facilitate the ongoing coordination of Federal activities concerning the use of technology in training. The Task Force shall consist of the heads of the following departments and agencies or their representatives: the Departments of State, the Treasury, Defense, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, Energy, and Education; the Office of Personnel Management, General Services Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space and Administration, Small Business Administration, and Social Security Administration; a representative from the Small Agency Council; and representatives from other relevant agencies and related Federal councils, as determined by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Task Force.

(b) Within 30 days of the date of this order, the head of each agency or council shall designate a senior official to serve as a representative to the Task Force. The representative shall report directly to the agency head or