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So I ask all of you to stand and raise your glasses in a toast to President and Mrs. Cardoso and to the people of Brazil.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:25 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters on the Oklahoma City Bombing
April 21, 1995

The President. I wanted to make a couple of points. First of all, I was briefed late last evening by the Attorney General on the status of the investigation, and I am well satisfied with the efforts that are being made, the progress that's being made. I would just ask that you and the American people not rush to any conclusions unsupported by known evidence and that we give the investigators the space they need to do their job. They are working hard; they are moving ahead.

The second thing I'd like to say is that Hillary and I have decided to go to Oklahoma City on Sunday to be a part of the memorial service and to be with the families of the victims and the people of Oklahoma City. I think all America will be there in spirit and is there today, and I have determined that I should also declare Sunday a national day of mourning for the victims there and to ask people in their places of worship and in their homes all across America to pray for the people there and for the community.

The final thing I'd like to say is just a brief message to the children of this country. I have been very concerned with how the children in Oklahoma City and, indeed, the children throughout America must be reacting to a horror of this magnitude. And my message to the children is that this was an evil thing and the people who did it were terribly, horribly wrong. We will catch them, and we will punish them.

But the children of America need to know that almost all the adults in this country are good people who love their children and love other children, and we're going to get through this. We're going to get through this. I don't want our children to believe something terrible about life and the future and grownups in general because of this awful thing. Most adults are good people who want to protect our children in their childhood, and we are going to get through this.

Q. Mr. President, do you know of any progress in the investigation?

The President. You know I'm not going to comment. I'm letting the Justice Department announce progress. I don't think that it's appropriate for me to say anything, except I can tell you that I know what they've done and the American people would be very pleased and very impressed by the work they are doing. But this is a big issue, and we don't want to undermine their ability to work by anything that is said or by jumping to unwarranted conclusions.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House, prior to his departure for Havre de Grace, MD. The proclamation declaring a national day of mourning is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks on the 25th Observance of Earth Day in Havre de Grace, Maryland
April 21, 1995

Thank you so much. First let me say to all of you how glad we are to be here. I know a lot of you have been here since very early this morning, and you've had a little rain coming out of the sky. You might have gotten a little more of the environment than you bargained for today. [*Laughter*] But I'm glad to see you

all here bright-eyed, clear-eyed, and committed to preserving America's natural environment.

I want to thank Governor Glendening and Senators Mikulski and Sarbanes, Congressman Gilchrest, and the other State officials who are here, your mayor, and so many others for everything that they have done. I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to the man who was responsible for this wonderful walkway we came down, Bob Lee, and all the rest of you who worked on that. It's a great thing. I also want to thank the AmeriCorps volunteers who have done so much, who have done so much to help to keep the Chesapeake clean. And finally let me say a special word of thanks to Mary Rosso—didn't she do a good job up here—just like she was—[*applause*]—not only for the speech that she gave but for the work that she did that brought her to this place today.

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to do one other thing before I get into the remarks that I came to make today. You know that this is the 25th anniversary of Earth Day. Twenty-five years ago, Earth Day was an American celebration: Americans of both political parties; Americans of all races and ethnic backgrounds, Americans from all regions of the country; Americans who were rich, poor, and middle class; Americans just got together to reaffirm their commitment to preserving our natural environment; Americans who lived in the city and were worried about city environmental problems; and Americans who lived in places like this—people like me—who were interested in going to places like the Duck Decoy Museum, knew that if they wanted the ducks to fly in Arkansas and Maryland in duck season, we'd better clean the environment up. It was an American experience. We joined together to save the natural beauty and all the resources that God has given us and to pass it on to our children and grandchildren.

For a quarter of a century now, Americans have stood as one to say no to dirty air, toxic food, poison water, and yes to leaving a land to our children as unspoiled as their hopes. This Earth Day may be the most important Earth Day since the beginning because there is such a great debate going on now that threatens to break apart the bipartisan alliance to save this country.

And before I get into that, I want to ask a man to come up here who was mentioned by Vice President Gore, who started this whole Earth Day, and who sponsored a lot of the most important environmental legislation of our time, Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin. I'd like to ask him to come here. After—give him a hand. [*Applause*]

After Gaylord Nelson left the United States Senate, he went on to a distinguished career as head of the Wilderness Society and devoted the rest of his working life directly to our environment. And today on this 25th anniversary of Earth Day, I decided the best way I could celebrate this and try again to call forth this American spirit of dedication to our environment is to award to Gaylord Nelson our Nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

I can't help noting that in 1789 the Continental Congress almost made Havre de Grace our Nation's capital. Now that I'm here, I see why it was a contender. And on the bad days in Washington, if it's all the same to you, I may just come back here and set up shop.

Ladies and gentlemen, if you ever doubt what we can do together to preserve our heritage, all you have to do is look at this bay. The beauty you see is God-given, but it was defended and rescued by human beings. Not long ago the Chesapeake was a mess. Garbage floated on it; shellfish were unsafe to eat. Now, I know there's still a lot more to do, but you know the bay is coming back because people overcame all that divided them to save their common heritage. People from Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, the District of Columbia all joined together—with a Federal effort as well—citizens of all kinds, from both political parties, watermen, farmers, business people, environmental groups. They couldn't have done it without the bipartisan lines of defense sparked by the first Earth Day: the Environmental Protection Agency, the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, all forged by Democrats and Republicans, by Presidents and Congresses working together.

Twenty-five years ago and more, we once had a river catch on fire. Lead was released into the air without a second thought. Our national bird was on the verge of extinction. Today we don't routinely dump sewage in our water anymore. We know better. Our children aren't dying from lead poisoning, and the bald eagle soars again all across America.

But what we're doing is more than about natural beauty. It also affects our health as well. A recent study by the Harvard School of Public

Health found that air pollution raised the risk of premature death by 15 or more percent.

Now, in this atmosphere of debate over environmental issues today, we all know that the particular solutions that were adopted 25 years ago aren't necessarily the right detailed program for today or for the next 25 years. But the old habit of putting American progress against nature is as outdated as the old belief that heavy top-down Government can solve all of our problems.

So as we say, well, should we reform the way we do things, let's not forget there is a right way and a wrong way to reform our approach to preserving our environment and protecting the public health. It would be crazy to throw the gains we have made in health and safety away, or to forget the lessons of the last 25 years. But that is just exactly what some of the proposed legislation in the United States Congress would do, and you must be clear about it.

Can this new Congress with these proposed bills prove that our air will be clean under the laws that have been proposed? Can they prove our water will be free of deadly bacteria? Can they prove our meat will be untainted? Bills passed in the House effectively hold up all regulations for 2 years. Should we wait that long for fresher air, purer water, safer food?

Instead of success stories like the Chesapeake, what if we face what happened in Milwaukee? In April of 1993, the citizens of Milwaukee drank the city's water not knowing it had been contaminated by a deadly bacteria. A hundred people died. Hundreds more fell ill—thousands more fell ill. The last casualty of that incident occurred just a few days ago when a child died from an infection, just a few days ago.

For more than a week, the people of Milwaukee were terrified to brush their teeth, make coffee, use ice cubes, even wash their clothes in the city's water supply. If you want to know how bad it was, you can ask Robert and Astrid Morris, who are here, or Susan Mudd, who along with her husband, Mayor John Norquist of Milwaukee, dealt with the terrible problems that faced all people of that city and reached into their own family. They were all in Milwaukee. Their loved ones suffered. They are here today. I'd like them to be recognized. They're over there. Raise your hands, and let's give them a hand. [*Applause*]

That's just one example of our continuing challenge on the health front. Two years ago, more than 400 people got horribly sick from eating hamburgers that contained the deadly *E. coli* bacteria. Children died. How could it happen? Well, at the time, inspectors from the Department of Agriculture merely looked, touched, and smelled meat and poultry to determine whether it was contaminated. Under the leadership of our then-Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Espy, we moved aggressively to step up inspections, and we proposed new regulations to use high-tech devices to really check the meat for its purity so that we'll be able to stop diseases that can infect our food.

But listen to this: The House of Representatives passed legislation that would handcuff our ability to address these two problems and many others as well. The House bill would hold up for a year regulations to protect people from the *E. coli* bacteria or from the microbial in the Milwaukee water. In fact, there were specific, separate votes on both those things where our people said, "Well, at least let's protect Milwaukee and that problem." "Well, at least let's deal with the *E. coli* problem. Surely we don't need to wait this long to put in these standards." And they said, "No, we don't need to do this."

Now, folks, in the politically attractive name of deregulation—who can be against that?—they have proposed a moratorium on all efforts to protect public health and safety, even these efforts, when we know there is a danger and we know what to do about it. This would stop good regulations, bad regulations, all regulations. They would block the safeguards that we have proposed to see that Milwaukee never happens again. They would block our efforts to make sure we don't expose anymore children anywhere by accident to the tainted meat with *E. coli* bacteria. We must not let this happen. And I will not let it happen.

Let me give you another example of what's going on. Should Government examine the cost and benefits of what it does before it moves? Of course. Don't you do that in your own life? Of course, you do. And I would support a reasonable bipartisan bill that says we ought to pay more careful attention to the cost and benefits of what we do. But under the so-called "risk legislation" pending in the Congress, every agency of our Government would have to go through an expensive and time-consuming process every time they want to move a muscle.

One line in this bill—I want to say this again—one line in this proposed legislation overrides every health and safety standards on the books. It says rather than our children's health, money will always be the bottom line.

This bill would let lawyers and special interests tie up the Government forever in lawsuits and petitions. The people proposing this bill, after railing for years and years and years about how we have too many lawsuits and too much bureaucracy, have constructed a bill designed to give relief to every lawyer in the country that wants to get into a mindless legal challenge and designed to construct gridlock and to make sure it gets into the court and lasts forever as long as it's about an environmental regulation. It would literally give polluters control over the regulations that affect them. It would lead to more bureaucracy, more lawsuits, but a whole lot less protection of the public health. And it should be defeated.

There is another bill in the House—it passed the House—called the so-called takings bill. And it has a very politically attractive purpose, to prevent the Government from taking property away from citizens without paying them for it. Well, that's already provided for in the Constitution. But it sure sounds good, doesn't it? You wouldn't like it if the Government showed up tomorrow on your front step and took your home away. And you'd expect even if it were an emergency and had to be done, to be paid for it. That's not what this is about. You're protected from that already. This is about making taxpayers pay polluters not to pollute. This is about making the Government pay out billions of dollars every time it acts to protect the public. It would bust the budget and benefit wealthy landowners at the expense of ordinary Americans.

This so-called takings bill has been on the ballot in 20 States. And every place it's been on the ballot, including some very conservative Republican States, the voters have voted against it. Well, the voters don't get to vote on the takings legislation, so the President will vote for them, and the President will vote no.

Ladies and gentlemen, you might wonder who thought up these bills. Well, the lobbyists for the big companies thought up these bills. And they were actually invited to sit down at the table and draft the bills and then explain them to the Congressmen who were supposed to be writing them.

Now, you know, lobbyists have always had an important role in the legislative process, and they always will. And all of us could be lobbyists at one time or another if something were going on in Congress or in the State legislature we didn't like or that we did like. But in my lifetime, nothing like this has ever happened. I mean, they're having meetings in which the lobbyists are writing the bills and explaining them to the Congressmen, who are then supposed to go explain why they're for them.

The lobbyists were given a room off the House floor to write speeches for the Congressmen explaining why they were supporting the bills that the lobbyists had written for them. When some Senators held a briefing on one of these bills recently, they invited the lobbyists to explain what they were for, since they had written it and the Senators hadn't quite got it down yet. [*Laughter*]

Now, I don't think that any party has a lock on purity, and I think that all politics is about compromise. But there has never in my lifetime been an example like this. And I don't think whether you're a Republican or a Democrat or a liberal or a conservative, I don't think you believe that that's the way your Federal Government ought to work when it comes to matters affecting the health and welfare of your children and the environmental future of the United States and, indeed, our entire planet. I don't believe you believe that.

On this Earth Day, let me pledge we will not allow lobbyists to rewrite our environmental laws in ways that benefit polluters and hurt our families, our children, and our future. Reform? Yes. Modernize? You bet. But roll back health and safety? No. Let DDT into our food again? Not on your life. Create more tainted water or toxic waste, the kind Mary Rosso and Angela Pool from Gary, Indiana, who is also with us here today, the kind of things they are fighting? Never. No. Say no, folks. Say no. Just say no to what they are doing.

I will support the right kind of change. I have spent 2 years working with the Vice President to do things people said couldn't be done. We have tried to improve the environment and advance the economy. He has proved with his reinventing Government initiative that you could reduce bureaucracy, shrink the size of the Federal Government, and improve the performance of the Federal Government so that people get more for their tax dollars. I support a bill in

the Senate that is bipartisan that would give Congress 45 days to consider new regulations before they take effect. That is not an unreasonable amount of time. Government bureaucracies do make mistakes. Everybody can come up with some horror story they've had in their life. Do something reasonable like this. But to paralyze the ability of the Government of the United States to protect children from more Milwaukees and more *E. coli* hamburgers? No, no, no. Let's adopt a reasonable bipartisan bill.

Let me tell you something else we did that I hope you will support. Until recently, we discovered that many small businesses were literally afraid to come to the Environmental Protection Agency for help in cleaning up a problem because they thought they would be fined. They thought they'd go through a bureaucratic nightmare, and so they didn't come. And so under the leadership of Carol Browner, the EPA has changed its policy. Now, if a small business comes to the EPA in good faith for advice on an environmental problem, they will be given 180 days, 6 months, to fight it with—to solve it without being fined. That way they can spend the money repairing their businesses and repairing the Earth, not fighting with regulators.

The Vice President also said that the EPA was going to cut its paperwork burdens on Americans by 25 percent. Twenty million hours a year will be given by the Government back to the private citizens of the United States to do what they want. That's more important to a lot of people than money. We are giving 20 million hours from the Government back to the people of the United States to do what they want. I am all for making Government less burdensome. It shouldn't take a forest full of paper to protect the environment. No telling how many trees we're going to keep up by cutting the paperwork burden of the EPA. But to cut the mission of the EPA to protect the environment and the future? No. Let's change in the right way, not the wrong way.

My fellow Americans, in the next 10 years as we move toward the 21st century, indeed, in the lives of all the children here present throughout their lives, I predict to you we will become more concerned with environmental issues, not less concerned. We will have to deal with the shortage of clean water, with global climate change, with the unfair environmental burdens that are placed on poor communities in America, with the political problems of uncontrollable immigration that are sparked all around the world in part because of environmental degradation.

Do you remember how just a few months ago the waters were full of Haitian boat people trying to get to the United States because of political oppression? One reason is nobody can make a living down there because they have ripped every tree off every spot of ground in the whole country. It is an environmental crisis as well as an economic crisis. So as we restore democracy, we know democracy will not prevail, we know that the Haitian people will not be able to live in Haiti and raise their children there and make money there and not seek to come to the United States or somewhere else unless we can rebuild the environment.

My fellow Americans, we must be more concerned with these issues, not less concerned with these issues. We cannot disarm our ability to deal with them. Our natural security must be seen as part of our national security.

Take a last look at this beautiful bay behind me. I'll never forget the first time I saw the Chesapeake, about 30 years ago now—a little more, actually. Will your children's children see what we see now and what I saw then? Will there be water clean enough to swim in? Will there be a strong economy that is sustained by a sound environment? Believe me, if we degrade our American environment, we will depress our economy and lower our incomes and shrink our opportunities, not increase them.

It is our landscape, our culture, and our values together that make us Americans. Stewardship of our land is a major part of the stewardship of the American dream since the dream grew out of this very soil. Robert Frost wrote, "The land was ours before we were the land." This continent is our home, and we must preserve it for our children, their children, and all generations beyond.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:46 a.m. in the Park at Concord Lighthouse. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Parris Glendening of Maryland; Mayor Gunther Hirsh of Havre de Grace; Charles Lee (Bob Lee) Geddes, management assistant, Harford County Department of Parks and Recreation; and Mary Rosso, founder, Maryland Waste Coalition.

Statement Announcing the Award of the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Gaylord Nelson
April 21, 1995

I am pleased to announce my intention to award the Presidential Medal of Freedom to former Senator Gaylord Nelson, who as State Legislator, Governor, and Senator championed the protection of our natural resources. As we commemorate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, his creation, it is fitting that we honor this great American's lifetime of public service.

In establishing Earth Day, Gaylord Nelson helped us to recognize that our fragile environment was increasingly at peril and that each of us could make a difference. His work has inspired all Americans to take responsibility for the planet's well-being and for our children's future.

I look forward to presenting the Medal to Senator Nelson.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
April 21, 1995.

NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this statement.

Remarks and an Exchange With Reporters on the Oklahoma City Bombing
April 21, 1995

The President. Good afternoon. First let me say how very proud I am of the swift and decisive and determined work of law enforcement officials on this case throughout the country. I know every American is proud of them, too. Their continued vigilance makes me sure that we will solve this crime in its entirety and that justice will prevail.

Today I want to say a special word of thanks to the Justice Department, under the able leadership of the Attorney General, to Director Freeh and all the hundreds of people in the FBI who have worked on this case, to the men and women of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, to all the Federal authorities, and to all the State and local enforcement officials, especially those in Oklahoma who have been working on this case. And of course, I'd like to say a personal thanks, as I know all Americans would, to the Oklahoma lawman whose vigilance led to the initial arrest of the suspect.

As I said on Wednesday, justice for these killers will be certain, swift, and severe. We will find them. We will convict them. And we will seek the death penalty for them.

Finally, I know I speak for all Americans when once again I extend our deepest thanks to the brave men and women who are still involved in the rescue teams. Let us not forget them. There is a lot of work for them still to do. It is difficult, and it is often heartbreaking now.

Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the people in Oklahoma City. And let me say again: You will overcome this moment of grief and horror. You will rebuild. And we will be there to work with you until the work is done.

Q. Mr. President, is there a sense now, sir, that this was not a foreign threat, that this was something from within our own borders?

The President. Let me say that I have never and the Justice Department has never said that it was a foreign threat. But the most important thing that you understand is that even though this is a positive development, this investigation has a lot of work still to be done in it, and therefore it would be—it would be wrong to draw any conclusions. There have been lots of twists and turns in this investigation. But I would say to the American people, we should not assume, as I said yesterday, that we should not assume that any people from beyond our borders are involved in it. We should not assume anything, except what we know.

Q. Any idea about motive, Mr. President? Anything in terms of the one suspect who's been arrested, any feeling about what—where he was or who he was or what he was up to?