A few years ago, through the Vice President's leadership, we were able to put in place a voluntary rating system for television. Les Moonves, the head of CBS, and Bob Iger, the head of ABC, have led the way by putting their networks behind this effort. They are here today, and they went to some considerable trouble to change their schedules to do so, and I appreciate their presence.

This year, half the new TV sets sold in America will contain the V-chip, which parents can use to protect their children from violent programming. Today the FCC is announcing a V-Chip Task Force to make sure that next year every new set contains the V-chip. And the Kaiser Family Foundation is announcing a massive new public education campaign to make sure parents know about it and know how to use it. Also, following this meeting, Kaiser and the Ad Council, also represented here, will produce a campaign of antiviolent ads called "Talking With Kids About Tough Issues."

Last week the Vice President also announced a voluntary agreement by 95 percent of the Internet service providers to offer parents a new tool to assure that they are only one click away from the resources they need to protect their children. And I thank the representatives of the Internet for being here today.

Let me also say that we know that profoundly important efforts are being made in our schools and our communities in efforts to involve parents in increasing their capacity to prevent their children from drifting into violence, to engage the early warning signs, to get the necessary counseling and mental health services. I know that Mrs. Gore and Hillary have both been heavily involved in a lot of these issues for a long time.

And I want to say a special word of appreciation to the parents who are here, to the teachers who are here, and to the students who are here, because I believe that they may have more to say to us about what the rest of us should do than we can imagine.

So to all of you, thank you for coming. Let's leave here today resolved to be, all of us, a part of this national campaign, and I want us to have a good conversation about where we go from here.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:43 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Jiang Zemin of China. The President also referred to the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS); and the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC).

Remarks Following the White House Strategy Meeting on Children, Violence, and Responsibility and an Exchange With Reporters

May 10, 1999

The President. Please be seated, everyone. We're getting our group up here, you see. It's a little slow—it's a large and, as you can see, diverse and distinguished group. We just had a wonderful meeting in the East Room of the White House. We had not only the Vice President and Tipper and Hillary and I, but many members of our administration and four Members of Congress: Senator Brownback and Senator Reid and Leader Gephardt and Representative Jennifer Dunn were there.

And we listened to several hours of discussions; over 40 people spoke, many of them already heavily involved in the efforts to give our children a safe childhood and protect them from violence.

This was exactly the kind of session I had hoped for, where everyone was talking about the problems and the opportunities; everyone was talking about what could be done to accept responsibility. No one was pointing the finger of blame.

In the weeks and months ahead, as we launch our national campaign to prevent youth violence, we will build on the strong foundation of this day and on many of the things which have been said and many of the people who have said them.

I want to say a special word of appreciation to the young people who are here today and who are working in their own communities to try to help their fellow students have a safe and wholesome life.

As the national campaign gets underway, we know we'll have to overcome the old ways of doing business. We've seen some of that today as well, in the remarkable support that gun manufacturers have given to many of our commonsense gun proposals. We see in the

efforts of networks like ABC and CBS, and private family foundations like Kaiser, and agencies like the FCC, all of whom have supported the television rating systems, and giving parents the tool of the V-chip to protect children from excessively violent programming.

We know that there is more for each of us to do at home and at school, in Hollywood and in the heartland and here in Washington. Every parent, every teacher, every leader has something more to do.

First and most fundamentally, we must do more to help parents fulfill their most important responsibilities, those to their children. Challenging parents to turn off the television when they don't like what they see, to use the new tools the Vice President announced recently to keep an eye on the computer screen, to refuse to buy products that glorify violence. If no one consumes these products, people will stop producing them. They will not build it if you don't come.

To the media and entertainment industries, I also say we need your wholehearted participation in this cause. There are many changes which have occurred over the last generation in our society. It is true that we've had a lot of breakdowns in families, schools, and communities. It is true that we have had a rise in the availability of weapons. It is also true that there has been a coarsening of the culture in many ways. And those who influence it must be sensitive to that.

I mentioned today that not very long ago there was a fascinating story on the birth of Hollywood, the virtual creation of Hollywood by immigrants, on one of our cable channels. And the story really graphically demonstrated how these immigrants, who came to the United States, faced initial discrimination, went to California to make a new life—created an image of America, and an image of the American dream and an image of American life in the movies that they made that had a very positive impact on the culture of America for decades.

We cannot pretend that there is no impact on our culture and our children that is adverse if there is too much violence coming out of what they see and experience. And so, we have to ask people who produce things to consider the consequences of them—whether it's a violent movie, a CD, a video game. If they are made, then at least they should not be marketed to children.

Finally, I urge Congress to join in this campaign by passing the legislation necessary to keep guns out of the hands of children. As a group of gun manufacturers and sportsmen made clear today, these are commonsense measures that they support.

There are also other things that we can do, that I hope we will do to provide more support for counseling services, for mental health services, for other things which will help to improve our efforts.

Again, let me say, I want to thank the Vice President and Tipper Gore for the work they have done on these issues for years. I want them to come forward and speak. But first, I want to ask the First Lady to speak and acknowledge that she has to go to a school as soon as she finishes talking here.

She had the idea for us to call this national conference and to try to organize a national grassroots campaign. It was a good idea, and it looks like a lot better idea after today's meeting. So I want to thank Hillary for everything she's done and ask her to come forward and say a few words.

[*At this point, Hillary Clinton, Tipper Gore, and Vice President Al Gore made brief remarks.*]

The President. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Q. [*Inaudible*]—forces? Is that good enough?

Situation in the Balkans

Q. Mr. President, are you encouraged by word of a Serb withdrawal?

The President. Well, I'm encouraged by any good word, but I think that the conditions that we set out are the minimal ones to make this work. I don't think that the—after all the Serbs—after all the buildup and the hundreds of thousands of Kosovars have been driven out, many, many killed, I don't think they'll come back with that. So I think we have to do better.

But any little daylight, any little progress is—it's better than it was the day before. We just have to bear down and keep working, and we'll work through it.

But I think that forces have got to be withdrawn. There has to be an international security force there. Otherwise, they won't come home. And that's the important thing.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:06 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. The transcript made available by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Hillary Clinton, Tipper Gore, and Vice President Al Gore.

Proclamation 7195—Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 1999

May 10, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Whether working in big cities, suburban communities, or small rural towns, America's law enforcement officers serve each day as a defense against the forces of crime and brutality. These courageous men and women defend our lives with their own. All too often they pay the ultimate price for their dedication, as America saw again this past year when an armed intruder invaded the United States Capitol and gunned down Officer Jacob J. Chestnut and Detective John M. Gibson. These brave men were husbands, fathers, neighbors, and friends. We must honor and remember their sacrifice and the loss of the loved ones they left behind.

We must also remember that the heroes who died defending the U.S. Capitol were just 2 of the 61 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty last year. Firearms took all but 3 of these lives. In addition, 78 officers died in tragic accidents. All of their memories live on, not only with their friends and families, but also in the hearts of all of us who enjoy safer, more peaceful lives because of their dedicated service.

This week we honor with special gratitude the nearly 600,000 highly trained law enforcement personnel who serve our Nation each day. Whether working undercover against drug pushers, gang leaders, and terrorists; apprehending fugitives; responding to domestic violence calls; or arresting drunk drivers, these courageous men and women uphold their pledge to preserve the peace and promote the public's safety. In large part because of their skill and determination, crime rates in our Nation have fallen to the lowest point in 25 years, with the murder rate at its lowest level in 30 years. But the war on crime is a constant and dangerous struggle, and during Police Week—and especially on Peace Officers Memorial Day—we honor those who serve on the front lines of that battle.

By a joint resolution approved October 1, 1962 (76 Stat. 676), the Congress has authorized and requested the President to designate May 15 of each year as "Peace Officers Memorial Day" and the week in which it falls as "Police Week," and, by Public Law 103–322 (36 U.S.C. 167), has requested that the flag be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 15, 1999, as Peace Officers Memorial Day and May 9 through 15, 1999, as Police Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities. I also request the Governors of the States and of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag of the United States be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States and all areas under its jurisdiction and control. I also invite all Americans to display the flag at half-staff from their homes on that day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., May 12, 1999]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 13.