And so I say tonight, the White House has never belonged to any one of us. It will always belong to all of us. We do not yet know who the next occupant will be, but we can honor the service, the lives, and the families of the candidates who contested this election. We know how proud President and Mrs. Bush must be of their son, and rightly so. And we Americans should take great pride in the fact that this contest was fought to a close conclusion. It is not a symbol of the division of our Nation with the vitality of our debate, and it will be resolved in a way consistent with the vitality of our enduring Constitution and laws.

I think tonight of the words of an Englishman, Charles Dickens, who visited here in 1842. Listen to what he said right after he attended one of the functions that they then called levees. Where I come from, that holds in the Mississippi River. [*Laughter*] But for years in the 19th century, the receptions that Presidents regularly held were called levees. He walked through the White House, listening to the Marine Band play, marveling at the crowd assembled. And here is how he described the event in his American notes: "Every man, even among the miscellaneous crowd in the halls who were admitted without any orders or tickets to look on, appeared to feel that he was part of the institution." Well, that's still the way it ought to be.

Every one of you, from the wealthiest to those who could not be called wealthy, of whatever race or region, whatever your background, whether you're dining here or working here, you are a part of the institution. You are the center of the Nation. The most important title in this house has ever been "citizen." It is, after all, why we're still around here after 200 years.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:18 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Margaret Truman Daniel, daughter of President Harry S. Truman; former First Ladies Betty Ford, Rosalynn Carter, Barbara Bush, and Nancy Reagan; Lynda Robb, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson and Lady Bird Johnson; Gen. John Eisenhower, USA (Ret.), son of President Dwight D. Eisenhower; Ethel Kennedy, widow of Senator Robert F. Kennedy; Helen Thomas, former reporter, United Press International; soprano Jessye Norman; Robert L. Breeden, chairman and chief executive officer, White House Historical Association; Gary Walters, chief White House usher; and Republican Presidential candidate Gov. George W. Bush. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Gerald R. Ford, President Jimmy Carter, President George Bush, and Hugh Sidey, president, White House Historical Association. The dinner was hosted by the White House Historical Association. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Application of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia To Join the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

November 9, 2000

Dear _____ *:*

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) has indicated its preparedness to join the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) as a participating state. Given the interest of the Congress in the question of FRY participation in international and regional organizations, as reflected, for example, in section 594(e) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2001, I want to inform you that the United States representative to the OSCE will support the FRY's application when the matter is considered before the OSCE Permanent Council on Friday, November 10. The decision is predicated on the FRY's recent actions, including those that indicate the FRY is approaching membership in regional and international organizations on the same basis as the other successor states, and is taking important steps towards resolving issues related to liabilities, assets, and property.

We have reviewed the FRY application and have concluded that the FRY has applied on the same basis that Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia applied to participate in the OSCE following

the dissolution of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY). This mirrors the approach taken by the FRY last week in applying as a new member to the United Nations.

The FRY's application on the same basis as other successors demonstrates what President Kostunica has told United States officials: that he is abandoning Milosevic's claim that the FRY is the continuation of the former SFRY. As applied to succession talks, this change removes a major impediment to progress in negotiations among the successor states by establishing that all are operating from a principle of equality. In this regard, the fact that all other successors sponsored the FRY's entry to the United Nations and have signaled a willingness to support entry to the OSCE reflects the importance of the step the FRY has taken.

In addition, President Kostunica has taken other steps to expedite succession discussions. He has designated senior officials for the issue. These officials, in turn, have told United States Government officials that they intend to move quickly to reach an agreed solution. As a sign of the priority the new government attaches to this issue, during its first week in office, it received the designated international mediator, Sir Arthur Watts, to resume talks suspended under the previous regime. In their preliminary discussions with Watts this week, Yugoslav officials reviewed the prior negotiations and signaled their desire to make a fresh start and to seek rapid progress. These actions reflect a complete reversal of the previous government's position and represent reasonable and appropriate steps towards resolving successor state issues.

As succession discussions develop and the FRY applies to additional organizations, we will continue to work with FRY authorities, international mediators, and the other successor states to press for progress towards resolving these succession issues.

My Administration places great importance on the integration of the FRY into the international community through membership within regional and international organizations. Such integration will support President Kostunica's program on democratization and economic recovery, which, in turn, will help lead towards greater stability and support for democracy within Serbia, as well as increase cooperation with the FRY's neighbors and international community on meeting Belgrade's obligations under international law including cooperation with the International War Crimes Tribunal.

Sincerely,

Bill Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; and C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 10.

Proclamation 7375—Veterans Day, 2000

November 10, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

On this day, in ceremonies across our Nation and around the world, Americans gather to pay tribute to our veterans. In community centers and church halls, at VFW posts and U.S. embassies, in quiet cemeteries and on battlefields fallen silent, we pause to honor the brave men and women of our Armed Forces whose devotion to duty and willingness to serve have sustained our country for more than two centuries.

Over the course of our history, some 41 million Americans have served—and more than a million have died—so that we might live in freedom. We are the beneficiaries of their courage, their sacrifice, and their vigilance; and so are countless freedom-loving people around the world.

In the past century alone, through two world wars and the long, tense struggle of the Cold War; on the front lines in Korea, Vietnam, Beirut, Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Haiti, the Persian Gulf, and the Balkans, our brave men and women in uniform have risked their lives to protect U.S. interests, assist our allies, promote peace, and advance our ideals. Thanks to their extraordinary record of service, more people now live under democratic rule than at any other time in history. And today, America is a stronger